

Davy, and his faithful nurse Pegotty, whose back resembled a modern maitrailleuse in keeping up a constant discharge of missiles, in the shape of buttons, and who at length surrenders to the "willin' Barkis"—that charming little ark on the Yarmouth sands, with its inmates, Ham, Mr. Pegotty, Mrs. Gummidge and "little Em'ly," the eccentric but kind-hearted Miss Trobwood, with her ceaseless warfare against mauling donkeys—Traddles deep in love with "the dearest girl, one in ten," his irrepressible hair ever on end, no amount of horse power being equal to keeping it flat:—but above all, that "complete letter-writer" and patient waiter on "something to turn up"—the accomplished, the Epicurean Micawber, whose lofty reference to Burns as "the Immortal Exciseman nurtured beyond the Tweed," ought to win the hearts of all Scotchmen—and whose gorgeous descriptions of his off-recurring pecuniary difficulties are so richly ludicrous,—little Dora, the child-wife, whose house-keeping proved such a failure, but whose innocent, affectionate ways, and early death have embalmed her in our memories for ever,—what charming personages are they all, in the light of love and humour shed over them by the great Master. It is, indeed, hard to say whether Dickens excels more in the humorous or the pathetic, when we remember that the same hand that sketched in the Old Curiosity Shop, Dick Swiveller, Quilp and Sally Brass, has also given us sweet little Nell, so tender, pure and good, whose presence is felt as an angel of light wherever she goes, and whose death-scene, as well as that of dear little Paul Dombey, has moistened many an eye unused to tears.

The limits of this brief "In Memoriam" are now almost reached, and quitting this fascinating theme, I must close with a few words in regard to Dickens as a man. Hans Christian Andersen, the great Danish novelist, who knew Dickens well, said, "take the best out of all Dickens's writings, combine them into the picture of a man, and there you have a Charles Dickens." This is high praise, and yet not unmerited, if we are to form our opinion of him from the concurrent testimony of those who knew him best. Bright, genial, sympathetic, charitable, tolerant, the firmest of friends, incapable of envy, malignity or meanness, humble, unspoiled by all his immense popularity, ready to help a friend at any cost,—such was Charles Dickens as painted by his most intimate friends. It is not wonderful to find that such a man had hosts of friends, and that they almost worshipped him. His smile was fascination itself—his manner called forth whatever was brightest and best in those with whom he mingled. What kindness of nature with which he delighted to endow his characters, was a reflection of his own loving spirit. His writings attest how keenly he felt the woes and injustices of the world, and how earnestly he laboured to alleviate and reform them. Nor have those labours proved fruitless. There are fewer Dotheboy's Halls, and brutal Squeers's, since Nicholas Nickleby appeared; Chancery suits are not quite so tedious as formerly—Fleet prisons for debtors are swept away—poor laws are ameliorated, and the Circumlocution Office with its art of "how not to do it" is falling into disrepute. Dickens's works have immensely helped forward all these wholesome reforms. A kindlier feeling too prevails