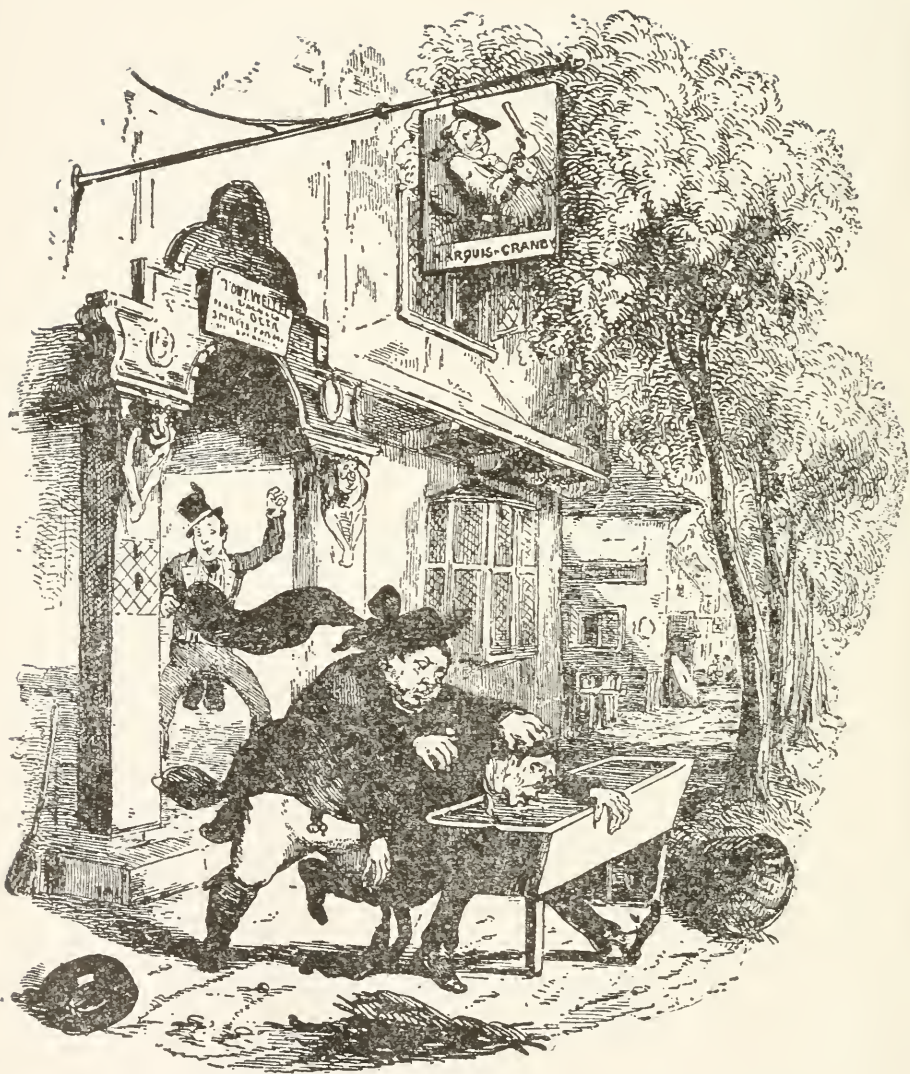




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THE PICKWICK PAPERS

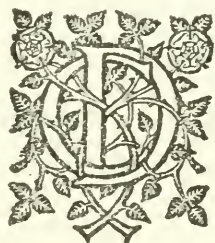


MR. WELLER IMMERSING MR. STIGGINS'S HEAD

CLEAR TYPE EDITION

THE WORKS OF
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



THE PICKWICK PAPERS

BOOKS, INC.
NEW YORK BOSTON

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DEDICATION

TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION

TO MR. SERJEANT TALFOURD, M.P.;
ETC. ETC.

MY DEAR SIR,

If I had not enjoyed the happiness of your private friendship, I should still have dedicated this work to you, as a slight and most inadequate acknowledgment of the inestimable services you are rendering to the literature of your country, and of the lasting benefits you will confer upon the authors of this and succeeding generations, by securing to them and their descendants a permanent interest in the copyright of their works.

Many a fevered head and palsied hand will gather new vigour in the hour of sickness and distress from your excellent exertions; many a widowed mother and orphan child, who would otherwise reap nothing from the fame of departed genius but its too frequent legacy of poverty and suffering, will bear, in their altered condition, higher testimony to the value of your labours than the most lavish encomiums from lip or pen could ever afford.

Beside such tributes, any avowal of feeling from me, on the question to which you have devoted the combined advantages of your eloquence, character, and genius, would be powerless indeed. Nevertheless, in thus publicly expressing my deep and grateful sense of your efforts in behalf of English literature, and of those who devote themselves to the most precarious of all pursuits, I do but imperfect justice to my own strong feelings on the subject, if I do no service to you.

These few sentences would have comprised all I should have had to say, if I had only known you in your public character. On the score of private feeling, let me add one word more.

Accept the dedication of this book, my dear Sir, as a mark of my warmest regard and esteem—as a memorial of the most gra-

tifying friendship I have ever contracted, and of some of the pleasantest hours I have ever spent—as a token of my fervent admiration of every fine quality of your head and heart—as an assurance of the truth and sincerity with which I shall ever be,

My dear Sir,

Most faithfully and sincerely yours,

CHARLES DICKENS

48 DOUGHTY STREET,
September 27, 1837.

ADDRESSES AND PREFACES

ADDRESS WHICH APPEARED IN PART X., JANUARY, 1837

TEN months have now elapsed since the appearance of the first number of the *Pickwick Papers*. At the close of the year, and the conclusion of half his task, their Author may perhaps, without any unwarrantable intrusion on the notice of the public, venture to say a few words for himself.

He has long been desirous to embrace the first opportunity of announcing that it is his intention to adhere to his original pledge of confining this work to twenty numbers. He has every temptation to exceed the limits he first assigned to himself, that brilliant success, an enormous and increasing sale, the kindest notice, and the most extensive popularity, can hold out. They are, one and all, sad temptations to an author, but he has determined to resist them; firstly, because he wishes to keep the strictest faith with his readers; and secondly, because he is most anxious that when the *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* form a complete work, the book may not have to contend against the heavy disadvantage of being prolonged beyond his original plan.

For ten months longer, then, if the Author be permitted to retain his health and spirits, the *Pickwick Papers* will be issued in their present form, and will then be completed. By what fresh adventures they may be succeeded is no matter for present consider-

ation. The Author merely hints that he has strong reason to believe that a great variety of other documents still lie hidden in the repository from which these were taken, and that they may one day see the light.

With this short speech, Mr. Pickwick's stage-manager makes his most grateful bow, adding, on behalf of himself and publishers, what the late eminent Mr. John Richardson, of Horsemonger Lane, Southwark, and the Yellow Caravan with the Brass Knocker, always said on behalf of himself and company, at the close of every performance—

'Ladies and gentlemen, for these marks of your favour, we beg to return you our sincere thanks; and allow us to inform you, that we shall keep perpetually going on beginning again, regularly, until the end of the fair.'

December, 1836.

ADDRESS WHICH APPEARED IN PART XV.,
JULY, 1837

186, Strand, June 30th, 1837.

THE AUTHOR is desirous to take the opportunity afforded him by his resumption of this work, to state once again what he thought had been stated sufficiently emphatically before, namely, that its publication was interrupted by a severe domestic affliction of no ordinary kind; that this was the sole cause of the non-appearance of the present number in the usual course; and that henceforth it will continue to be published with its accustomed regularity.

However superfluous this second notice may appear to many, it is rendered necessary by various idle speculations and absurdities which have been industriously propagated during the past month, which have reached the Author's ears from every quarter, and have pained him exceedingly. By one set of intimate acquaintances, especially well-informed, he has been killed outright, by another, driven mad; by a third, imprisoned for debt; by a fourth, sent per steamer to the United States; by a fifth, rendered incapable of any mental exertion for evermore; by all, in short, represented as doing anything but seeking in a few weeks' retirement the restoration of that cheerfulness and peace of which a sad bereavement had temporarily deprived him.

Notice to Correspondents.—We receive every month an immense number of communications purporting to be ‘suggestions’ for *Pickwick Papers*. We have no doubt that they are furnished with the kindest intentions; but as it is wholly out of our power to make use of any such hints, and as we really have no time to peruse anonymous letters, we hope the writers will henceforth spare themselves a great deal of unnecessary and useless trouble.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE Author’s object in this work, was to place before the reader a constant succession of characters and incidents; to paint them in as vivid colours as he could command; and to render them, at the same time, life-like and amusing.

Deferring to the judgment of others in the outset of the undertaking, he adopted the machinery of the club, which was suggested as the best adapted to his purpose: but finding that it tended rather to his embarrassment than otherwise, he gradually abandoned it, considering it a matter of very little importance to the work whether strictly epic justice were awarded to the club, or not.

The publication of the book in monthly numbers, containing only thirty-two pages in each, rendered it an object of paramount importance that, while the different incidents were linked together by a chain of interest strong enough to prevent their appearing unconnected or impossible, the general design should be so simple as to sustain no injury from this detached and desultory form of publication, extending over no fewer than twenty months. In short, it was necessary—or it appeared so to the Author—that every number should be, to a certain extent, complete in itself, and yet that the whole twenty numbers, when collected, should form one tolerably harmonious whole, each leading to the other by a gentle and not unnatural progress of adventure.

It is obvious that in a work published with a view to such considerations, no artfully interwoven or ingeniously complicated plot can with reason be expected. The Author ventures to express a hope that he has successfully surmounted the difficulties of his undertaking. And if it be objected to the *Pickwick Papers*, that they are a mere series of adventures in which the scenes are ever changing, and the characters come and go like the men and women we encounter in the real world, he can only content himself with

the reflection, that they claim to be nothing else, and that the same objection has been made to the works of some of the greatest novelists in the English language.

The following pages have been written from time to time, almost as the periodical occasion arose. Having been written for the most part in the society of a very dear young friend who is now no more, they are connected in the Author's mind at once with the happiest period of his life, and with its saddest and most severe affliction.

It is due to the gentleman, whose designs accompany the letter-press, to state that the interval has been so short between the production of each number in manuscript and its appearance in print, that the greater portion of the illustrations have been executed by the artist from the Author's mere verbal description of what he intended to write.

The almost unexampled kindness and favour with which these papers have been received by the public will be a never-failing source of gratifying and pleasant recollection while their Author lives. He trusts that, throughout this book, no incident or expression occurs which could call a blush into the most delicate cheek, or wound the feelings of the most sensitive person. If any of his imperfect descriptions, while they afford amusement in the perusal, should induce only one reader to think better of his fellowmen, and to look upon the brighter and more kindly side of human nature, he would indeed be proud and happy to have led to such a result.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST CHEAP EDITION

AN Author who has much to communicate under this head, and expects to have it attended to, may be compared to a man who takes his friend by the button at a Theatre Door, and seeks to entertain him with a personal gossip before he goes in to the play.

Nevertheless, as Prefaces, though seldom read, are continually written, no doubt for the behoof of that so richly and so disinterestedly endowed personage, Posterity (who will come into an immense fortune), I add my legacy to the general remembrance; the rather as ten years have elapsed since the *Pickwick Papers* appeared in a completed form, and nearly twelve since the first monthly part was published.

It was observed, in the Preface to the original Edition, that they

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