

ruffling his hair, and I think most of us can remember with a flush of joy those extremely rare cases in our own childhood when some grown-up visitor treated us with real, instead of with mock, respect. It is, perhaps, the final test of a gentleman—his attitude towards children.—*Professor Wm. Lyon Phelps, in the Century.*

Read "Pickwick Papers."

Every one of you ought to know the "*Pickwick Papers*," even though you should never turn another page of Dickens, which would be a vast pity. But this book, at least, you should read, for the love, and the fun, and the pathos, and the make-believe, the reality and the adventuring spirit of Dickens, are crowded into its pages, which are as cramful of everlasting youth as the sun is of shining. You can't forget it, any more than you can forget you have hands and feet; and in a way you aren't really complete unless you do know it. Something is missing out of your mind that ought to be there.—*St. Nicholas.*

The absolute plainness of Shakespeare was beautifully illustrated by an incident that happened to me. When I was the editor of a country paper in Ohio, there was wont to come to my office a very wealthy farmer whose specialty was horses. He could neither read nor write. He was a famous horseman and loved horses as other men loved first mortgages, and he knew horses through and through. One day I read to Loflin—that was his name—that description of a horse in *Venus and Adonis*:—

Round-hoofed, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,
Broad breast, full eye, small head and nostrils wide,
High chest, short ears, straight legs, and passing strong,
Thick mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide,
Look, what a horse should have he did not lack,
Save a proud rider on so proud a back.

"Sol," said I, "what do you think of that?"

"You kin buy a hoss on that description ef you didn't know one from a mule. Who writ it?"

"Shakespeare."

"Who wuz Shakespeare?"

"An English poet."

"Wall, I don't know who Shakespeare wuz, and don't go much on poetry, but ef you ever see Shakespeare, jist tell him fur Sol Loflin that he know'd hoss."—*Nasby.*

An Afternoon With Dickens.

In order that the younger children may enjoy the Dickens Centenary, there should not be too much premeditation about the programme nor too much preparation beforehand. There is a great deal in Dickens that little children will enjoy even if the selections are too difficult for them to read. In rural schools, the older children may be assigned such readings or the teacher may do it herself. In graded schools, classes may be combined and the difficulty overcome in this way.

Programme.

SONG—*School.*

READING—"The Boyhood of Dickens." (From the "Story of Dickens." Educational Publishing Company, Boston.)

The village of Chatham seemed the most beautiful place in the whole world to the little boy, and so wonderful was the town-hall, with its clock and bell, to his childish eyes, that for a long time he believed it to be a part of Aladdin's palace. He often went out walking through the woods and green fields around Chatham, or went with his father for a sail upon the Medway among the gay ships and barges. Here, too, he saw the soldiers drilling, their gay banners waving and muskets shining in the bright sunshine, as they marched through the streets or paraded upon the common.

But the time soon came when little Charles was obliged to leave the pleasant village he loved so well; and the cool, quiet woods and green fields around Chatham were exchanged for the noise and confusion, the dust, dirt, and smoke of the great city of London. It was a dark, rainy morning when the rumbling old coach stopped at the door, ready to carry the timid little nine-year-old boy to his new home in the great busy city. Very soon the green fields where the daisies and buttercups grew, and the dear old trees under whose branches he had often rested in the pleasant shade, were left far behind; and the little boy felt very sad all alone in the old coach, with the dreary rain-drops beating against the windows and the great tear-drops blinding his own eyes.

His father had become very poor indeed and their home was in the poorest part of the great city of London. Have you ever been in the poorest, shabbiest part of a large city? If you have, perhaps you can imagine what a change it must have been to this little boy who had always lived in a pleasant village, with plenty of room for play, and pleasant woods and fields nearby when he wanted to take a walk to them. Here he had no books, no school, no play-mates; and his only comfort was to creep up into this lonely garret-room and think over all the bright stories he had read and the good times he had enjoyed with his little friends in Chatham.

His sister Fannie was sent away to school, but he could not go with her, though he longed so much for an opportunity to improve himself and learn something of