

Manhood is shown in the trial of Dyck Calhoun. He would not say what the cause of the grievance between him and Erris Boyne was, and this he did to save the daughter of Erris Boyne from the shame that her father was a traitor. Such things speak well for the men of that day. It is not chivalry, it is not custom, it is the spirit of fair-play, the inherent morality of the men of all ages, and they exist today as they have always existed in the history of the earth. Strip *No Defence* of its historical robes and the human elements are the same now as then, and the lesson of the book belongs to this day as to the day of George III.

We can only see life well when we get behind the clothes of time—clothes are the customs of time, they are not the living things. It is character that makes a novel, not clothes; clothes are but costume and melodrama, and the characters of *No Defence* belong not to the day in which they live but to all time. If the book may chance to please, it is the characters that do it, not the story—the story must always come from the characters. I have a hope that the basis of success of my books is character, not story, though the story is essential. What is it of Dickens that is most remembered? It is character—always character. So with lesser men it is character that counts, and if the characters of *No Defence* remain in the minds of the readers, I shall be proud and glad.