

# CHARLES DICKENS--The Yuletide Novelist

Ever Appeals to All Nations at This Season of the Year—His Works Breathe the Spirit of Peace and Goodwill—Tiny Tim Still Speaks to All the Charitable World  
By A. T. PRICE

**CHRISTMAS:** A well-known public man once said that—Charles Dickens, to a great extent, made the keeping of Christmas what it is. There is little doubt that the Master-Author's Christmas Stories infused into the world that Christmas spirit which is so prevalent today—the spirit of love and charity. Charles Dickens' works are as popular today as they were a generation ago. Branches of the "Dickens Societies" are established in many towns on both sides of the Atlantic. Charles Dickens will never be forgotten. The millions of his readers at the present time speak that, and he will be always especially remembered at Christmas.

### A Retrospect

Time was, with most of us, when Christmas Day encircling all our limited world like a magic ring, left nothing out for us to miss or seek; bound together all our own enjoyments, affections and hopes; group-ed everything and everyone around the Christmas tree; and made the little picture shining in our bright young eyes complete.

### Re-united

What! Did that Christmas never really come when we and the price-less pearl who was our young choice were married, after the happiest of totally impossible marriages, by the two united families previously at daggers-drawn on our account? When brothers and sister-in-law, who had always been rather cool to us before our relationship was effected, perfectly doted on us, and when fathers and mothers overwhelmed us with unlimited incomes? Was that Christmas dinner never really eaten after which we arose and generously, eloquently rendered honor to our late rival, present in the company, then and there exchanging friendship and forgiveness, and founding an attachment not to be surpassed in Greek or Roman story, which subsisted until death?

Has that same rival long ceased to care for that same priceless pearl, and married for money, and become usurious? Above all, do we really know now, that we should probably have been miserably if we had won and worn the pearl, and that we are better without her?

Therefore, as we grow older, let us be more thankful that the circle of our Christmas associations and of the lessons that they bring, expands! Let us welcome every one of them, and summon them to take their places by the Christmas hearth.

Welcome, old aspirations, glittering creatures of an ardent fancy, to your shelter beneath the holly! We knew you, and have not outlived.

Charles Dickens will never be out of date, and will always be especially remembered at Christmas time. He will never be neglected or forgotten. The millions of his readers at the present time speak for that. In his own measure he shares with Shakespeare the immortality not only of great genius, but of a world genius. His works will keep his memory green. The name of Charles Dickens is a household word wherever the English language is spoken; but when all this is admitted it is impossible not to recognize his Christmas compassion, his extraordinary insight, his shining gifts, together with wit, the magnification of the pathetic and the kindness which he brought to bear on the interpretation of the comedy and the tragedy of the common people he knew so well. "Lord keep his memory green."

ed you yet. Welcome, old projects and old loves, however fleeting, your nooks among the staid lights that burn around us. Welcome all that was ever real to our hearts; and for the earnestness that made you real, thanks to heaven! Before the boy, there stretches out a future brighter than we ever looked on in our old romantic time, but bright with honor and truth. Around this little head on which the sunny curls lie heaped, the graces sport, as prettily as airy, as when there was no scythe within the reach of Time to shear away the curls of our first love. Upon another girl's face near it—placidly but smiling bright—a quiet and contented little face, we see Home plainly written.

### Those Who Have Gone.

Of all days in the year, we will turn our faces towards that, our Christmas Day, and from its silent hosts bringing those we love, amongst us. City of the Dead, is the blessed name wherein we are gathered together at this time, and in the presence that is here among us according to the promise, we will receive and not diminish, the people who are dear to us!

Among the figures there is one, a poor, mis-shapen boy on earth, of a glorious beauty now, of whom his dying mother said it grieved her much to leave him here alone for so many years as it was likely would elapse before he came to her—being such a little child. But he went quickly, and was laid



REV. STIGGINS.

upon her breast, and in her hand she leads him.

There was a gallant boy who fell far away, upon a burning sand, beneath a burning sun said: "Tell them at home, with my last love, how much I could have wished to kiss them once, but I died contented and alone my duty!" Or shall the words "Therefore, whom read the words "Therefore, whom commit his body to the deep," and so consigned to the lonely ocean and sailed on. Or there was another, who lay down to his rest in the dark shadow of great forests, and, on earth, awoke no more. O forest, be brought home at such a time!

Christmas! In every cheerful measure and suggestion that the season brings, say the bright star that rested above the poor roof, be the star of all the Christmas world!

Charles Dickens himself realized Yuletide as a time for peace and good-will, and worked indefatigably to that end. There is little doubt that he was the means through his works of bringing the nations upon earth nearer together at Christmas. With his magic wand he strikes the rock of our self-centred, indifference and selfishness, and forthwith tenderness and pity and joy. In the "Christmas Carol" he turns the hard and selfish man into a warm-hearted and grateful one; in "The Chimes" a Christmas story of bells that rang an old year out and a new one in; in "The Cricket on the Hearth," a fairy tale of home; "The Battle of Life," a love story, and in "The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain," a fancy for Christmas time.

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### Some Characters AND Extracts FROM HIS WORKS

#### LITTLE NELL.

It has been stated that several reviewers of the "Old Curiosity Shop," owned to having wept over the death of Little Nell. "A story of a strong spirit, imprisoned in a frail lovely body," in Philadelphia, U. S. A., by the side of the statue of Dickens, Little Nell stands as if she were his good genius. The character of Little Nell has been a power for good. "I love little children," said the great author and his creation of Little Nell gives us it. Bret Harte, in his poignant verses, draws a vivid picture of a group of mopes, tortured and reckless with gold hunger, leaving their drink and gambling to "hear of Little Nell," shows very clearly what her influence has been.

#### FLORENCE DOMBEY.

In "Dombey and Son," Dickens gives us the character of a child with a sweet disposition, but utterly neglected, Florence, "who to know was to love" winning a last smile from her dying mother, working late and early to help the little, delicate Paul—the hope and pride of the arrogant and selfish father—in the tasks he was so soon to lay down; Florence with her curly head upon the black of the rough old dog, who is her only comfort; she the music of her voice was heard even in the dark valley of the shadow. When on the death of Little Paul she would wander around the large mansion, fearing to meet her father and yet yearning for his love, her heart breaking in her efforts to quell the pent-up feelings, and her great love for her step-mother, Edith, who, in her bitter contempt for the unnatural and proud father, pitied and loves the neglected child. In the character of Florence, Dickens has opened the flood-gates of sweetness and goodness and we agree with Captain Cuttle that she is "Heart's Delight."



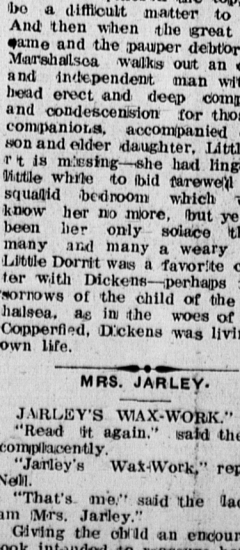
"POOR JOE."

#### LITTLE EMILY

POOR LITTLE EMILY! How enchanting she is as little Emily, with her blue eyes and dancing, foreshadowing even her own unhappy fate by the very coquetry of her baby love with David Copperfield. Her beauty and her cleverness made her the joy of the Yarmouth boathouse, and as she plays innocently upon the beach and dreams of being a lady, the tiny figure stands out distinct against the blue water. And then as years roll on, and Ham—the hearted Ham—tells her of his great love, she realizes his faithfulness, but yet is petulant, at the thought of her dreams of being a lady were to come to naught. And then at this crucial moment Steerforth comes into her life and she leaves all those that love her to become a "Jady." And yet the tragic story of this one of our author's children ends, as we all know, in a triumph for her great-souled uncle Peggotty. Poor little Emily! Weak and Frail, but yet so loving,

#### LITTLE DORRIT

The character of "Little Dorrit," is all gentleness and self-denying helpfulness. It has been said that Charles Dickens, as a lad of twelve summers became acquainted with a little girl of 11 years, in "that small house in Somers Town," whose name was Mary Ann. This little girl, who claimed to be the original of "Little Dorrit," died not long since in England. Had she lived a few months longer she would have reached her 100th birthday. This lady, Mrs. Mary Anne Cooper often stated that "Charles called me his little girl, but afterwards he called me 'Little Dorrit,' because he did not like the name of Mary Ann." However, the character of Little Dorrit is treated by the great master with sweet compassion. Her birth in the Marshalsea (the Marshalsees) the poor mother passing in the stifling room on a hot summer afternoon, is unforgettable. And how wretched of her life is depicted and what pathos there is in these few words: "As that period of her early life the little creature began to perceive that it was not the habit of all the world to live locked up in narrow yards, surrounded by high walls with spikes in the top, would be a difficult matter to settle." And then when the great change came and the pauper debtor of the Marshalsea walks out an opulent and independent man with his head erect and deep compassion and condescension for those late companions, accompanied by his son and elder daughter, Little Dorrit is missing—she had lingered a little while to bid farewell to the staid bedroom which was to know her no more, but yet had been her only solace through many and many a weary night. Little Dorrit was a favorite character with Dickens—perhaps in the shadows of the child of the Marshalsea, as in the woe of David Copperfield, Dickens was living his own life.



MRS. JARLEY.

JARLEY'S WAX-WORK. "Read it again," said the lady complacently. "Jarley's Wax-Work," repeated Nell. "That's me," said the lady. "I am Mrs. Jarley." Giving the child an encouraging look intended to reassure her and let her know that, although she stood in the presence of the original Jarley, she must not allow

#### himself to be utterly overwhelmed and borne down, the lady of the caravan unfolded another scroll, whereon was the inscription, "One hundred figures the full size of life," and then another scroll on which was written, "The only stupendous collection of real wax work in the world," and then several smaller scrolls with such inscriptions as, "Now exhibiting within." — "The genuine and only Jarley." — "Jarley's unrivalled collection." — "Jarley is the delight of the Nobility and Gentry." — "The Royal Family are the patrons of Jarley." When she had exhibited these levithaus of public announcement, to the astonished crowd, she brought forth specimens of the lesser fry in the shape of handbills, some of which were couched in the form of parodies in popular melodies as "Believe me 'if all Jarley's wax-work were rare." — "I saw thy show in youthful prime." — "Over the water to Jarley, while, to consult all tastes, others were composed with a view to the lighter and more fashionable spirits, as a parody on the favorite air "If I had a donkey," beginning:

"If I know'd a donkey wot wouldn't go To see Mrs. Jarley's wax-work show, Oh you think I'd acknowledge him? Oh! no, no! Then run to Jarley's." — besides several compositions in prose, purporting to be dialogues between the Emperor of China and an oyster, or the Archbishop of Canterbury and a dissentor on the subject of church-rates, but all having the same moral, namely, that the reader must make haste to Jarley's and that children and servants were admitted at half-price. When she had brought all these testimonials of her important position in society to bear upon her young companion, Mrs. Jarley rolled them up, and having put them carefully away, sat down again and looked at the child in triumph. — Old Ourlofty Shop.

#### BARNADY RUBGE

Barnaby holding the torch as he had been directed, looked on in silence, fascinated by intensity of curiosity, but repelled, nevertheless, by some strong and secret horror which convulsed him in every nerve. As he stood, at that moment,



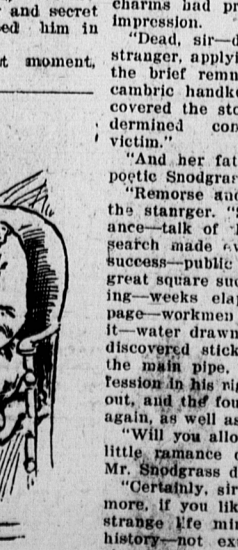
PAUL DOMBEY.

#### half shrinking back and half bend-

ing forwards both his face and his figure were still in the strong glare of the light, and as distinctly revealed as though it had been broad day. He was about three-and-twenty years old, and, though rather spare, of a fair height and strong make. His hair, of which he had a great profusion, was red, and, hanging in disorder about his face and shoulders, gave to his restless looks an expression quite unearthly, enhanced by the paleness of his complexion and the glassy lustre of his large, protruding eyes. Starting as his aspect was, the features were good, and there was something even plaintive in his wan and haggard aspect. But the absence of the soul is far more terrible in a living man than in a dead one; and in this unfortunate being its noblest powers were wanting.

#### QUIPL.

His dress was of green, clumsily crumpled here and there, apparently by his own hands—with gaudy lace; brightest where the cloth was most worn and soiled, and poorest where it was at the best. A pair of tawdry ruffles dangled at his wrists, while his throat was nearly bare. He had crumpled his hat with a cluster of peacock's feathers, but they were limp and broken, and now trailed negligently down his back. Girl to his side was the steel hilt of an old sword without blade or scabbard; and some particolored ends of ornamental portion of his attire. The flustered and confused disposition of all the motley scraps that formed his dress, bespoke, in



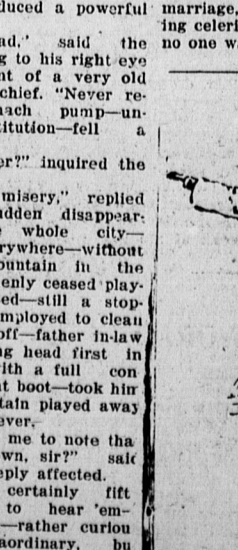
QUIPL.

#### horses, did the stranger proceed,

until they reached Rochester bridge, by which time the note-books, both of Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Snodgrass, were completely filled with selections from his adventures.—Pickwick Papers.

#### ESTELLA

IN "Great Expectations," Charles Dickens gives us a masterly study of a complex child and woman in Estella. If there is a certain analogy between Little Nell, hopelessly endeavoring to save her Florence Dombey striving to soften wretched old grandfather, and her adamant father, there is certainly another between the unhappy, irresistible little Emily and quite the most remarkable of the little girls of Dickens—Estella. Poor Pip falls humbly and hopelessly in love, as if she were a small, imperious queen and he her slave. She treats him abominably, this lad from the forge, with the heart of a true gentleman beating beneath his shabby coat. Her sullen disposition, and insolent manners. What a contrast to little Jane Pocket in the same book! Jane, a "mere mite who seemed to have taken upon herself prematurely some charge of the others."



MISS NINETTA GRUMBLES AND MISS MOLEENA KENWIGS

#### IN "Nicholas Nickleby," there

are two little girls some of us prefer the baby heroines and beauties. What theatrical performance has ever had bigger or better pleased audiences than those who, in their own archaic, can view that infant phenomenon, Miss Crummles, in the famous interlude of "The Savage and the Maiden?" We have—and enjoy—a full description of the costume in which she rehearsed it. "A dirty white flock with tucks up to the knees short trousers, sandalled shoes, white spencer and pink gauze bonnet." When Nicholas had to canvass for patronage with the girls, Miss Snevellicci, "the infant" accompanied them to play—property and carried a fringed parasol without a handle, which she had an inconvenient habit of dropping into areas. Though so used the glare of the footlights, she does not seem to have been other than a well-behaved small mortal in private life, not half as forward as Miss Morlianna Kenwigs of the long flaxen pigtail, who danced to the admiration of all "when the soles of her shoes had been carefully chalked," and following suit when her mother fainted at the news of rich Uncle Lillyvick's marriage, "came to" with astonishing celerity when when "she found no one was looking at her."

#### MR. JINGLE

"You have been in Spain, Sir," said Mr. Tracy Tupman. "Lived there ages." "Many conquests, sir," inquired Mr. Tupman. "Conquests! Thousands. Don belacio — Pizzig-Grandee—only daughter—Donna Christina—sprandid creature—love me to distraction—jealous father—high-souled daughter—handsome Englishman—Donna Christina in despair—prussic acid—stomach pump in my portmanteau—operation performed—old Bolaro in ecstasies—consent to our union—join hands and floods of tears—romantic story very."



MR. JINGLE

"Is the lady in England now, sir?" inquired Mr. Tupman, on whom the description of her charms had produced a powerful impression. "Dead, sir—dead," said the stranger, applying to his right eye the brief remnant of a very old cambric handkerchief. "Never recovered the stomach pump—undetermined constitution—fell a victim."

"And her father?" inquired the poetic Snodgrass. "Remorse and misery," replied the stranger. "Sudden disappearance—talk of the whole city—search made everywhere—without success—public fountain in the great square suddenly ceased playing—weeks elapsed—still a stoppage—workmen employed to clean it—water drawn off—father-in-law discovered sticking his first in the main pipe, with a full confession in his right boot—took him out, and the fountain played away again, as well as ever."

"Will you allow me to note that little romance down, sir?" said Mr. Snodgrass deeply affected. "Certainly, sir, certainly fit more, if you like to hear 'em—strange life mine—rather curious history—not extraordinary, but singular."

In this strain, with an occasional glass of ale, by the way of parent thesis, when the coach changed

