

real little girl, but some people love to read about them; they both die young. But "Pip," in "Great Expectations," is a very live boy indeed, and he grows up to be a not-too-good young man—very selfish and conceited. If you want to read a true description of a thoroughly frightened child, read in the first chapters of "Great Expectations," how Pip stole the pie and the brandy for the escaped convict, and how he felt when the soldiers came in at the door after him, as he thought. For the only way to know about Dickens is to read for yourself. His books can be read over and over again.

I wish more children agreed with Thackeray's little daughter, of whom her father said: "All children ought to love Dickens. I know two who do. I know a little girl who, when she is happy, reads "Nicholas Nickleby"; when she is unhappy, reads "Nicholas Nickleby"; when she is tired, reads "Nicholas Nickleby"; when she is in bed, reads "Nicholas Nickleby"; when she has nothing to do, reads "Nicholas Nickleby"; and when she has finished the book, reads "Nicholas Nickleby" over again." "Have not you, have not I, all of us, reason to be thankful," Thackeray goes on to say, "to this kind friend, who soothed and charmed so many hours, brought pleasure and sweet laughter to so many homes, made such multitudes of children happy?"

The World of Dickens.

People may or may not like Dickens's books, and there are plenty of both classes, but no one can escape him. The countless characters he created have become part of the make-up of our minds and expression, and he is incorporated in the language. Who is there that has not heard of "Little Nell," of "Traddles," of "Scrooge" or "Squeers," of "Bill Sykes" and "Mr. Micawber," and "Uriah Heep"? Why, we know them as well as we know the people whom we meet every day; better, for that matter, since they have become types by which we measure the living world. To call a man a "Pecksniff" is to label him pretty clearly, and even inanimate things, like the "Old Curiosity Shop," have given their name and character to numberless followers. No, we can't escape from Dickens, even if we want to. The world he made has come to be a part of the world we all live in; we use the names he used, and speak the phrases in our everyday intercourse; in fact, it is hard to think of a world with all the Dickens characters left out of it. —*February St. Nicholas,*

Dickens and Jolly Living.

Life was inexpressibly sweet to him (Dickens), and he had a veritable zest for it. He loved the streets of London because they were filled with crowds of men, women and children. His zest for life is shown in the way he describes a frosty winter morning, the pleasant excitement of the departure of a coach, and the naive delight he takes in the enormous meals his characters devour. He fills the hungry with good things. . . . Some novelists never give us anything to eat and drink, others give us too much. . . . Hawthorne seldom places his characters about the dinner table, and when he does, the food lacks both variety and abundance. In Dickens, there is a vast amount of beef, mutton, vegetables, pudding, and beer. No sooner do two characters meet on the street, than they adjourn to a restaurant, where every article in the long bill of fare is portrayed with realistic relish. Dickens discusses gravy as a Frenchman discusses love or a pedant an old text. Think of the stupendous meals consumed by Homeric heroes, with their "rage of hunger," and then read the "Faerie Queene," where no meals are served except to one of the seven deadly sins! No dyspeptic should ever read Dickens, for the vicarious diet of the characters might kill him. —*Professor Wm. Lyon Phelps, in the Century.*

Dickens and Children.

Every child in England and America today should be grateful to Dickens, for the present happy condition of children is due in no small degree to his unrelenting efforts in their behalf. . . . This is the golden age for children, and I suppose they are making the most of it, and will continue to do so, while the kindergarten and nature-study take the place of discipline. . . . Our novelist must have suffered continual mortification as a child, to write about the bad manners of elders toward children, with such mordant bitterness. What he emphasized was not so much the material discomfort constantly suffered by children, as the daily insults to their dignity. They were repressed, they were beaten, they were starved; but worse than that, they were treated with a grinning condescension, more odious than deliberate insult. Dickens, with all the force of his genius, insisted on the inherent dignity of childhood. I confess I cannot read without squirming those passages in "Great Expectations," where every visitor greeted the small boy by