

## Charles Dickens in Canada

By H. Gerald Wade

H. Gerald Wade, secretary of the re-organized Winnipeg Dickens Fellowship, has written a very interesting article on "When Dickens Came to Canada." It appeared recently in a Toronto paper, and is well worth repeating.

Canadians are second to none in their love for the works of Charles Dickens, and no English writer, no teller of Christmas tales touches them more nearly or makes his characters so real to them, characters many of whom have counterparts in our cosmopolitan country. Besides the link of the humanity in his books, there are personal associations between Canadians and Charles Dickens. Mr. Wm. Cruickshank, R.C.A., of Toronto, has a vivid memory of him, having frequently met the great novelist at his London home. He describes him as a kindly man, at that time very much of a dandy, in velvet coat and braided trousers. The link is closer here in that the Canadian artist is a nephew of the George Cruickshank whose drawings and caricatures illustrate much of Dickens' text. Mr. E. S. Williamson, president of the Toronto branch of the Dickens Fellowship, has the first gold watch owned by the author, as well as one of the finest collections of Dickens souvenirs in existence. In Canada we now have five branches of the Dickens Fellowship, the Toronto branch being the largest in the world. The most intimate connection of all between our great country and the great novelist is a personal visit he paid us in 1842, when our country was not then so great, but when the novelist was firm in his enormous popularity. And as Dickens' notes of this visit to Canada are least known, perhaps, in Canada of any of his writings. I give here what I have gleaned from his American notes and his correspondence, hoping the glimpses of a Canada of seventy years ago may be interesting to Canadian readers.

For some time Dickens had entertained a desire to visit America, and on September 19, 1841, he wrote to Forster, "I have made up my mind (with God's leave) to go to America, and to start as soon after Christmas as it will be safe to go." Of taking Mrs. Dickens with him, he writes: "Kate cries dismally if I mention the subject," but later writes, "Kate is quite reconciled." Prominent among the novelist's numerous well-wishers anxious for his safe journey was the kindly humorist, "Thomas Hood," who composed the following witty verses:

"Pshaw! away with leaf and berry,  
And the sober-sided cup!  
Bring a goblet, the bright sherry;  
And a bumper fill me up!  
Tho' I had a pledge to shiver,  
And the largest ever was,  
Ere his vessel leaves our river,  
I will drink a health to Boz.  
Here's success to all his antics,  
Since it pleases him to roam,  
And to paddle o'er Atlantic  
After such a sale at home.  
May he shun all rocks whatever,  
And the shallow sand that lurks,  
And the passage be as clever  
As the best among his works!"

At length came the eventful day. He writes: "I shall never forget the fourth serious and three-fourths comical astonishment with which, on the morning of January 3, 1842, I opened the door and put my head into a stateroom on board the Britannia packet, twelve hundred tons burden per register (of the Cunard Line, Captain John Hewett in command), bound for Halifax, Canada, and on carrying her Majesty's mails."

While Dickens could not have foreseen the luxury of our modern travel, he was apparently quite conscious of the poor accommodation such as offered on the Britannia, and for which he had to pay thirty-eight guineas, which was at that time the fare between Liverpool, Halifax and Boston. In his notes he speaks of his cabin as "an utterly impossible, impracticable, thoroughly hopeless and proudly preposterous box." Of his berth he also wrote: "Something they call my bed, but which I believe to be a muffin bread flat."

The trip across the Atlantic in mid-winter was an exceptionally rough one. Of this much-advertised, noble "paddle-wheel" ship Britannia, he wrote: "Every plank and timber creaked as if the ship was made of wicker-work, and now cracked like an enormous fire of the driest possible twigs," and that he arrived safely in Halifax is a wonder, judging by his unpublished private letters.

On Thursday, January 30, 1842, they arrived at Halifax, after being sixteen days out. They landed at Canard's Wharf, where they were met by the then member for Halifax, Joseph Howe, M.L.A., and escorted to the House of Assembly, where Dickens sat at the right hand of the Speaker, the Hon. L. G. W. Archibald, and gave a short address. Of this event he describes: "The ceremonial and forms observed were so closely copied and so gravely presented on a small scale that it was like looking at Westminster through the wrong end of a telescope." From an old Halifax newspaper report we read that he was in that city only six or seven hours, and proceeded on his way to Boston by the same steamer on which he crossed from Liverpool. The article goes on to say that he visited New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and went on as far west as St. Louis; afterwards spending a month in Canada, which I shall now describe.

A Halifax newspaper called The Nova Scotian, published on February 24, 1842, has a long article regarding Dickens, giving in full his reply to a toast given at a banquet in his honor in Boston. And in the same paper of March 10 there is a speech of his given at Hartford, Conn., the latter copied from The Hartford Record.

While our Canadian papers at the time seem to have made much of his visits to other places, they give very little information regarding his short stay in Halifax and other parts of Canada, in fact mention only his being here.

Of Halifax Dickens thought the whole aspect was cheerful, thriving and industrious, and he carried away with him a most pleasant impression of the town and its inhabitants. He writes: "Nor was it without regret that I returned home without having found an opportunity of returning and once more shaking hands with the friends we made that day."

They arrived in Boston on Saturday, January 22, and spent some time in that city. It has probably never been the good fortune of any individual, whether in a public or a private capacity, to meet with such an ovation as that which was accorded to Dickens on his arrival there—balls, dinners, assemblies of all kinds were given in his honor; and his progress through the country in city, town or village was marked by expressions of sincere admiration and personal affection on the part of the inhabitants. He was most warmly entertained by many American men of letters, especially by Washington Irving, and he and his wife made a host of good and kind friends, many of whom afterwards came to visit them in England.

As time goes on and incidents of Dickens' visit are recalled, we are learning that his account of the country in his "American Notes" and "Martin Chuzzlewit" were on the whole moderate, as they seem to reflect many of his personal experiences. In the correspondence of J. L. Motley we read that one day Dickens was absolutely obliged to force himself through a crowd in Boston, and one woman stopped before him and said, "Mr. Dickens, will you be kind enough to walk entirely round the room so that we can all have a look at you?"

Chapman's invitation to him was also very funny. He said:

"Mr. Dickens, will you dine with me?"  
"I am very sorry, I am engaged."  
"Will you sup with me?"  
"I am engaged."  
"Will you lunch with me?"  
"I am engaged."  
"Will you breakfast with me?"  
"I am engaged."  
"Well, well you sleep with me?"  
"Thank you, with the greatest pleasure. Nothing could gratify me more than an invitation to sleep."

Of Dickens we might take a glimpse while in Boston. One of the first to greet him was James T. Fields, who thus describes him: "How well I recall when I first saw the young man who was even then famous over half the globe! He came bounding into the Tremont House fresh from the steamer that had brought him to our shores and his cheery voice rang through the hall as he gave a quick glance at the new scenes." Fields also described him as like an Emperor of Cheerfulness on a cruise of pleasure, determined to conquer a realm or two of fun every hour of his overflowing existence. Longfellow at that time describes him as a gay, free and easy character, with a fine bright face, blue eyes and long hair. As a Cincinnati lady wrote of him: "He is young and handsome, has a mellow, beautiful eye, fine brow and abundant hair. His manner is easy, but not elegant; his dress foppish, in fact he was over-dressed, yet his garments were worn so easily they appeared to be a necessary part of him." Of Mrs. Dickens, Chief Justice Lewis of Philadelphia writes: "She was good-looking and courteous in her manner." Dickens wrote: "She really has, since we got over the first trial of being among circumstances so new and so fatiguing, made a most admirable traveler in every respect."

They left Boston on Saturday, February 5, for Worcester, where they had arranged to remain as guests of the governor of the state until the following Monday, but we shall not follow them through this part of the journey, but will join them on the Canadian side of the Falls.

In his note Dickens writes that he wished to abstain from instituting any comparison or drawing any parallel whatever between the social features of the United States and Canada. For this reason he confined himself to a very brief account of his visit to Canada. He wrote: "Canada has held and always will retain a foremost place in my remembrance."

Dickens was much impressed with his visit to the Canadian Falls, and wrote: "Niagara is stamped upon my heart, an image of beauty, to remain there until its pulses cease to beat forever. And I think in every quiet season now, still do these waters roll and leap and roar and tumble all day long, always does the mighty stream appear to die as it comes down, and always from its unfathomable grave arises that tremendous ghost of spray and mist which is never laid, which has haunted this place since darkness brooded on the deep and that first flood before the deluge. Light comes rushing on Creation at the Word of God."

Of Toronto Dickens described: "The town itself is full of life and motion, bustle, business and improvements. The streets were well

lighted with gas and well paved, the houses large and good and the shops excellent, and there were some of which would do no discredit to London itself." He was also much impressed with Upper Canada College. (The corner stone of the new college building had been laid only a few days before his arrival.)

On his leaving Toronto, he went to Kingston by boat, calling at Fort Hope and Cobourg; the latter he called "a cheerful little town."

In Kingston he was much impressed with the jail, which he thought was well and wisely governed, but a bad fire had visited the seat of government before his visit there and Dickens writes: "Indeed it may be said of Kingston that one-half of it appears to be burned down and the other half not to be built up."

Over two weeks was spent by Dickens and his wife in Montreal and Quebec. This part of his Canadian trip he seemed to enjoy very much, making many friends, especially among the officers at the barracks, and enjoying a number of drives, etc. He writes: "The rides were made more doubly interesting by the bursting out of spring, which is here so rapid that it is but a few days' leap from barren winter to the blooming youth of summer. The streets he described as being generally narrow and irregular, the city displaying a great variety of good shops and having many excellent dwellings."

It is interesting to note that it was while a guest of the city of Montreal that he won his first greatest laurels as an actor at the old Queen's Theatre. The performance was for charity and was a private one got up by the officers of the Coldstream Guards, who were at that time stationed there. It took place on the Queen's Birthday, and the plays presented were, "A Roland for an Oliver," "Post Two o'Clock in the Morning," and a Farce entitled "Deaf as a Post."

The novelist assumed a prominent character in each play, in addition to being stage manager. Mrs. Dickens was also in the cast, it being her first appearance on the stage. Though Dickens had not acted for years, he astonished both himself and his Montreal audience. He writes: "I really do believe that I was very funny at least, I know I laughed heartily at myself. But only think of Kate playing—and playing devilish well, I assure you."

During his stay in Montreal Dickens made a short trip with his wife to the good old city of Quebec and was much charmed (as we all are to this day) by its interest and beauty. He wrote: "The impression made upon the visit, or by this Gibraltar of America, its giddy heights, its citadel suspended as it were in the air, its picturesque, steep streets and its splendid views which burst upon the eye at every turn, is at once unique and lasting. The dangerous precipice, along whose rocky front Wolfe and his brave companions climbed to glory; the Plains of Abraham, where Wolfe received his mortal wound, are not the least among the associations clustering about it which would make a desert rich in interest."

Dickens left Montreal for New York on May 30. His last greeting in Canada was from the officers at the barracks, and with "Rule Britannia" sounding in his ears he sailed away.

Of Canada after his visit he wrote: "Few Englishmen are prepared to find it what it is—advancing quietly, old differences settling down and being fast forgotten, public feeling and private enterprise alike in a sound and wholesome state, nothing of flush or fever in its system, but health and vigor throbbing in its steady pulse. It is full of hope and promise. To me, who had been accustomed to think of it as something left behind in the strides of advancing society, as something neglected and forgotten, slumbering and wasting in its sleep, the demand for labor and the rates of wages, the busy quays, the vessels taking in their cargoes and discharging them, the amount of shipping in the different ports, the commerce, roads and public works—all made to last—the respectability and character of the public journals and the amount of rational comfort and happiness which honest industry may earn, were very great surprises."

The passage home was started on Tuesday morning, June 7, 1842, on board the steamship Washington, and on Monday morning, June 27, sighted old Cape Clear. Dickens writes: "I shall not easily forget that day, how merry we all were, and how heartily we drank the captain's health. We turned in pretty late that night and turned out pretty early next morning, and by 9 o'clock we had shaken hands all round and said good-bye."

Of the journey home that bright summer day in June he wrote: "The country by the railroad seemed, as we rattled through it, like a luxuriant garden. The beauty of the fields, the trees, the pretty cottages, the beds of flowers, the delights of that one journey crowding into the short compass of a summer's day the joy of many years with the winding up with home and all that makes it dear—no tongue can tell or pen of mine describe."

### EXILED YOUNG KING'S DIARY

A tin box containing twenty small volumes of King Emanuel's diary was forwarded to him recently at Wood Norton. It appears that the King has kept a diary since his early infancy. Each volume is bound in morocco leather and has a silver lock and key.

### METEORITE FALLS AT HULL

The fall of a meteorite took place at Hull; a stable being demolished and the roofs of five other buildings shattered. Eight horses in the stable were very much frightened, but escaped uninjured.

## Woman Who Did Not Care

By H. Sheridan-Bickers

("Yorick")

It was all rather melodramatic. Had it been a play it would have thrilled a backwoods audience. But this was a real tragedy, so things did not end happily ever after. In life, troubles have a habit of not finishing so satisfactorily as the popular playwright would have us believe.

There was no hero in this case. There might have been; but the only man concerned, who was very young, never had a chance of showing the good qualities that were hidden by the crop of "wild oats" that will spring up from youthful soil.

Slow horses and fast women had victimized him in turn. The boy had the misfortune to have been without good female influences until he was twenty-two. Then it came too late. His mother—a beautiful woman alike in face and disposition—had died soon after his birth, and he had no sisters. He was brought up with more money than morals. His father loved him as he loved himself—which was not wisely, but too well. So it was no wonder that he was spoiled. At twenty-one he came into a large fortune, which he proceeded—as we are wont to do in youth—to throw away with both hands on all manner of worthless things. But the boy was not really bad, and a nice girl might easily have saved him. There were, however, no offers at that time.

Soon after he came of age he met the Anatomical Actress. She was a fascinating musical comedy star with a decidedly twinkling reputation, who acted far better off the stage than on. She found it paid better to disguise rather than to portray emotions. What she hid of her feelings, however, she revealed of her "form."

She might well have been called The Woman Who Did Not Care, but the boy thought the world of her. Imitating the fool in the story, he wasted his substance on her with

"Honor and Faith and a Sure Intent,  
And it wasn't the least what the Lady meant;  
But a Fool must follow his natural bent—  
Even as you and I."

At last the Inevitable Day came, when the Boy

had run through his Fortune, and the Lime-light Lady had told him, with a characteristic curtness and lack of refinement, that she did not think so much of him after all. This came as a great shock to the Boy, for he had imagined that she loved him. All of which shows that he was very foolish.

He attempted to expiate his cardinal sin of Ignorance by plunging into further Follies.

About this time he was introduced to a Girl as good as she was beautiful—which was saying a lot. He tried hard to behave sensibly, and for a time was moderately successful. Then some one who was jealous of him, and had heard of his wild doings, told her. On Christmas Day the Boy proposed marriage to the Girl, and she refused him—fearing the Past would become the Future. The Boy left her house hurriedly with a white, drawn face.

The sight of his grief caused the Girl to hurry after to call him back, for she loved him. But the Boy had gone.

She sat down and wrote him a gentle letter, asking him to give her a chance of reconsidering her decision, as she had suddenly discovered she was fond enough of him to try, and "reform" him. She did not say all this in her note, but she meant to convey it.

The Boy would have understood—had he got it. Just as she was going to post this letter herself, the Boy came back. He had rushed up unannounced, much to the surprise of the lymphatic lady.

The Girl saw what he held in his hand, and the look on his white face frightened her. "For God's sake, stop!" she cried in terror. The Boy did not seem to hear her.

"I have lived too long in the company of bad women," he said. "I will die at the feet of a good one."

There was a flash, a report, and in a shower of smoke he fell in a huddled heap at the Girl's feet.

The lymphatic lady, who hurried in horror-stricken, found her kissing her Boy as he lay dying, whilst on the floor lay the Letter of Salvation—unopened.

When they told her the Boy was dead, the Woman Who Did Not Care laughed—but there was no mirth in her laughter!

## The Deadly Pass Germ

Pass, v. t. To cause to obtain entrance or conveyance. n. A narrow or difficult place of entrance or exit.—Webster's Dictionary.

Pass, v. t. To beat the gate. n. A skull, a comp, a white, snow, ducat, broad, slip, easy or a shove.—Grafier's Lexicon.

Pass, n. The root of all evil. v. t. To pauperize playgoers.—Managers' Litany.

Henry B. Harris, in speaking of the pass evil, says:

"If you are a confirmed pass grabber, a pass is more to be preferred than gold—yea, than much fine gold. It is a paper for which wine is to be offered, the fatted bird is to be killed, and long rides in automobiles are to be exchanged, if there is no purely conversational way of getting. If you are a manager, a pass is the means by which a person, who at times barter two dollars in hard money for a chance on amusement, is converted into a person who would suffer his right eye to be pried out rather than cross the box-office palm with silver. If you are one of those entitled to the regular or occasional receipt of passes, read this. It may do you good. If you are a person not entitled to said prerequisites, read it anyhow. It is warranted to have no effect upon you."

"Every night \$1,000 worth of seats are given away by the seventy-one theatres of New York. Most of them go to persons who have no right to them. In the course of a season \$200,000 worth of free seats are handed out by managers, most of whom retreat into their private offices and bite themselves savagely in the neck after each such act of generosity. That is why all theatre managers wear high collars. They are at once a defence and a concealment. No person who gets a free ticket ever willingly thereafter buys a ticket, though he has so much money that the under footman starts the hot water plant with dollar bills. All recipients of passes automatically become liars. They tell their friends the passes came from the pretty girl, third from the right end—the one with the dimple."

It was "the profession" that started pass grafting, anyhow. Passes were first given out to actors that they might see their brethren and sisters in impassioned action, and thereby learn what to avoid when it came their turn to mount the boards. Later, someone discovered that passes could be made to provide food, raiment, and irrigation. The owner of the pass was always the oracle of the assembly, and even the manicure girl would lift her soulful eyes from his horned fingers if he told the nature of his possession. By and by he lived to gaffer passes. A drab daily existence was tolerated only because of the pleasure of pursuit the night offered.

Every time that the box-office man ducks to look out of that stuffy little window of his and sees a young lady in imitation cat fur and hand-painted eyes approaching, he heaves a sigh. He knows what she will say. She may have rehearsed with "The Belles of Kokomo"

for three days, and then given it up, because Art is a cluck to a girl that has been raised tender. But she feels that she is entitled to free tickets all the days of her life. If the show has been playing to "rotten" business, or the treasurer feels good natured, he may respond in the affirmative to her query if he recognizes the perfidious.

"H-s-s-t!" she will whistle through her teeth, and jiggle her elbow. And from the pavement, where he has been awaiting the result of the overture, comes the shamefaced young man who has taken her to dinner, and in a moment of folly has accepted at face value her declaration that "I'll get the tickets." Like-ly they have been to half a dozen houses before they found the kind treasurer. The representatives of the foreign papers are persistent, too. It doesn't seem to occur to them that they can be turned down.

"I gave an old woman a pass the other night," said Mr. Harris, "because she had been at it for twenty years. I thought persistence warranted recognition. Once I was standing at the door, when a man came up to me and presented the card of one of my own actors. When I told him who I was, he took to his heels and ran."

"I tell you, the curse of the business is the 'pass system.' If the other managers would agree, I would cut it off tomorrow. I believe we are free from it here, comparatively speaking. The Hudson has the name of being a hard house to get into, but I would like to do away with it altogether. I have bought passes for my own theatre on the street, and the time will come when authors will see that they are getting the worst of it in the matter of royalties and call us to account for the passes we give away. Some managers say that the pass has its uses. I do not believe it. I think play should live or die by what it takes in the box-office. I never knew a bad play to be saved by 'papering' the house—and I have known good plays to be harmed. Managers who make use of this device are only trying to fool themselves. I've tried to fool myself that way—and I know."

### YOUNG BOXER'S DEATH

During a boxing match at Lowestoft a young man named Ernest Saunders collapsed in the third round. He was conveyed to hospital, where he died on Monday.

### ART OF PREPARING POTATOES

There are twenty ways of cooking a cabbage, and 240 methods of preparing potatoes. Mr. Senn, hon. secretary of the Food Cookery Association, told the members of the Royal Horticultural Society recently.

Expect not praise without zavy until you are dead. Honors bestowed on the illustrious dead have in them no admixture of envy; for the living pity the dead; and pity and envy, like oil and vinegar, assimilate not.—Colton.

BRITISH SHOO

By Horace

In some part, nish to remove a m possess many A to sport, especially the Old Country. tales about pheasant barn-yard hen and are not very much poultry, and natu them, accustomed dog and gun in la that birds so reare worthily be called Briton has to con this criticism, but can critic makes applicable to the gen and that this pheas of it.

It is just critic pheasant shooting ing only; and the any means look o bird that may fall the partridge giv pheasant is only t the best possible s sport in what we and garden and sy land. And before bird with so muc long tail, let us a saying that in un deal with him to splendid shot to

I have shot, and the hilly country of England where th the gun and with curves of flight th did tests of shooti among the Dorset Hambro's place, w shooting very sho seen some of the p at such heights t shooting them, an fall rockets, with ward in the head a ment in the art o gun.

Of course, bac edge that these bi ing over the guns e ed into first flight of beaters of who than they had of mistake to think th to be shot, gives a in a flat country it difficult to induce l make his shooting there may always whole business is no question of any in shot of the bird suade him to give enough to call for

We came to q ditions as soon as our partridges, o Much of the glo made up of the scenery and the type of sportsman ple. But lovely, and mountains, it and English and home of the grou ps splendor it is sample that land There are the gr heather-clad hills.

The Real The question ant of the home get sport difficult to get within sho The methods moor and shoot before you, taking for you, and hav to them. For my ond or third pla than the first, b own hands entire the tameness of great deal on loca take a keen deli pointers and sett quartering their a square yard of standing like sta found, one dog be performance a be mental and phys no use trying to ner if they are away as soon as over the edge of a good deal on p

In the islands shot grouse over lying so close tha to rise and a son to rush in and heather. Then I shire, on the m grouse so wild t this way you wo