

AN HOUR WITH DICKENS ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

POEMS.

THE CHILDREN.

Poem Found in the Desk of Charles Dickens After His Death.
When lessons and tasks are all ended,
And the school for the day is dismissed,
And the little ones gather around me
To bid the "good night," and be kissed,
O the little white arms that encircle
My neck in a tender embrace!
O the smiles that are halos of heaven,
Shedding sunshine and love on my face!

And when they are gone I sit dreaming
Of my childhood, too lovely to last;
Of love that my heart will remember
When it wakes to the pulse of the past.

See the world add its wickedness
Made me
A partner of sorrow and sin—
When the glory of God was about me,
And the glory of gladness within.

My heart grows weak as a woman's,
And the fountain of feeling will flow,
When I think of the paths steep and stony,
Where the feet of the dear ones must go.

Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them,
Of the tempests of fate blowing wild—
There's nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child.

They are idols of hearts and of house-
hold,
They are angels of God in disguise—
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses,
His glory still beams from their eyes.

O those runts from earth and from heaven,
They have made me more manly and mild,
And I know how Jesus could liken
The kingdom of God to a child.

Seek not a life for the dear ones,
All radiant, as others have done;
But that life may have just as much shadow
To temper the glare of the sun.

Would pray God to guard them from evil,
But my prayer would bound back to myself,
Oh! seraph may pray for a sinner,
But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bent,
I have banished the rule and the rod,
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge,
They have taught me the goodness of God.

My heart is a dungeon of darkness,
Where I shut them for breaking a rule,
My crown is sufficient correction,
My love is the law of the school.

shall leave the old house in the autumn,
To traverse its threshold no more;
Oh! how shall I sigh for the dear ones
That meet me each morn at the door,
That smile the "good night" and the "good-bye,"
And the glow of their innocent eyes,
The group on the green, and the flowers
That are brought every morning to me.

shall miss them at morn and at eve,
Their notes in the school and the street;
shall miss the low hum of their voices,
And the tramp of their delicate feet.
When the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And death says the school is dismissed,
I lay the little ones gather around me,
And bid me "good night" and be kissed.

—Charles Dickens.

DICKENS IN CAMP.

(By Bret Harte.)

Above the pines the moon was slowly drifting,
The river sang below;
The dim Sierras, far beyond, uplifting
Their minarets of snow.

The roaring camp-fire, with rude hum-
our, painted
The ruddy tints of health
On haggard face and form that drooped
and faint.

In the fierce race for wealth,
The old crowd, and from his pack's
scant treasure
A hoarded volume drew,
And cards were dropped from hands
of careless leisure
To hear the tale anew;

And then, while round them shadows
gathered faster,
As by the firelight fell,
Read aloud the book wherein the
Master
Had writ of "Little Nell."

Perhaps 'twas boyish fancy, for the
reader
Was youngest of them all—
But, as he read, from the clustering
pines and cedar,
A silence seemed to fall;

The fir-trees, gathering closer in the
shadows,
Listened in every spray,
While the whole camp with "Nell" on
English meadows
Wandered and lost their way.

And as in mountain solitudes o'er-
taken
By some spell divine—
Their faces drop from them like
needles shaken
From out the gusty pine.

Lost is that camp, and wasted all its
fire,
And he who wrought that spell?

Ah, towering pile and stately Ken-
tish spire,
Ye have one tale to tell!

Lost is that camp! but let its fragrant
story
Blend with the breath that thrills
With hop-vines' incense all the pen-
sive glory
That fills the Kentish hills.

And on the grave where English oak
and holly
And laurel wreaths entwine,
Doom it not all a too presumptuous
folly—
This spray of Western pine.

July 1870.

Verdict in the Edwin Drood Case.

The Jury Compromise on Man-
slaughter—Dukes in Court—Judge
Chesteron's Jokes—And Snore.

An evening of sheer delight! Let
us have more of it, and oh! let it be
soon!

This was the prevailing verdict on
"The Trial of John Jasper for the
Murder of Edwin Drood," which took
place last night at the King's Hall,
Covent Garden—devoted as a rule to
the purposes of conflicts of another
kind—under the auspices of the Lon-
don branch of the Dickens Fellow-
ship, the hon. secretary of which (Mr.
Frank S. Johnson) and his colleagues
had worked like Trojans (or, better,
lovers of the master of English tale-
telling) to secure a notable result.

Notable! It comes nowhere near
describing it. Just consider. The
trial began at seven o'clock. It did
not end till after eleven. The doors
were opened at 6.30. For not far
short of five hours an audience which
packed every inch of the large hall
sat and listened while judge and jury
threw out two mutually exclusive
theories of the making away with
Edwin Drood. There were dukes
and duchesses in the audience; also

Hundreds of people were refused
tickets. Five pounds was offered
for a seat yesterday. Newspapers
from Russia and Argentina were re-
porting the trial.

Of the versions of the story put
before the court and of the extraor-
dinary finding of a jury surely not
equalled since a famous trial record-
ed by one Lewis Carroll—allusion
meant to be complimentary and even
respectful, whatever it seem—this is
not the time or place to speak. Is
not the chronicle of it to be written
in a book to be published for the
benefit of the charitable enterprise
aforesaid? Here it is but to tell of
the way of it all. What a judge in
Mr. G. K. Chesteron! How ponder-
ous he looked! "Staple inn" a place
of refreshment, I presume? How
naturally he snored! And what a
grave array of counsel, in Mr. J.
Cunning Walters and Mr. B. W.
Matz for the one part, and Mr. Cecil

there were London clerks earning a
couple of sovereigns a week, and
well nigh all the grades between. Fit
tribute to one of the most democra-
tic-minded of authors. Here was a
wonder in itself—several thousands
of Londoners, largely middle-aged,
most of them men, but hundreds wo-
men, came to watch the working out
of a human story.

Had Dickens Been There?

It may be said they only came to
see the celebrities in the court, but
this will not do. Had that been the
case they would speedily have tired.
Those who in the second half did
tire somewhat gave way because of
the Turkish bath-like temperature
of the hall, not a window of which
appeared to be open. It was not in
the least because of lack of interest
in the Fellowship's work. There is
only one word for that. Everybody,
concerned worked with thorough-
ness and good-humour, which would
have won the master's heart, all the
more since the proceeds were to go
to the charitable side of the Fellow-
ship's work.

There were, of course, differences
between this and an ordinary court.
In the latter, "what the soldier said"
is not evidence, as we all know.
Here, Miss Helena insinuated her
suspicions so that they became con-
firmation strong. Again, in the
Dickensian forum witnesses tell their
story rapidly and naturally. They
are not "pulled up" while the judge
takes notes. Furthermore, counsel
ask leading questions by the bushel.

But what of all that? The verdict
detail. What matters is that London
had one of the most delightful even-
ings of intellectual interest and
wholesome good humor which it
could wish for; and that the needy
gain.

And now—since Thackeray and
Stevenson's unfinished stories do not
admit of such treatment—when will
one of the jurors give us the material
for such another evening? Name?
Well, there is Mr. William de Mor-
gan for one.

In the end the jury announced that
they had compromised on a verdict of
manslaughter. No sentence was pro-
nounced.—Graphic, Jan. 8th, 1914.

Cash in hand, 20 pounds. Outlay, 19 pounds 19
shillings and sixpence.

Result: HAPPINESS.

Cash in hand, 20 pounds. Outlay, 20 pounds no
shillings and sixpence.

Result: MISERY.

—Mr. MICAWBER.

Dickens and Music.

Mr. James T. Lightwood contri-
butes to the February number of the
Choir (C. H. Kelly, City Road), an ar-
ticle on Dickens and music.

Strange as it may seem, the influ-
ence which poetry and music, espe-
cially the latter, exerted on Dickens
has been little referred to, but Mr.
Lightwood has recently made a per-
usal of Dickens's works with a view
to noting all the musical references.

This has revealed the fact that in
practically all his books Dickens has
introduced musical characters, or in-
cidents with music as the back-
ground. Though not a practical
musician himself, he was greatly in-
terested in everything pertaining to
music, and eagerly availed himself
of any opportunity of musical inter-
course.

Dickens's orchestras are limited
both in numbers and resources—a
solitary fiddle, or a fiddle and a tam-
bourine, or fiddles and harps, etc. He
makes much innocent fun of the
flute. Jack Redburn found consola-
tion on wet Sundays in "blowing a
very slow tune on the flute." The
cello, "the melodious grumbler,"
comes in for the most notice. Mr.
Morfin solaced himself by producing
"the most dismal and forlorn sounds
out of his violoncello before going to
bed." Among the many references
to organs and organists may be not-
ed the faithful Tom Pline playing
his favorite instrument. In "The
Chimes" there is a fine description
of the music of the organ in the church.
As to vocalists, Dickens pays more
attention to basso profundos than to
other voices, but the references are
all of a humorous nature. Almost
all the novels contain reference to
singers, good, bad, and indifferent;
while the songs are often a parody
of the original, an adaptation to suit
the character who utters them. Dick-
ens shows much enthusiasm for the
patriotic songs of the eighteenth cen-
tury. "The British Grenadiers" is
"an inspiring topic" and "he is
equally attracted to 'Heart of Oak,'
as it is more correctly named. Ac-
cording to Dickens church-music was
not in a healthy condition, either in
the Anglican churches or in the dis-

The Death of Little Nell.

For she was dead. There, upon
her little bed, she lay at rest. The
solemn stillness was no marvel
now. She was dead. No sleep
so beautiful and calm, so free
from trace of pain, so fair to
look upon. She seemed a crea-
ture fresh from the hand of God
and waiting for the breath of
life—not one who had lived and
suffered death. Her couch was
dressed with here and there some
winter berries and green leaves,
gathered in a spot she had been
used to favor. "When I die, put
near me something that has loved
the light, and had the sky above
it always." These were her
words.

She was dead. Dear, gentle,
patient, noble Nell was dead. Her
little bird—a poor slight thing
the pressure of a finger would
have crushed—was stirring nim-
bly in his cage, and the strong
heart of the child mistress was
mute and motionless forever.

Where were the traces of her
early cares, her sufferings, and
fatigues? All gone. Sorrow
was dead indeed in her, but
peace and perfect happiness
were born in her, in her tran-
quil beauty and profound repose.

And still her former self lay
there, unaltered in this change.
Yes, the old freckle had smiled
upon that same sweet face; it
had passed like a dream, through
haunts of misery and care; at the
door of the poor schoolmaster on
the summer evening, before the
furnace-fire upon the cold wet
night, at the still bedside of the
dying boy, there had been the
same mild lovely look. So shall
we know the angels in their ma-
jesty after death.

"It is not," said the school-
master, as he bent down to kiss
her of the cheek, and gave her
tears free vent, "it is not on
earth that Heaven's justice ends.

Think what earth is, compared
with the world to which her
young spirit has winged its early
flight; and say, if one deliberate-
wish expressed in solemn terms
above this bed could call her
back to life, which of us would
utter it?"

And how simply and feelingly does
Dickens describe poor Nell's funeral,
when they laid her away, and the
"old church received her in its quiet
shade."

They saw the vault covered,
and the stone fixed down. Then
when the dusk of evening had
come on, and not a sound dis-
turbed the sacred stillness of the
place—when the bright moon
poured in her light on tomb and
monument on pillar, wall, and
arch, and most of all (it seemed
to them) upon her quiet grave—
in that calm time, when outward
things and inward thoughts teem
with assurances of immortality,
and worldly hopes and fears are
hushed in the dust before them—
then, with fragrant and sub-
limely hearts, they turned away,
and left the child with God.

THE STORM AT SEA in Martin
Chuzzlewit.

Whither go the clouds and
wind, so eagerly? If like gaily
spirited they repeat to some dread
conference with powers like
themselves, in what wild region
do the elements hold council,
or where unbend in terrible dis-
port? Here! Free from that
cramped prison, called the earth,
and out upon the waste of wa-
ters. Here, roaring, raging,
shrieking, howling, all night long.
Here in the fury of their un-
checked liberty, they storm and
buffet with each other, until the
sea, lashed into passion like their

Dickens Was a Tidy Man.

Authors, as a rule, are not famed
for tidiness, but Dickens was an ex-
ception. There never existed, I
think, in all the world, a more thor-
oughly tidy or methodical creature
than was my father," wrote his
daughter, "Mamie." He was tidy in
every way—in his mind, in his hand-
some and "graceful" person, in his
work, in keeping his writing-table
drawers, in his large correspondence,
in fact, in his whole life. But he
could be a fidget also, as, for exam-
ple, in regard to the furniture in a
room in a hotel. He might be stay-
ing only a single night, but if it did
not please him he would rearrange
it all, always turning about north
and south to meet his views of the
electrical currents of the earth!

Mr. Dickens's untidy habits were
not in his work, but in his private
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Great Men and Women

CHARLES DICKENS.
(1812-1870.)

Someone has described Dickens as
"the man who cheers us all up," and
he thinks that if Dickens is not the
highest writer of English fiction, he
fills the biggest place, and is the last
whom we could spare. Carlyle de-
scribed him as "the good, the gentle,
the noble, the high-minded Dick-
ens, every inch of him an honest man.
Since Shakespeare, no Englishman
has supplied the world with so many
notable parallels to every circum-
stance of life. He began to write in
1833, being then attached to a paper
in London as reporter, and with the
commencement of the "Pickwick Pa-
pers" in 1836 he became known on
both sides of the Atlantic. These Pa-
pers came out in monthly parts and
caught the public fancy, and the tale
was accompanied in its way by the
laughter of all England. While it was
still running "Oliver Twist" was be-
gun, also "Nicholas Nickleby" and
"Barnaby Rudge" were brought out
at a pace hardly paralleled by Scott.
And what a company of friends and
acquaintances he gives us! David
Copperfield, Mr. Micawber, Trotty
Veck, Caleb Plummer, Mr. Dombey,
Mark Tapley, Mr. Bumble, Scrooge,
not to mention Mr. Pickwick and
Samuel Weller, and a host of others
that all readers of Dickens know
(and are they not legion?).

And the men and women that
Dickens has given us will not readily
be let fall from among our acquaint-
ances. They have passed into litera-
ture in a hundred forms. Number
less are the references to them in
other books.

"I can often tell," remarked Lord
Houghton, "a man's own character by
hearing his favorite characters in
fiction." A most diverting list might
be compiled of the characters from
Dickens which eminent persons have
selected as their favourite. We know
that Lord Palmerston thought Sam
Weller was Dickens's high-water
mark; that the late Lord Salisbury
never weary of Saurey Gamp; that
Mr. Chamberlain most rejoiced in Wil-
kins Micawber. In fact, if one looks
through biographies published for the
last fifty years, one is almost sure to
come across references to the big-
rapher's literary favourites, and espe-
cially in the characters of Dickens.

To Dickens must be given the credit
of inventing the mid-Victorian theory
of the secular aspect of Christmas,
and of its social duties and pleasures,
and his "Christmas Carol" and his
other Christmas books are responsible
for much of the charity and good
cheer that accompany our celebration
of the season now.

He died rather suddenly in 1870 and
the world was the poorer by his
death. He was busy with "Edwin
Drood" when the pen fell from his
hand, and in interesting attempt to
clear up the mystery of Edwin
Drood's death is found in another col-
umn, which describes a mock trial
held in London last month, with G. K.
Chesteron as Judge.

And who does not know Mrs. Gamp
with her watery eye, and her friend
Mrs. Harris, though Mrs. Prip did
say "She didn't believe there was no
such person!" Can't you hear her
now telling Mr. Pecksniff?

"If it wasn't for the nerve a
little slip of liquor gives me (I
was never able to do more than
taste it) I never could go through
with what I sometimes have to do.
Mrs. Harris, I says 'leave the bottle
on the chimney-piece, and don't ask me
to take none, but let me put my lips to it
when I am so disposed, and then I
will do what I'm engaged to do,
according to the best of my ability.'"
"Mrs. Gamp," she says, "in
answer, 'if ever there was a so-
ber creature to be got at eight
centence a day for working, peo-
ple, and three and six for gentle-
folks—night watching,' said Mrs.
Gamp 'being a extra charge—
you are that invaluable person.'"
Mrs. Harris, I says to her, 'don't
name the charge for it I could
afford to lay all my taffer creet-
ars out for nothink. I would glad-
ly do it; it is the love I bear
em.'"

And Dickens's descriptive power is
shown to full advantage in
THE STORM AT SEA in Martin
Chuzzlewit.

Whither go the clouds and
wind, so eagerly? If like gaily
spirited they repeat to some dread
conference with powers like
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do the elements hold council,
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and out upon the waste of wa-
ters. Here, roaring, raging,
shrieking, howling, all night long.
Here in the fury of their un-
checked liberty, they storm and
buffet with each other, until the
sea, lashed into passion like their

own, leaps up in ravings might-
ier than theirs, and the whole
scene is whirling madness.

The story of Nell in "The Old Cur-
iosity Shop" is one of the most fami-
liar to all readers of Dickens. Who
can read unmoved his wonderful and
ouching word-picture of her death,
clothed with such eloquence of sim-
plicity?

To Churchman.

We very much regret that uninten-
tionally, our notice of Candelmas in
last Saturday's issue was so very in-
complete as "Churchman" very pro-
perly points out. As it happens, the
information in its entirety is taken
from "The Harnsworth Encyclo-
paedia" and the error is certainly
not to the credit of that publication.
Even the little shilling "Pears Cyclo-
paedia" describes Candelmas correct-
ly as "An English and Roman
Church Festival." We are glad that
the Leisure Hour Page is proving
interesting and agreeable, and well-
come factors that bring us in close
touch with its readers, and in this
instance, especially thank "Church-
man" for drawing attention to the in-
advertence mentioned above.

The flea is very small, but he can
jump farther than the hippopotamus.
He can jump several hundred times
his own length. If a man were as
good a jumper as the flea, he would
treat the elevators in the Woolworth
building with quiet scorn and would
leap lightly to the cornice from
Broadway. However, after the flea
has spent several hours executing
prodigious jumps he is usually within
ten inches of the spot where he be-
gan. This would fill us with great
contempt for the flea's intelligence if
we did not at this minute think of the
hundreds of automobile owners who
travel all day at the rate of 50 miles
an hour in order to land where they
started.

The flea inhabits warm, sandy
countries, and is very fond of human
society. Nothing leases a flea so much
as to jump down the collar of a per-
fect stranger and roam around him
for days at a time, occasionally sink-
ing a shaft into him in the hope of
striking oil. Fleas will not touch
some people, but love others dearly
and travel for miles to congregate
upon them. When traveling in Italy
always choose a companion who is
madly beloved by the flea. This will
enable you and many others in the
same neighbourhood to travel in com-
parative comfort.

Talking about women and dogs, it
might be mentioned that the latest
craze of wealthy women who are dog-
fanciers is to have the portraits of
their pets painted in oils. It is not
going too far to say that there is a
colony of artists, with headquarters in
London, who spend the greater part
of their time in fulfilling commissions
at shows in all parts of the country.

The flea is an insect kangaroo about
as large as a pin head, to the eye, and
a little larger than a well drilled out-
let to the scene of feeling.

The flea has a hard shell and a set
of extremely talented legs. Because
of these legs the flea can do what no
other animal or insect has ever been
able to accomplish, it can be in
two places at once—under the thumb
of an angry man and four feet away,
getting ready to jump again.

This is an astonishing statement,
but can be proven by several million
people who have hunted the flea with
murderous intent at one time or an-
other. It is perfectly easy to place a
large horny thumb on a small flea

Author of "At Good Old Swish."

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people who have hunted the flea with
murderous intent at one time or an-
other. It is perfectly easy to place a
large horny thumb on a small flea

Author of "At Good Old Swish."

A flea is an insect kangaroo about
as large as a pin head, to the eye, and
a little larger than a well drilled out-
let to the scene of feeling.

The flea has a hard shell and a set
of extremely talented legs. Because
of these legs the flea can do what no
other animal or insect has ever been
able to accomplish, it can be in
two places at once—under the thumb
of an angry man and four feet away,
getting ready to jump again.

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