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THE

PERSONAL HISTORY

OF

DAVID COPPERFIELD.

BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON & CO., 90, 92 & 94 GRAND STREET.
1869.
I remarked in the original Preface to this Book, that I did not find it easy to get sufficiently far away from it, in the first sensations of having finished it, to refer to it with the composure which this formal heading would seem to require. My interest in it was so recent and strong, and my mind was so divided between pleasure and regret—pleasure in the achievement of a long design, regret in the separation from many companions—that I was in danger of wearying the reader with personal confidences and private emotions.

Besides which, all that I could have said of the Story to any purpose, I had endeavored to say in it.

It would concern the reader little, perhaps, to know how sorrowfully the pen is laid down at the close of a two-years’ imaginative task; or how an Author feels as if he were dismissing some portion of himself into the shadowy world, when a crowd of the creatures of his brain are going from him for ever. Yet, I had nothing else to tell; unless, indeed, I were to confess (which might be of less moment still), that no one can ever believe this Narrative, in the reading, more than I believed it in the writing.

So true are these avowals at the present day, that I can now only take the reader into one confidence more. Of all my books, I like this the best. It will be easily believed that I am a fond parent to every child of my fancy, and that no one can ever love that family as dearly as I love them. But, like many fond parents, I have in my heart of hearts a favorite child. And his name is David Copperfield.
CHAPTER I.

I AM BORN.

Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show. To begin my life with the beginning of my life, I record that I was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night. It was remarked that the clock began to strike, and I began to cry, simultaneously.

In consideration of the day and hour of my birth, it was declared by the nurse, and by some sage women in the neighborhood who had taken a lively interest in me several months before there was any possibility of our becoming personally acquainted, first, that I was destined to be unlucky in life; and secondly, that I was privileged to see ghosts and spirits; both these gifts inevitably attaching, as they believed, to all unlucky infants of either gender, born towards the small hours on a Friday night.

I need say nothing here on the first head, because nothing can show better than my history whether that prediction was verified or falsified by the result. On the second branch of the question, I will only remark, that unless I ran through that part of my inheritance while I was still a baby, I have not come into it yet. But I do not at all complain of having been kept out of this property; and if anybody else should be in the present enjoyment of it, he is heartily welcome to keep it.

I was born with a caul, which was advertised for sale, in the newspapers, at the low price of fifteen guineas. Whether sea-going people were short of money at that time, or were short of faith and preferred cork jackets, I don’t know; all I know is, that there was but one solitary bidding, and that was from an attorney connected with the hill-breaking business, who offered two pounds in cash, and the balance in sherry, but declined to be guaranteed from drowning on any higher bargain. Consequently the advertisement was withdrawn at a dead loss—for as to sherry, my poor dear mother’s own sherry was in the market then—and ten years afterwards the caul was put up in a raffle down in our part of the country, to fifty members at half-a-crown a head, the winner to spend five shillings. I was present myself, and I remember to have felt quite uncomfortable and confused, at a part of myself being disposed of in that way. The caul was won, I recollect, by an old lady with a hand-basket, who, very reluctantly, produced from it the stipulated five shillings, all in halfpence, and twopence halfpenny short—as it took an immense time and a great waste of arithmetic, to endeavor without any effect to prove to her. It is a fact which will be long remembered as remarkable down there, that she was never drowned, but died triumphantly in bed, at ninety-two. I have understood that it was, to the last, her proudest boast, that she never had been on the water in her life, except upon a bridge; and that over her tea (to which she was extremely partial) she, to the last, expressed her indignation at the impertinence of martners and others, who had the presumption to go “meandering” about the world. It was in vain to represent to her that some conveniences, tea perhaps included, resulted from this objectionable practice. She always returned, with greater emphasis and with an instinctive knowledge of the strength of her objection, “Let us have no meandering.”

Not to meander myself, at present, I will go back to my birth.

I was born at Blunderstone, in Suffolk, or “thereby,” as they say in Scotland. I was a posthumous child. My father’s eyes had closed upon the light of this world six months, when mine opened on it. There is something strange to me, even now, in the reflection that he never saw me; and something stranger yet in the shadowy remembrance that I have of my first childish associations with his white grave-stone in the churchyard, and of the indefinable compassion I used to feel for it lying out alone there in the dark night, when our little parlor was warm and bright with fire and candle, and the doors of our house were—almost cruelly, it seemed to me—bolted and locked against it.
An aunt of my father's and consequently a great-aunt of mine, of whom I shall have more to relate by and by, was the principal magistrate of our family. Miss Trotwood, or Miss Betsey, as my poor mother always called her, when she suffi-
ciently overcame her dread of this formidable personage to mention her at all (which was seldom), had been married to a husband younger than herself, who was very handsome, except in the sense of the homely adage, "Handsome is, that handsome does"—for he was strongly sus-
pected of having beaten Miss Betsey, and even of having once, on a disputed question of supplies, made some hasty but determined arrangements to throw her out of a two-stairs' window. These evidences of an incompatibility of temper induced Miss Betsey to pay him off, and effect a separation by mutual consent. He went to India with his capital, and there, according to a wild legend in our family, he was once seen riding on an elephant, in company with a Baboon; but I think it must have been a Baboo—or a Begum. Anyhow, from India tidings of his death reached home, within ten years. How they affected my aunt, nobody knew; for immediately upon the separation she took her maiden name again, bought a cottage in a hamlet on the sea-coast a long way off, established herself there as a single woman with one servant, and was understood to live secluded, ever afterwards, in an inflexible retirement.

My father had once been a favorite of hers, I believe; but she was mortally affronted by his marriage, on the ground that my mother was "a wax doll." She had never seen my mother, but she knew her to be not yet twenty. My father and Miss Betsey never met again. He was double my mother's age when he married, and of a delicate constitution. He died a year afterwards, and, as I have said, six months before I came into the world.

This was the state of matters on the afternoon of, what I may be excused for calling, that eventful and important Friday. I can make no claim, therefore, to have known, at that time, how matters stood; or to have any remembrance, founded on the evidence of my own senses, of what follows.

My mother was sitting by the fire, but poorly in health, and very low in spirits, looking at it through her tears, and desponding heavily about herself and the fatherless little stranger, who was already welcomed by some grosses of prophetical pins in a drawer up-stairs, to a world not at all excited on the subject of his arrival; my mother, I say, was sitting by the fire, that bright, wintry March afternoon, very timid and sad, and very doubtful of ever coming alive out of the trial that was before her, when, lifting her eyes as she dried them, to the window opposite, she saw a strange lady coming up the garden.

"My mother had a sure foreboding at the second "at it was Miss Betsey. The setting sun "on the strange lady, over the garden-

fence, and she came walking up to the" fell rigidity of figure and composure "nance that could have belonged to no "When she reached the house, she got "proof of her identity. My father had "that she seldom conducted herself in "mary Christian; and now, instead of "bells, she came and looked in at the ido-}
touch her hair, and that with no ungenteel hand; but, looking at her, in her timid hope, she found that lady sitting with the skirt of her dress tucked up, her hands folded on one knee, and her feet upon the fender, frowning at the fire.

"In the name of Heaven," said Miss Betsey, suddenly, "why Rockery?"

"Do you mean the house, ma'am?" asked my mother.

"Why Rockery?" said Miss Betsey. "Cooksey would have been more to the purpose, if you had had any practical ideas of life, either of you."

"The name was Mr. Copperfield's choice," returned my mother. "When he bought the house, he liked to think that there were rooks about it."

The evening wind made such a disturbance just now, among some tall old elm-trees at the bottom of the garden, that neither my mother nor Miss Betsey could forbear glancing that way. As the close bent to one another, like giants who were whispering secrets, and after a few seconds of such repose, fell into a violent flurry, tossing their wild arms about, as if their late confidences were really too wicked for their peace of mind, some weather-beaten ragged old rooks' nests bulging their higher branches, swung like wrecks upon a stormy sea.

"Where are the birds?" asked Miss Betsey.

"The—?" My mother had been thinking of something else.

"The rooks—what has become of them?" asked Miss Betsey.

"There have not been any since we have lived here," said my mother. "We thought—Mr. Copperfield thought—it was quite a large rookery; but the nests were very old ones, and the birds have deserted them long since."

"David Copperfield all over!" cried Miss Betsey. "David Copperfield from head to foot! Calls a house a rookery when there's not a rook in it, and takes the birds on trust, because he saw the nests!"

"Mr. Copperfield," returned my mother, "is dead, and if you dare to speak unhiliciously to me—"

My poor dear mother, I suppose, had some unnecessary intention of committing an assault and battery upon my aunt, who could easily have settled her with one hand, even if my mother had been in far better training for such an encounter than she was at that evening. But it passed with the action of rising from her chair; and she sat down again very wearily, and faintly.

When she came to herself, or when Miss Betsey had restored her, whichever it was, she found the latter standing at the window. The twilight was by this time shading down into darkness; and dimly as they saw each other, they could not have done that without the aid of the fire.

"Well!" said Miss Betsey, coming back to her chair, as if she had only been taking a casual look at the prospect; "and when do you expect—?"

"I am all in a tremble," faltered my mother. "I don't know what's the matter. I shall die, I am sure!"

"No, no, no," said Miss Betsey. "Have some tea."

"Oh dear me, dear me, do you think it will do me any good?" cried my mother in a helpless manner.

"Of course it will," said Miss Betsey. "It's nothing but fancy. What do you call your girl?"

"I don't know that it will be a girl, yet, ma'am," said my mother innocently.

"Bless the Baby!" exclaimed Miss Betsey, unconsciously quoting the second sentiment of the incantation in the drawer up-stairs, but applying it to my mother instead of me, "I don't mean that. I mean your servant."

"Peggotty," said my mother.

"Peggotty!" repeated Miss Betsey, with some indignation. "Do you mean to say, child, that any human being has gone into a Christian church, and got herself named Peggotty?"

"It's her surname," said my mother, faintly. "Mr. Copperfield called her by it, because her Christian name was the same as mine."

"Here, Peggotty!" cried Miss Betsey, opening the parlor-door. "Tea, your mistress is a little unwell. Don't dawdle."

Having issued this mandate with as much potentiality as if she had been a recognised authority in the house ever since it had been a house, and having looked out to confront the amazed Peggotty coming along the passage with a candle at the sound of a strange voice, Miss Betsey shut the door again, and sat down as before; with her feet on the fender, the skirt of her dress tucked up, and her hands folded on one knee.

"You were speaking about its being a girl," said Miss Betsey. "I have no doubt it will be a girl. I have a presentiment that it must be a girl. Now child, from the moment of the birth of this girl—"

"Perhaps boy," my mother took the liberty of putting in.

"I tell you I have a presentiment that it must be a girl," returned Miss Betsey. "Don't contradict. From the moment of this girl's birth, child, I intend to be her friend. I intend to be her godmother, and I beg you'll call her Betsey Trotwood Copperfield. There must be no mistakes in life with this Betsey Trotwood. There must be no trifling with her affections, poor dear. She must be well brought up, and well guarded from reposing any foolish confidences where they are not deserved. I must make that my care."

There was a twitch of Miss Betsey's head, after each of these sentences, as if her own old wrongs were working within her, and she repressed any plain reference to them by strong constraint. So my mother suspected, at least, as she observed her by the low glimmer of the fire; too much scared by Miss Betsey, too uneasy in herself, and too subdued and bewildered affo-
together, to observe anything very clearly, or to know what to say. "And was David good to you, child?" asked Miss Betsey, when she had been silent for a little while, and these motions of her head had gradually ceased. "Were you comfortable together?"

"We were very happy," said my mother.

"Mr. Copperfield was only too good to me."

"What, he spoilt you, I suppose?" returned Miss Betsey.

"For being quite alone and dependent on myself in this rough world again, yes, I fear he did indeed," sobbed my mother.

"Well! Don't cry!" said Miss Betsey. "You were not equally matched, child—if any two people can be equally matched—and so I asked the question. You were an orphan, weren't you?"

"Yes."

"And a governess?"

"I was a nursery governess in a family where Mr. Copperfield came to visit. Mr. Copperfield was very kind to me, and took a great deal of notice of me, and paid me a good deal of attention, and at last proposed to me. And I accepted him. And so we were married," said my mother simply.

"Ha! Poor Baby!" mused Miss Betsey, with her brow still bent upon the fire. "Do you know anything?"

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," faltered my mother.

"About keeping house, for instance," said Miss Betsey.

"Not much, I fear," returned my mother.

"Not as much as I could wish. But Mr. Copperfield was teaching me—"

("Much he knew about it himself!"") said Miss Betsey in a parenthesis.

"And I hope I should have improved, being very anxious to learn, and he very patient to teach, if the great misfortune of his death—my mother broke down again here, and could get no farther.

"Well, well!" said Miss Betsey.

"—I kept my housekeeping-book regularly, and balanced it with Mr. Copperfield every night," cried my mother in another burst of distress, and breaking down again.

"Well, well!" said Miss Betsey. "Don't cry any more."

"—And I am sure we never had a word of difference respecting it, except when Mr. Copperfield objected to my threes and fives being too much like each other, or to my putting early tails to my sevens and nines," resumed my mother in another burst, and breaking down again.

"You'll make yourself ill," said Miss Betsey, "and you know that will not be good either for you or for my goddaughter. Come! You mustn't do it!"

This argument had some share in quieting my mother, though her increasing indisposition had perhaps a larger one. There was an interval of silence, only broken by Miss Betsey's occasionally ejaculating "Ha!" as she sat with her feet upon the fender.

"David had bought an annuity for himself with his money. I know," said she, by and by.

"What did he do for you?"

"Mr. Copperfield," said my mother, answering with some difficulty, "was so considerate and good as to secure the reversion of a part of it to me."

"How much?" asked Miss Betsey.

"A hundred and five pounds a year," said my mother.

"He might have done worse," said my aunt.

The word was appropriate to the moment. My mother was so much worse that Peggotty, coming in with the teaboard and candles, and seeing at a glance how ill she was,—as Miss Betsey might have done sooner if there had been light enough,—conveyed her up-stairs to her own room with all speed; and immediately despatched Ham Peggotty, her nephew, who had been for some days past secreted in the house, unknown to my mother, as a special messenger in case of emergency, to fetch the nurse and doctor.

Those allied powers were considerably astonished, when they arrived within a few minutes of each other, to find an unknown lady of portentous appearance sitting before the fire, with her bonnet tied over her left arm, stopping her ears with jewellers' cotton. Peggotty knowing nothing about her, and my mother saying nothing about her, she was quite a mystery in the parlour; and the fact of her having a magazine of jewellers' cotton in her pocket, and sticking the article in her ears in that way, did not detract from the solemnity of her presence.

The doctor having been up-stairs and come down again, and having satisfied himself, I suppose, that there was a probability of this unknown lady and himself having to sit there, face to face, for some hours, laid himself out to be polite and social. He was the meekest of his sex, the mildest of little men. He sidled in and out of a room, to take up the less space. He walked as softly as the Ghost in Hamlet, and more slowly. He carried his head on one side, partly in modest depreciation of himself, partly in modest propagation of everybody else. It is nothing to say that he hadn't a word to throw at a dog. He couldn't have thrown a word at a mad dog. He might have offered him one gently, or half a one, or a fragment of one; for he spoke as slowly as he walked; but he wouldn't have been rude to him, and he couldn't have been quick with him, for any earthly consideration.

Mr. Chuzzlewit, looking meekly at my aunt, with his head on one side, and making her a little bow, said, in allusion to the jewellers' cotton, as he softly touched his left ear:

"Some local irritation, ma'am?"

"What!" replied my aunt, pulling the cotton out of one ear like a cork.

Mr. Chuzzlewit was so alarmed by her abruptness—as he told my mother afterwards—that it was a
mercy he didn’t lose his presence of mind. But
he repeated sweetly:

“Some local irritation, ma’am!”

“Nonsense!” replied my aunt, and corked
herself again, at one blow.

Mr. Chillip could do nothing after this, but sit
and look at her feebly, as she sat and looked at
the fire, until he was called up-stairs again. After
some quarter of an hour’s absence, he returned.

“Well?” said my aunt, taking the cotton out
of the ear nearest to him.

“Well, ma’am,” returned Mr. Chillip, “we
are—we are progressing slowly, ma’am.”

“Ha—a—ah!” said my aunt, with a perfect
smile on the contemptuous interjection. And
corked herself as before.

Really—really—as Mr. Chillip told my mother,
he was almost shocked; speaking in a profession-
as matter of view alone he was almost shocked.
But he sat and looked at her, notwithstanding,
for nearly two hours, as she sat looking at the fire,
until he was again called out. After another ab-
sence, he again returned.

“Well?” said my aunt, taking out the cotton
on that side again.

“Well, ma’am,” returned Mr. Chillip, “we
are—we are progressing slowly, ma’am.”

“Ya—a—ah!” said my aunt. With such a
frown at him, that Mr. Chillip absolutely could not
bear it. It was really calculated to break his
spirit, and did afterwards. He preferred to go
and sit upon the stairs, in the dark and a strong
draft, until he was again sent for.

Ham Peggotty, who went to the national
school, and was a very dragoon at his catechism,
and who may therefore be regarded as a credible
witness, reported next day, that happening to
people at the parlor-door an hour after this, he
was instantly described by Miss Betsey, then walk-
ing to and fro in a state of agitation, and pounced
upon before he could make his escape. That
there were now occasional sounds of feet and
voices overhead which he inferred the cotton did
not exclude, from the circumstance of his evi-
dently being clutched by the lady as the victim on
whom to expend her superabundant agitation
when the sounds were loudest. That, marching
him constantly up and down by the collar (as if
he had been taking too much laudanum), she, at
those times, shook him, rumpled his hair, made
light of his linen, stopped his ears as if she con-
cluded them with her own, and otherwise tortured
and maltreated him. This was in part confirmed
by his aunt, who saw him at half-past twelve
o’clock, soon after his release, and affirmed that
he was then as red as I was.

The mild Mr. Chillip could not possibly bear
such a time, if at any time. He sidled into
the parlor as soon as he was at liberty, and
said to my aunt in his meekest manner:

“Well, ma’am, I am happy to congratulate
you.”

“What upon?” said my aunt, sharply.

Mr. Chillip was flustered again, by the extreme
severity of my aunt’s manner; so he made her a
little bow, and gave her a little smile, to mollify
her.

“Mercy on the man, what’s he doing!” cried
my aunt, impatiently. “Can’t he speak?”

“Be calm, my dear ma’am,” said Mr. Chillip,
in his softest accents. “There is no longer any
occasion for uneasiness, ma’am. Be calm.”

It has since been considered almost a miracle
that my aunt didn’t shake him, and shake what
he had to say out of him. She only shook her
own head at him, but in a way that made him
quail.

“Well, ma’am,” resumed Mr. Chillip, as soon
as he had courage, “I am happy to congratulate
you. All is now over, ma’am, and well over.”

During the five minutes or so that Mr. Chillip
devoted to the delivery of this oration, my aunt
eyed him narrowly.

“How is she?” said my aunt, folding her
arms with her bonnet still tied on one of them.

“Well, ma’am, she will soon be quite comfort-
able, I hope,” returned Mr. Chillip. “Quite as
comfortable as we can expect a young mother to
be, under these melancholy domestic circum-
stances. There cannot be any objection to your
seeing her presently, ma’am. It may do her
good.”

“And she. How is she?” said my aunt
sharply.

Mr. Chillip laid his head a little more on one
side, and looked at my aunt like an amiable
bird.

“The baby,” said my aunt. “How is she?”

“Ma’am,” returned Mr. Chillip, “I appreh-
ended you had known. It’s a boy.”

My aunt said never a word, but took her boun-
et by the strings, in the manner of a signal, and
aimed a blow at Mr. Chillip’s head with it, put it on
her hand, walked out, and never came back. She
vanished like a discontented fairy; or like one of
those supernatural beings whom it was popularly
supposed I was entitled to see; and never came back
any more.

No. I lay in my basket, and my mother lay in
her bed; but Betsey Trotwood Copperfield was
for ever in the land of dreams and shadows, the
tremendous region whence I had so lately trav-
elled; and the light upon the window of our room
shone out upon the earthy bourne of all such
travellers, and the mound above the ashes and
the dust that once was he, without whom I had
never been.

CHAPTER II.

I observe.

The first objects that assume a distinct presen-
tence before me, as I look far back, into the blank
of my infancy, are my mother with her pretty
hair and youthful shape, and Peggotty, with no
shape at all, and eyes so dark that they seemed
to darken their whole neighborhood, in her face,
and cheeks and arms so hard and red that I was...
dered the birds didn't peck her in preference to apples.

I believe I can remember these two at a little distance apart, dwarfed to my sight by stooping down or kneeling on the floor, and I going unsteadily from the one to the other. I have an impression on my mind which I cannot distinguish from actual remembrance, of the touch of Peggotty's fore-finger as she used to hold it out to me, and of its being roughened by needlework, like a pocket nutmeg-grater.

This may be fancy, though I think the memory of most of us can go farther back into such times than many of us suppose; just as I believe the power of observation in numbers of very young children to be quite wonderful for its closeness and accuracy. Indeed, I think that most grown men who are remarkable in this respect, may with greater propriety be said not to have lost the faculty, than to have acquired it; the rather, as I generally observe such men to retain a certain freshness, and gentleness, and capacity of being pleased, which are also an inheritance they have preserved from their childhood.

I might have a misgiving that I am "meander ing" in stopping to say this, but that it brings me to remark that I build these conclusions, in part upon my own experience of myself; and if it should appear from anything I may set down in this narrative that I was a child of close observation, or that as a man I have a strong memory of my childhood, I undoubtedly lay claim to both of these characteristics.

Looking back as I was saying, into the blank of my infancy, the first object I can remember as standing out by themselves from a confusion of things, are my mother and Peggotty. What else do I remember? Let me see.

There comes out of the cloud, our house—not new to me, but quite familiar, in its earliest remembrance. On the ground-floor is Peggotty's kitchen, opening into a back yard; with a pigeon-house on a pole, in the centre, without any pigeons in it; a great dog-kennel in a corner, without any dog; and a quantity of fowls that look terribly tall to me, walking about, in a menacing and ferocious manner. There is one cock who gets upon a post to crow, and seems to take particular notice of me as I look at him through the kitchen window, who makes me shiver, he is so fierce. Of the geese outside the side-gate who come waddling after me with their long necks stretched out when I go that way, I dream at night; as a man envious by wild beasts might dream of lions.

Here is a long passage—what an enormous perspective I make of it!—leading from Peggotty's kitchen to the front-door. A dark store-room opens out of it, and that is a place to be run past at night; for I don't know what may be among those tubs and jars and old tea-cheats, when there is nobody in there with a dimly-burning light, letting a mouldy air come out at the door, in which there is the smell of soup, pickles, pepper, candles, and coffee, all at one sniff. Then there are the two parlors; the parlor in which we sit of an evening, my mother and I and Peggotty—for Peggotty is quite our companion, when her work is done and we are alone—and the best parlor where we sit on a Sunday; grandly, but not so comfortably. There is something of a doleful air about that room to me, for Peggotty has told me—I don't know when, but apparently ages ago—about my father's funeral, and the company having their black cloaks put on. One Sunday night my mother reads to Peggotty and me in there, how Lazarus was raised up from the dead. And I am so frightened that they are afterwards obliged to take me out of bed, and show me the quiet churchyard out of the bedroom window, with the dead all lying in their graves at rest, below the solemn moon.

There is nothing half so green that I know anywhere, as the grass of that churchyard; nothing half so shady as its trees; nothing half so quiet as its tombstones. The sheep are feeding there, when I kneel up early in the morning, in my little bed in a closet within my mother's room, to look out at it; and I see the red light shining on the sun-dial, and think within myself, "Is the sun-dial glad, I wonder, that it can tell the time again?"

Here is our pew in the church. What a high-backed pew! With a window near it, out of which our house can be seen, and is seen many times during the morning's service, by Peggotty, who likes to make herself as sure as she can that it's not being robbed, or is not in flames. But though Peggotty's eye wanders, she is much offended if mine does, and frowns to me, as I stand upon the seat, that I am to look at the clergyman. But I can't always look at him—I know him without that white thing on, and I am afraid of his wondering why I stare so, and perhaps stopping the service to inquire—and what am I to do? It's a dreadful thing to gape, but I must do something. I look at my mother, but she pretends not to see me. I look at a boy in the aisle, and he makes faces at me. I look at the sunlight coming in at the open door through the porch, and there I see a stray sheep—I don't mean a sinner, but mutton—half making up his mind to come into the church. I feel that if I looked at him any longer, I might be tempted to say something out loud; and what would become of me then! I look up at the monumental tablets on the wall, and try to think of Mr. Rodger's late of this parish, and what the feelings of Mrs. Rodgers must have been, when affliction some long time Mr. Rodgers bore, and physicians were in vain. I wonder whether they called in Mr. Chillip, and he was in vain; and if so, how he likes to be reminded of it once a week. I look from Mr. Chillip, in his Sunday neckcloth, to the pulpit; and think what a good place it would be to play in, and what a castle it would make, with another boy coming up the stairs to attack it, and having the velvet cushion with the tassels thrown...
down on his head. In time my eyes gradually shut up; and, from seeming to hear the clergyman singing a drowsy song in the heat, I hear nothing, until I fall off the seat with a crash, and am taken out, more dead than alive, by Peggoty.

And now I see the outside of our house, with the lattice bed-room windows standing open to let in the sweet-smelling air, and the ragged old rocks-nests still dangling in the elm-trees at the bottom of the front garden. Now I am in the garden at the back, beyond the yard where the empty pigeon-house and dog-kennel are—a very preserve of butterflies, as I remember it, with a high fence, and a gate and padlock; where the fruit clusters on the trees, riper and richer than fruit has ever been since, in any other garden, and where my mother gathers some in a basket, while I stand by, bolting furtive gooseberries, and trying to look unmoved. A great wind rises, and the summer is gone in a moment. We are playing in the winter twilight, dancing about the parlor. When my mother is out of breath and rests herself in an elbow-chair, I watch her winding her bright curls round her fingers, and straightening her waist, and nobody knows better than I do that she likes to look so well, and is proud of being so pretty.

That is among my very earliest impressions. That, and a sense that we were both a little afraid of Peggoty, and submitted ourselves in most things to her direction, were among the first opinions—if they may be so called—that I ever derived from what I saw.

Peggoty and I were sitting one night by the parlor fire, alone. I had been reading to Peggoty about crocodiles. I must have read very periphrastically, or the poor soul must have been deeply interested, for I remember she had a cloudy impression, after I had done, that they were a sort of vegetable. I was tired of reading, and dead sleepy; but having leave, as a high treat, to sit up until my mother came home from spending the evening at a neighbor's, I would rather have lighted upon my nest (of course) than have gone to bed. I had reached that stage of sleepiness when Peggoty seemed to swell and grow immensely large. I propped my eyelids open with my two fingers, and looked perseveringly at her as she sat at work; at the little bit of wax-candle she kept for her thread—how old it looked, being wrinkled in all directions—at the little house with a thatched roof, where the yard-measure lived; at her work-box with a sliding lid, with a view of St. Paul's Cathedral (with a pink dome) painted on the top; at the brass thimble on her finger; at herself, whom I thought lovely. I felt so sleepy, that I knew if I lost sight of anything, for a moment, I was gone.

"Peggoty," says I, suddenly, "were you ever married?"

"Lord, Master Davy," replied Peggoty, "What's put marriage in your head?"

She answered with such a start, that it quite woke me. And then she stopped in her work, and looked at me, with her needle drawn out to its thread's length.

"But were you ever married, Peggoty?" says I. "You are a very handsome woman, ain't you?"

I thought her in a different style from my mother, certainly; but of another school of beauty, I considered her a perfect example. There was a red velvet footstool in the best parlor, on which my mother had painted a nosegay. The groundwork of that stool and Peggoty's complexion appeared to me to be one and the same thing. The stool was smooth, and Peggoty was rough, but that made no difference.

"Me handsome, Davy!" said Peggoty. "Lawk, no, my dear! But what put marriage in your head?"

"I don't know!—You mus'n't marry more than one person at a time, may you, Peggoty?"

"Certainly not," says Peggoty, with the promptest decision.

"But if you marry a person, and the person dies, why then you may marry another person, mayn't you, Peggoty?"

"You may," says Peggoty, "if you choose, my dear. That's a matter of opinion."

"But what is your opinion, Peggoty?" said I.

I asked her, and looked curiously at her, because she looked so curiously at me.

"My opinion is," said Peggoty, taking her eyes from me, after a little indecision and going on with her work, "that I never was married myself, Master Davy, and that I don't expect to be. That's all I know about the subject."

"You ain't cross, I suppose, Peggoty, are you?" said I, after sitting quiet for a minute.

I really thought she was, she had been so short with me; but I was quite mistaken: for she laid aside her work (which was a mending of her own), and opening her arms wide, took my curly head within them, and gave it a good squeeze. I know it was a good squeeze, because, being very plump, whenever she made any little exertion after she was dressed, some of the buttons on the back of her gown flew off. And I recollect two burrs to the opposite side of the parlor, while she was hugging me.

"Now let me hear some more about the Crook-dilflies," said Peggoty, who was not quite right in the name yet, "for I ain't heard half enough."

I couldn't quite understand why Peggoty looked so queer, or why she was so ready to go back to the crocodiles. However, we returned to those monsters, with fresh wakefulness on my part, and we left their eggs in the sand for the sun to hatch; and we ran away from them, and baffled them by constantly turning, which they were unable to do quickly, on account of their unwieldy make; and we went into the water after them, as natives, and put sharp pieces of luminum down their throats; and in short we ran the whole crocodile gauntlet. I did, at least; but I had no doubts of Peggoty, who was known to be blest.
her needle into various parts of her face and arms all the time.

We had exhausted the crocodiles, and begun with the alligators, when the garden-bell rang. We went out to the door; and there was my mother, looking unusually pretty, I thought, and with her a gentleman with beautiful black hair and whiskers, who had walked home with us from church last Sunday.

As my mother stooped down on the threshold to take me in her arms and kiss me, the gentleman said I was a more highly privileged little fellow than a monarch—or something like that; for my later understanding comes, I am sensible, to my aid here.

"What does that mean?" I asked her, over her shoulder.

He patted me on the head; but somehow, I didn’t like him or his deep voice, and I was jealous that his hand should touch my mother’s in touching me—which it did. I put it away as well as I could.

"Oh, Davy!" remonstrated my mother.

"Dear boy!" said the gentleman. "I cannot wonder at his devotion!"

I never saw such a beautiful color on my mother’s face before. She gently chid me for being rude; and, keeping me close to her shawl, turned to thank the gentleman for taking so much trouble as to bring her home. She put out her hand to him as she spoke, and, as he met it with his own, she glanced, I thought, at me.

"Let us say ‘good night,’ my fine boy," said the gentleman, when he had bent his head—I saw him—over my mother’s little glove.

"Good night!" said I.

"Come! Let us be the best friends in the world!" said the gentleman, laughing. "Shake hands!"

My right hand was in my mother’s left, so I gave him the other.

"Why, that’s the wrong hand, Davy!" laughed the gentleman.

My mother drew my right hand forward, but I was resolved, for my former reason, not to give it him, and I did not. I gave him the other, and he shook it heartily, and said I was a brave fellow, and went away.

At this minute I see him turn round in the garden, and give us a last look with his ill-omened black eyes, before the door was shut.

Peggotty, who had not said a word or moved a finger, secured the fastenings instantly, and we all went into the parlor. My mother, contrary to her usual habit, instead of coming to the elbow-chair by the fire, remained at the other end of the room, and sat singing to herself.

"Hope you have had a pleasant evening, ma’am," said Peggotty, standing as stiff as a barrel in the centre of the room, with a candle-stick in her hand.

"Much obliged to you, Peggotty," returned my mother in a cheerful voice, "I have had a very pleasant evening."

"A stranger or so makes an agreeable change," suggested Peggotty.

"A very agreeable change, indeed," returned my mother.

Peggotty continuing to stand motionless in the middle of the room, and my mother resuming her singing, I fell asleep, though I was not so sound asleep but that I could hear voices, without hearing what they said. When I half awoke from this uncomfortable doze, I found Peggotty and my mother both in tears, and both talking.

"Not such a one as this, Mr. Copperfield,—I wouldn’t have liked," said Peggotty. "That, say, and that I swear!"

"Good Heavens!" cried my mother, "you’ll drive me mad! Was ever any poor girl so ill used by her servants as I am! Why do I do my self the injustice of calling myself a girl? Have I never been married, Peggotty?"

"God knows you have, ma’am," returned Peggotty.

"Then, how can you dare," said my mother—"you know I don’t mean how can you dare, Peggotty, but how can you have the heart—to make me so uncomfortable and say such bitter things to me, when you are well aware that I haven’t out of this place a single friend to turn to?"

"The more’s the reason," returned Peggotty, "for saying that it won’t do. No! That it won’t, No! No price could make it do. No!—I thought Peggotty would have thrown the candle-stick away, she was so exulting with it.

"How can you be so aggravating," said my mother, shedding more tears than before, "as to talk in such an unjust manner! How can you go on as if it was all settled and arranged, Peggotty, when I tell you over and over again, you cruel thing, that beyond the commonest civilities nothing has passed! You talk of admiration. What am I to do? If people are so silly as to indulge the sentiment, is it my fault? What am I to do? I ask you? Would you wish me to shave my head and blacken my face, or disfigure myself with a barn, or a scald, or something of that sort? I dare say you would, Peggotty. I dare say you’d quite enjoy it."

Peggotty seemed to take this aspersión of her much to heart, I thought.

"And my dear boy," cried my mother, coming to the elbow-chair in which I was, and caressing me, "my own little Davy! Is it to be hinted to me that I am wanting in affection for my precious treasure, the dearest little fellow that ever was!"

"Nobody never went and hinted no such thing," said Peggotty.

"You did, Peggotty!" returned my mother.

"You know you did. What else was it possible to infer from what you said, you unkind creature when you know as well as I do, that on his account only last quarter I wouldn’t buy myself a new parasol, though that old green one is frayed all the way up, and the fringe is perfect mangled? You know it is, Peggotty; you can deny it. Then, turning affectionately to me,
with her cheek against mine, "Am I a naughty mamma to you, Davy? Am I a nasty, cruel, selfish, bad mamma? Say 'Fam, my child; say 'yes,' dear boy, and Peggoty will love you; and Peggoty's love is a great deal better than mine, Davy. I don't love you at all, do I?"

At this we all fell a-crying together. I think I was the loudest of the party, but I am sure we were all sincere about it. I was quite heart-broken myself, and am afraid that in the first transports of wounded tenderness I called Peggoty a "Boat." That honest creature was in deep affliction, I remember, and must have become quite buttonless on the occasion; for a little volley of those explosives went off, when, after having made it up with my mother, she knelt down by the elbow-chair, and made it up with me.

We went to bed greatly dejected. My sob kept waking me, for a long time; and when one very strong sob quite hoisted me up in bed, I found my mother sitting on the coverlet, and leaning over me. I fell asleep in her arms, after that, and slept soundly.

Whether it was the following Sunday when I saw the gentleman again, or whether there was any greater lapse of time before he re-appeared, I cannot recall. I don't profess to be clear about dates. But there he was, in church, and he walked home with us afterwards. He came in, too, to look at a famous geranium we had, in the parlor-window. It did not appear to me that he took much notice of it, but before he went he asked my mother to give him a bit of the blossom. She begged him to choose it for himself, but he refused to do that—I could not understand why—so she plucked it for him, and gave it into his hand. He said he would never, never, part with it any more; and I thought he must be quite a fool not to know that it would fall to pieces in a day or two.

Peggoty began to be less with us, of an evening, than she had always been. My mother deplored her very much—more than usual, it occurred to me—and we were all three excellent friends; still we were different from what we used to be, and were not so comfortable among ourselves. Sometimes I fancied that Peggoty perhaps objected to my mother's wearing all the new dresses she had in her drawers, or to her going so often to visit at that neighbor's; but I couldn't, to my satisfaction, make out how it was.

Gradually, I became used to seeing the gentleman with the black whiskers. I liked him no better than at first, and had the same uneasyAvRw-lyy of him; but if I had any reason for it, beyond a child's instinctive dislike, and a general idea that Peggoty and I could make much of my mother without any help, it certainly was not the reason that I might have found if I had been older. No such thing came into my mind, or near it. I could observe, in little pieces, as it were; but as to making a net of a number of these pieces, and catching anybody in it, that was, as yet, beyond me.

One autumn morning I was with my mother in the front garden, when Mr. Murdstone—I knew him by that name now—came by, on horseback. He reined up his horse to salute my mother, and said he was going to Lowestoft to see some friends who were there with a yacht, and merrily proposed to take me on the saddle before him if I would like the ride.

The air was so clear and pleasant, and the horse seemed to like the idea of the ride so much himself, as he stood sniffing and pawing at the garden-gate, that I had a great desire to go. So I was sent up-stairs to Peggoty to be made apron; and, in the meantime, Mr. Murdstone dismounted, and, with his horse's bridle drawn over his arm, walked slowly up and down on the outer side of the sweet-briar fence, while my mother walked slowly up and down on the inner, to keep him company. I recollect Peggoty and I peeping out at them from my little window; I recollect how closely they seemed to be examining the sweet-briar between them, as they strolled along; and how, from being in a perfectly angelic temper, Peggoty turned cross in a moment, and bruised my hair the wrong way, excessively hard.

Mr. Murdstone and I were soon off, and trotting along on the green turf by the side of the road. He held me quite easily with one arm, and I don't think I was restless usually; but I could not make up my mind to sit in front of him without turning my head sometimes, and looking up in his face. He had that kind of shallow black eye—I want a better word to express an eye that has no depth in it to be looked into—which, when it is abstracted, seems, from some peculiarity of light, to be disfigured, for a moment at a time, by a cast. Several times when I glanced at him, I observed that appearance with a sort of awe, and wondered what he was thinking about so closely. His hair and whiskers were blunter and thicker, looked at so near, than even I had given them credit for being. A squaringness about the lower part of his face, and the dotted indication of the strong black beard he shaved close every day, reminded me of the wax-work that had travelled into our neighborhood some half-year before. This, his regular eyebrows, and the rich white, and black, and brown, of his complexion—confound his complexion, and his memory!—made me think him, in spite of my misgivings, a very handsome man. I have no doubt that my poor dear mother thought him so too.

We went to an hotel by the sea, where two gentlemen were smoking cigars in a room by themselves. Each of them was lying on at least four chairs, and had a large rough jacket on. In a corner was a heap of coats and boat-cloaks, and a flag, all bundled up together.

They both rolled on their feet, in an entirely sort of manner when we came in, and said...
"Halloa, Murdstone! We thought you were dead!"

"Not yet," said Mr. Murdstone.

"And who's this shaver?" said one of the gentlemen, taking hold of me.

"That's Davy," returned Mr. Murdstone.

"Davy who?" said the gentleman. "Jones?"

"Copperfield," said Mr. Murdstone.

"What! Bewitching Mrs. Copperfield's incumbrance?" cried the gentleman. "The pretty little widow?"

"Quinjon," said Mr. Murdstone, "take care, if you please. Somebody's sharp."

"Who is?" asked the gentleman, laughing. I looked up, quickly; being curious to know.

"Only Brooks of Sheffield," said Mr. Murdstone.

I was quite relieved to find that it was only Brooks of Sheffield; for at first, I really thought it was I.

There seemed to be something very comical in the reputation of Mr. Brooks of Sheffield, for both gentlemen laughed heartily when he was mentioned, and Mr. Murdstone was a good deal amused also. After some laughing, the gentleman whom he had called Quinjon said:

"And what is the opinion of Brooks of Sheffield, in reference to the projected business?"

"Why, I don't know that Brooks understands much about it at present," replied Mr. Murdstone; "but he is not generally favorable, I believe."

There was more laughter at this, and Mr. Quinjon said he would ring the bell for some sherry in which to drink to Brooks. This he did; and when the wine came, he made me have a little, with a biscuit, and, before I drunk it, stand up and say, "Confusion to Brooks of Sheffield!"

The toast was received with great applause, and such hearty laughter that it made me laugh too; at which they laughed the more. In short, we quite enjoyed ourselves.

We walked about on the cliff after that, and sat on the grass, and looked at things through a telescope—I could make out nothing myself when it was put to my eye, but I pretended I could—and then we came back to the hotel to an early dinner. All the time we were out, the two gentlemen smoked incessantly—which, I thought, if I might judge from the smell of their rough coats, they must have been doing, ever since the coats had first come home from the tailor's. I must not forget that we went on board the yacht, where they all three descended into the cabin, and were busy with some papers. I saw them quite hard at work, when I looked down through the open skylight. They left me, during this time, with a very nice man, with a very large head of red hair and a very small shiny hat upon it, who had got a cross-barred shirt or waistcoat on, with "Skylark" in capital letters across the chest. I thought it was his name; and that as he lived on board ship and hadn't a street-door to put his name on, he put it there instead; but when I called him Mr. Skylark, he said it meant the vessel.

I observed all day that Mr. Murdstone was graver and steadier than the two gentlemen. They were very gay and careless. They joked freely with one another, but seldom with him. It appeared to me that he was more clever and odd than they were, and that they regarded him with something of my own feeling. I remarked that, once or twice, when Mr. Quinjon was talking, he looked at Mr. Murdstone sideways, as if to make sure of his not being displeased; and that once when Mr. Pasmore (the other gentleman) was in high spirits, he trod upon his foot, and gave him a secret caution with his eyes, to observe Mr. Murdstone, who was sitting stern and silent. Nor do I recollect that Mr. Murdstone laughed at all that day, except at the Sheffield joke—and that, by the by, was his own.

We went home early in the evening. It was a very fine evening, and my mother and he had another stroll by the sweetbriar, while I was set in to get my tea. When he was gone, my mother asked me all about the day I had had, and what they had said and done. I mentioned what they had said about her, and she laughed, and told me they were impudent fellows who talked nonsense—but I knew it pleased her. I knew it quite as well as I knew it now. I took the opportunity of asking if she was at all acquainted with Mr. Brooks of Sheffield, but she answered No, only she supposed he must be a manufacturer in the knife and fork way.

Can I say of her face—altered as I have reason to remember it, perished as I know it is—that it is gone, when here it comes before me at this instant, as distinct as any face that I may choose to look on in a crowded street? Can I say of her innocent and girlish beauty, that it faded, and was no more, when its breath falls on my cheek now, as it fell that night? Can I say she ever changed, when my remembrance brings her back to life, thus only; and, truer to its loving youth than I have been, or man ever is, still holds fast what it cherished then?

I write of her just as she was when I had gone to bed after this talk, and she came to bid me good night. She kneeled down playfully by the side of the bed, and laying her chin upon my hands, and laughing, said:

"What was it they said, Davy? Tell me again. I can't believe it."

"'Bewitching—_' I began.

My mother put her hands upon my lips to stop me.

"'It was never bewitching,' she said, laughing. "'It never could have been bewitching. Davy. Now, I know it wasn't!'"

"Yes it was. 'Bewitching Mrs. Copperfield,' I repeated sturdily. "'And pretty.'"

"'No, no, it was never pretty. Not pretty,'" interposed my mother, laying her fingers on my lips again.

"Yes it was. 'Pretty little widow.'"

"'What foolish, impudent creatures!' cried my mother, laughing and covering her face.
TO YARMOUTH WITH THE CARRIER.

That night, and my board and lodging during the visit were to be paid for.

The day soon came for our going. It was such an early day that it came soon, even to me, who was in a fever of expectation, and half afraid that an earthquake or a fiery mountain, or some other great convulsion of nature, might interpose to stop the expedition. We were to go in a carrier’s cart, which departed in the morning after breakfast. I would have given any money to have been allowed to wrap myself up over-night, and sleep in my hat and boots.

It touched me nearly now, although I tell it lightly, to recollect how eager I was to leave my happy home; to think how little I suspected what I did leave for ever.

I am glad to recollect that when the carrier’s cart was at the gate, and my mother stood there kissing me, a grateful fondness for her and for the old place I had never turned my back upon before, made me cry. I am glad to know that my mother cried too, and that I felt her heart beat against mine.

I am glad to recollect that when the carrier began to move, my mother ran out at the gate, and called to him to stop, that she might kiss me once more. I am glad to dwell upon the earnestness and love with which she lifted up her face to mine, and did so.

As we left her standing in the road, Mr. Mardstone came up to where she was, and seemed to exultate with her for being so moved. I was looking back round the awning of the cart, and wondered what business it was of his. Peggotty, who was also looking back on the other side, seemed anything but satisfied; as the face she brought back in the cart denoted.

I sat looking at Peggotty for some time, in a reverie on this supposititious case: whether, if she were employed to lose me like the boy in the fairy tale, I should be able to track my way home again by the buttons she would shed.

CHAPTER III.

I HAVE A CHANGE.

The carrier’s horse was the laziest horse in the world, I should hope, and shuffled along, with his head down, as if he liked to keep people waiting to whom the packages were directed. I fancied, indeed, that he sometimes chuckled audibly over this reflection, but the carrier said he was only troubled with a cough.

The carrier had a way of keeping his head down, like his horse, and of drooping sleepily forward as he drove, with one of his arms on each of his knees. I say “drove,” but it struck me that the cart would have gone to Yarmouth quite as well without him, for the horse did all that; and as to conversation, he had no idea of it but whistling.

Peggotty had a basket of refreshments on her knee, which would have lasted us out handsomely, if we had been going to London by the same con
veyance. We ate a good deal, and slept a good deal. Peggotty always went to sleep with her chin upon the handle of the basket, her hold of which never relaxed; and I could not have believed unless I had heard her do it, that one defenceless woman could have snored so much.

We made so many deviations up and down lanes, and were such a long time delivering a bedstead at a public-house, and calling at other places, that I was quite tired, and very glad, when we saw Yarmouth. It looked rather spongy and soppy, I thought, as I carried my eye over the great dull waste that lay across the river; and I could not help wondering, if the world were really as round as my geography-book said, how any part of it came to be so flat. But I reflected that Yarmouth might be situated at one of the poles; which would account for it.

As we drew a little nearer, and saw the whole adjacent prospect lying a straight low line under the sky, I hinted to Peggotty that a mound or so might have improved it; and also that if the land had been a little more separated from the sea, and the town and the tide had not been quite so much mixed up, like tea and water, it would have been nicer. But Peggotty said, with greater emphasis than usual, that we must take things as we found them, and that, for her part, she was proud to call herself a Yarmouth Booter.

When we got into the street (which was strange enough to me), and smelt the fish, and pitch, and oakum, and tar, and saw the sailors walking about, and the carts jingling up and down over the stones, I felt that I had done so busy a place an injustice; and said as much to Peggotty, who heard my expressions of delight with great complacency, and told me it was well known (I suppose to those who had the good fortune to be born Booters) that Yarmouth was, upon the whole, the finest place in the universe.

"Here's my Am!" screamed Peggotty, "grew out of knowledge!"

He was waiting for us, in fact, at the public-house; and asked me how I found myself, like an old acquaintance. I did not feel, at first, that I knew him as well as he knew me, because he had never come to our house since the night I was born, and naturally he had the advantage of me. But our intimacy was much advanced by his taking me on his back to carry me home. He was, now, a huge, strong fellow of six foot high, broad in proportion, and round-shouldered; but with a simmering boy's face and curly light hair that gave him quite a sheepish look. He was dressed in a canvas jacket, and a pair of such very stiff trousers that they would have stood quite as well alone, without any legs in them. And you couldn't so properly have said he wore a hat, as that he was covered in a top, like an old building, with something pitchy.

Ham carrying me on his back and a small box of ours under his arm, and Peggotty carrying another small box of ours, we turned down lanes bestrown with bits of chips and little hillocks of sand, and went past gas-works, rope-walks, boat-builders' yards, shipwrights' yards, ship-breakers' yards, coaliers' yards, riggers' lofts, smiths' forges, and a great litter of such places, until we came out upon the dull waste I had already seen at a distance; when Ham said,

"You're our house, Mas'r Davy!"

I looked in all directions, as far as I could stare over the wilderness, and away at the sea, and away at the river, but no house could I make out. There was a black barge, or some other kind of superannuated boat, not far off, high and dry on the ground, with an iron funnel sticking out of it for a chimney and smoking very cosily; but nothing else in the way of a habitation that was visible to me.

"That's not it?" said I. "That ship-looking thing?"

"That's it, Mas'r Davy," returned Ham.

If it had been Aladdin's palace, roc's egg and all, I suppose I could not have been more charmed with the romantic idea of living in it. There was a delightful door cut in the side, and it was roofed in, and there were little windows in it; but the wonderful charm of it was, that it was a real boat which had no doubt been upon the water hundreds of times, and which had never been intended to be lived in, on dry land. That was the capitulation of it to me. If it had ever been meant to be lived in, I might have thought it small, or inconvenient, or lonely; but never having been designed for any such use, it became a perfect abode.

It was beautifully clean inside, and as tidy as possible. There was a table, and a Dutch clock, and a chest of drawers, and on the chest of drawers there was a tea-tray with a painting on it of a lady with a parasol, taking a walk with a military-looking child who was rumbling a hoop. The tray was kept from tumbling down, by a Bible; and the tray, if it had tumbled down, would have smashed a quantity of cups and saucers and a teapot that were grouped around the book. On the walls there were some coloured pictures, framed and glazed, of scriptural subjects; such as I have never seen since in the hands of peddlars, without seeing the whole interior of Peggotty's brother's house again, at one view. Abraham in red going to sacrifice Isaac in blue, and Daniel in yellow cast into a den of grizzly lions, were the most prominent of these. Over the little mantel-shelf, was a picture of the Sarah Jane lugger, built at Sunderland, with a real little wooden stern stuck on to it; a work of art, combining composition with carpentry, which I considered to be one of the most enviable possessions that the world could afford. There were some books in the beams of the ceiling, the use of which I did not divine then; and some lockers and boxes and conveniences of that sort, which served for seats and slid out the chairs.

All this, I saw in the first glance after I crossed the threshold—child-like, according to my theory—and then Peggotty opened a little door and
MR. PEGGOTTY'S DELIGHTFUL HOUSE.

After tea, when the door was shut and all was made snug (the nights being cold and misty now), it seemed to me the most delicious retreat that the imagination of man could conceive. To hear the wind getting up out at sea, to know that the fog was creeping over the desolate flat outside, and to look at the fire and think that there was no house near but this one, and this one a boat, was like enchantment. Little Em'ly had overcome her shyness, and was sitting by my side upon the lowest and least of the lockers, which was just large enough for us two, and just fitted into the chimney corner. Mrs. Peggotty, with the white apron, was knitting on the opposite side of the fire. Peggotty at her needle-work was as much at home with Saint Paul's and the bit of wax-candle, as if they had never known any other roof. Ham, who had been giving me my first lesson in all-fours, was trying to recollect a scheme of telling fortunes with the dirty cards, and was printing off fusty impressions of his thumb on all the cards he turned. Mr. Peggotty was smoking his pipe. I felt it was a time for conversation and confidence.

"Mr. Peggotty!" says I.

"Sir," says he.

"Did you give your son the name of Ham, because you lived in a sort of ark?"

Mr. Peggotty seemed to think it a deep idea, but answered:

"No, sir. I never give him no name."

"Who gave him that name, then?" said I, putting question number two of the catechism to Mr. Peggotty.

"Why, sir, his father gave it him," said Mr. Peggotty.

"I thought you were his father!"

"My brother Joe was his father," said Mr. Peggotty.

"Dead, Mr. Peggotty?" I hinted, after a respectful pause.

"Drownded," said Mr. Peggotty.

I was very much surprised that Mr. Peggotty was not Ham's father, and began to wonder whether I was mistaken about his relationship to anybody else there. I was so curious to know, that I made up my mind to have it out with Mr. Peggotty.

"Little Em'ly," I said, glancing at her. "She is your daughter, isn't she, Mr. Peggotty?"

"No, sir. My brother-in-law, Tom, was her father," said Mr. Peggotty.

I couldn't help it. "—Dead, Mr. Peggotty?" I hinted, after another respectful silence.

"Drownded," said Mr. Peggotty.

I felt the difficulty of resuming the subject, but had not got to the bottom of it yet, and must get to the bottom somehow. So I said:

"Haven't you any children, Mr. Peggotty?"

"No, master," he answered, with a short laugh. "I'm a bachelored."  

"A bachelor!" I said, astonished. "Why, who's that, Mr. Peggotty?" Pointing to the person in the apron who was knitting.

"That's Missis Gummidge," said Mr. Peggotty.
"Gummidge, Mr. Peggotty?"

But at this point, Peggotty—I mean my own peculiar Peggotty—made such impressive motions to me not to ask any more questions, that I could only sit and look at all the silent company, until it was time to go to bed. Then, in the privacy of my own little cabin, she informed me that Ham and Emily were an orphan nephew and niece, whom my host had at different times adopted in their childhood, when they were left destitute; and that Mrs. Gummidge was the widow of his partner in a boat, who had died very poor. He was but a poor man himself, said Peggotty, but as good as gold and as true as steel—those were her similes. The only subject, she informed me, on which he ever showed a violent temper or swore an oath, was this generosity of his; and if it were ever referred to, by any one of them, he struck the table a heavy blow with his right hand (and split it on one such occasion), and swore a dreadful oath that he would be "Gormed" if he didn't cut and run for good, if it was ever mentioned again. It appeared, in answer to my inquiries, that nobody had the least idea of the etymology of this terrible verb passive to begormed; but that they all regarded it as constituting a most solemn imprecation.

I was very sensible of my entertainers' goodness, and listened to the woman's going to bed in another little crib like mine at the opposite end of the boat, and to him and Ham hanging up two hammocks for themselves on the hull, I had noticed in the roof, in a very luxurious state of mind, enhanced by my being sleepy. As slumber gradually stole upon me, I heard the wind howling out at sea and coming on across the flat so fiercely, that I had a lazy apprehension of the great deep rising in the night. But I beheld myself that I was in a boat, after all; and that a man like Mr. Peggotty was not a bad person to have on board if anything did happen.

Nothing happened, however, worse than morning. Almost as soon as it shone upon the oyster-shell frame of my mirror I was out of bed, and out with little Emily, picking up stones upon the beach.

"You're quite a sailor, I suppose?" I said to Emily. "I don't know that I supposed anything of the kind, but I felt it an act of gallantry to say something; and a shining sail close to us made such a pretty little image of itself, at the moment, in her bright eye, that it came into my head to say this.

"No," replied Emily, shaking her head, "I'm afraid of the sea."

"Afraid!" I said, with a becoming air of boldness, and looking very big at the mighty ocean.

"I ain't!"

"Ah! but it's cruel," said Emily. "I have seen it very cruel to some of our men. I have seen it tear a boat as big as our house all to pieces."

"I hope it wasn't the boat that—"

"That father was drowned in?" said Emily.

"No. Not that one, I never see that boat."

"Nor him?" I asked her.

Little Emily shook her head. "Not to her!"

Here was a coincidence! I immediately fell into an explanation how I had never seen her father; and how my mother and I had lived by ourselves in the happiest state possible, and lived so then, and always meant to do so; and how my father's grave was in the yard near our house, and shaded by a tree, and the boughs of which I had walked; how the birds sang many a pleasant morning; how there was some difference between Emily's hood and mine, it appeared. She had a mother before her father; and where he was, and where her grave was no one knew, except that it was where in the depth of the sea.

"Besides," said Emily, as she looked into her shells and pebbles, "your father was a gentleman, and your mother is a lady; and my father is a fisherman and my mother was a fisherman's daughter, and my uncle Dan is a fisherman's son.

"Dan is Mr. Peggotty, is he?" said I.

"Uncle Dan—yonder," said Emily, "is the boat-house."

"Yes. I mean him. He must be very rich, then, you think?"

"Good!" said Emily. "If I was ever a lady, I'd give him a sky-blue coat with gold buttons, saxeen trousers, a red velvet waistcoat, a cocked hat and a large gold watch, and a silver box of money."

I said I had no doubt that Mr. Peggotty deserved these treasures. I must ask, however, that I felt it difficult to picture him quite in the manner proposed for him by Emily. Little Ham, and Mrs. Gummidge. We would then, when there came stormy weather, our own sakes, I mean. We would for fishermen's, to be sure, and we'd help the money when they come to any hurt."

This seemed to me to be a very sad thing, and therefore not at all improbable, I expressed my pleasure in the contemplation, and Emily was emboldened to say,

"Don't you think you are afraid of it now?"

It was quite enough to reassure me, but I had no doubt if I had seen a moderately large wave come tumbling in, I should have taken it as a signal, with an awkward recollection of her relations. However, I said, "No," and.
"You don't seem to be, either, though you say you are;"—for she was walking much too near the brink of a sort of old jetty or wooden causeway we had strolled upon, and I was afraid of her falling over.

"I'm not afraid in this way," said little Em'ly.

"But I wake when it blows, and tremble to think of Uncle Dan and Ham, and believe I hear 'em crying out for help. That's why I should like so much to be a lady. But I'm not afraid in this way. Not a bit. Look here!"

She started from my side, and ran along a jagged timber which protruded from the place we stood upon, and overhung the deep water at some height, without the least defence. The incident is so impressed on my remembrance, that if I were a draughtsman I could draw its form here, I dare say, accurately as it was that day, and little Em'ly springing forward to her destruction (as it appeared to me), with a look that I have never forgotten, directed far out to sea.

The light, bold, fluttering little figure turned and came back safe to me, and I soon laughed at my fears, and at the cry I had uttered; fruitlessly in any case, for there was no one near. But there have been times since, in my manhood, many times there have been, when I have thought, Is it possible, among the possibilities of hidden things, that in the sudden rashness of the child and her wild look so far off, there was any merciful attraction of her into danger, any tempting her towards him permitted on the part of her dead father, that her life might have a chance of ending that day.

There has been a time since when I have wondered whether, if the life before her could have been revealed to me at a glance, and so revealed as that a child could fully comprehend it, and if her preservation could have depended on a motion of my hand, I ought to have held it up to save her. There has been a time since—I do not say it lasted long, but it has been—when I have asked myself the question, would it have been better for little Em'ly to have had the waters close above her head that morning in my sight; and when I have answered Yes, it would have been.

This may be premature. I have set it down too soon, perhaps. But let it stand.

We strolled a long way, and loaded ourselves with things that we thought curious, and put some stranded starfish carefully back into the water—I hardly know enough of the race at this moment to be quite certain whether they had reason to feel obliged to us for doing so, or the reverse—and then made our way home to Mr. Peggotty's dwelling. We stopped under the lee of the lobster-outhouse to exchange an innocent kiss, and went in to breakfast glowing with health and pleasure.

"Like two young mariavises," Mr. Peggotty said. I knew this meant, in our local dialect, like two young thrushes, and received it as a compliment.

Of course I was in love with little Em'ly. I am sure I loved that baby quite as truly, quite as tenderly, with greater purity and more disinterestedness, than can enter into the best love of a later time of life, high and ennobling as it is. I am sure my fancy raised up something round that blue-eyed mite of a child, which otherwiserealised, and made a very angel of her. If, any sunny forenoon, she had spread a little pair of wings, and flown away before my eyes, I don't think I should have regarded it as much more than I had had reason to expect.

We used to walk about that dim old flat at Yarmouth in a loving manner, hours and hours. The days sported by us, as if Time had not grown up himself yet, but were a child too, and always at play. I told Em'ly I adored her, and that unless she confessed she adored me I should be reduced to the necessity of killing myself with a sword. She said she did, and I have no doubt she did.

As to any sense of inequality, or youthfulness, or other difficulty in our way, little Em'ly and I had no such trouble, because we had no future. We made no more provision for growing older than we did for growing younger. We were the admiration of Mrs. Gummidge and Peggotty, who used to whisper of an evening when we sat lovingly, on our little locker side by side, "Lor! wasn't it beautiful!" Mr. Peggotty smiled at us from behind his pipe, and Ham grinned all the evening and did nothing else. They had something of the sort of pleasure in us, I suppose, that they might have had in a pretty toy, or a pocket model of the Colosseum.

I soon found out that Mrs. Gummidge did not always make herself so agreeable as she might have been expected to do, under the circumstances of her residence with Mr. Peggotty. Mrs. Gummidge's was rather a fruitful disposition, and she whimpered more sometimes than was comfortable for other parties in so small an establishment. I was very sorry for her; but there were moments when it would have been more agreeable, I thought, if Mrs. Gummidge had had a convenient apartment of her own to retire to, and had stopped there until her spirits revived.

Mr. Peggotty went occasionally to a public house calling The Willing Mind. I discovered this, by his being out on the second or third evening of our visit, and by Mrs. Gummidge's looking up at the Dutch clock, between eight and nine, and saying he was there, and that, what was more, she had known in the morning he would go there.

Mrs. Gummidge had been in a low state all day, and had burst into tears in the forenoon, when the fire smoked. "I am a lone lorn creature," were Mrs. Gummidge's words, when that unpleasant occurrence took place, "and everythink goes contrary with me."

"Oh, it'll soon leave off," said Peggotty—I again mean our Peggotty—"and besides, you know, it's not more disagreeable to you than to us."

"I feel it more," said Mrs. Gummidge.

It was a very cold day, with cutting blasts..."
wind. Mrs. Gummidge’s peculiar corner of the fireside seemed to me to be the warmest and snuggiest in the place, as her chair was certainly the easiest, but it didn’t suit her that day at all. She was constantly complaining of the cold, and of her occasional visitation in her back, which she called “the creeps.” At last she shed tears on that subject, and said again that she was a “lone lorn creature” and everythink went contrary with her.

“It is certainly very cold,” said Peggotty. “Everybody must feel it so.”

“I feel it more than other people,” said Mrs. Gummidge.

So at dinner; when Mrs. Gummidge was always helped immediately after me, to whom the preference was given as a visit of distinction. The fish were small and bony, and the potatoes were a little burnt. We all acknowledged that we felt this something of a disappointment; but Mrs. Gummidge said she felt it more than we did, and shed tears again, and made that former declaration with great bitterness.

Accordingly, when Mr. Peggotty came home about nine o’clock, this unfortunate Mrs. Gummidge was knitting in her corner, in a very wretched and miserable condition. Peggotty had been working cheerfully. Ham had been patching up a great pair of waterboots; and I, with little Emily by my side, had been reading to them. Mrs. Gummidge had never made any other remark than a forlorn sigh, and had never raised her eyes since tea.

“Well, Matea,” said Mr. Peggotty, taking his seat, “and how are you?”

We all said something, or looked something, to welcome him, except Mrs. Gummidge, who only shook her head over her knitting.

“What’s amiss?” said Mr. Peggotty, with a clap of his hands. “Cheer up, old Mawther!” (Mr. Peggotty meant old girl.)

Mrs. Gummidge did not appear to be able to cheer up. She took out an old black silk handkerchief and wiped her eyes; but instead of putting it in her pocket, kept it out, and wiped them again, and still kept it out, ready for use.

“What’s amiss, dame?” said Mr. Peggotty.

“Nothing,” returned Mrs. Gummidge. “You’ve come from The Willing Mind, Dan’l!”

“Why yes, I’ve took a short spell at The Willing Mind to-night,” said Mr. Peggotty.

“I’m sorry I should drive you there,” said Mrs. Gummidge.

“Drive! I don’t want no driving,” returned Mr. Peggotty with an honest laugh. “I only go too ready.”

“Very ready,” said Mrs. Gummidge, shaking her head, and wiping her eyes. “Yes, yes, very ready. I am sorry it should be along of me that you’re so ready.”

“Along o’ you! It ain’t along o’ you!” said Mr. Peggotty. “Don’t ye believe a bit on it.”

“Yes, yes, it is,” cried Mrs. Gummidge. “I know what I am. I know that I am a lone lorn creature, and not only that everythink goes contrary with me, but that I go contrary with everybody. Yes, yes, I feel more than other people, and I show it more. It’s my misfortune.”

I really couldn’t help thinking, as I sat talking in all this, that the misfortune extended to some other members of that family besides Mrs. Gummidge. But Mr. Peggotty made no such return only answering with another entreaty to Mrs. Gummidge to cheer up.

“I ain’t what I could wish myself to be,” said Mrs. Gummidge. “I am far from it. I know what I am. My troubles have made me contemptible. I feel my troubles, and they make me contemptible. I wish I didn’t feel so, but I do. I wish I could be hardened to ’em, but I can’t. I make the house uncomfortable. I don’t wonder at it. I’ve made your sister so all day, and Master Davy.”

Here I was suddenly melted, and roared out.

“No, you haven’t. Mrs. Gummidge,” in great distress.

“It’s far from right that I should do it,” said Mrs. Gummidge. “It ain’t a fit return. I bet better go into the house and die. I am a lone lorn creature, and had much better not make myself contrary here. If thinks must go contrary with me, and I must go contrary myself, let me go contrary in my parish. Dan’t, I’d better go into the house, and die and be a riddance!”

Mrs. Gummidge retired with these words, and betook herself to bed. When she was gone, Mr. Peggotty, who had not exhibited a trace of emotion but the profoundest sympathy, looked round upon us, and nodding his head with a livid expression of that sentiment still animating his face, said in a whisper:

“She’s been thinking of the old ‘un!”

I did not quite understand what old one Mr. Gummidge was supposed to have fixed her mind upon, until Peggotty, on seeing me to bed, explained that it was the late Mr. Gummidge; and that her brother always took that for a conceit on such occasions, and that it always had moving effect upon him. Some time after he was in his hammock that night, I heard him musingly repeat to Ham, “Poor thing! She’s been thinking of the old ‘un!” And whenever Mrs. Gummidge was overcome in a similar manner during the remainder of our stay (which happened from time to time) he always said the same thing in exclamation of the circumstance, and always with the tenderest commiseration.

So the fortnight slipped away, varied by nothing but the variation of the tide, which altered Mr. Peggotty’s times of going out and coming in, and altered Ham’s engagements also. When the latter was unemployed, he sometimes walked with us to show us the boats and ships; and once or twice he took us for a row. I don’t know why one slight set of impressions should be more particularly associated with a place than another, though I believe this obtains with all people, in reference especially to the associations of their childhood. I never hear the name...
HOME GREATLY CHANGED.

...same, of Yarmouth, but I am reminded of a Sunday morning on the beach, the ing for church, little Em'ly leaning on her, Ham lastly dropping stones into... and the sun, away at sea, just break... the heavy mist, and showing us the... their own shadows.

...the day came for going home. I bore... the separation from Mr. Peggotty and... and, but my agony of mind at leaving... Em'ly was piercing. We went arm-in... public-house where the carrier put up, missed, on the road, to write to her. (I... that promise afterwards, in characters... those in which apartments are usually d in manuscript, as being to let.) We... overly come at parting; and if ever, in... have had a void made in my heart, I had... that day.

...the time I had been on my visit, I had... to my home again, and had thought... about it. But I was no sooner... wards it, than my reproachful young con... tended to point that way with a steady... ed I felt, all the more for the sinking of a... that it was my nest, and that my... as my comforter and friend.

...aimed upon me as we went along; so... carer we drew, and the more familiar the... we passed, the more excited et there, and to run into her arms. But... instead of sharing in these transports,... check them (though very kindly), and... ause and out of sorts.

...stone Rookery would come, however, fher, when the carrier's horse pleased—... How well I recollect it, on a cold grey... , with a dull sky, threatening rain !... or opened, and I looked, half-laughing... angry in my pleasant agitation, for my... It was not she, but a strange ser...

... Peggoty !" I said, ruefully, "isn't she... ?"

...yes, Master Davy," said Peggotty... come home. Wait a bit, Master Davy, I'll tell you something."

...in getting out of the cart, Peggotty was... most extraordinary feastoon of herself, too blank and strange to tell her so. e had got down, she took me by the... me, wondering, into the kitchen; and... loor. Peggoty !" I said, quite frightened. "What's... r ?" "No, the matter, bless you, Master Davy be answered, assuming an air of sprung... thing's the matter, I'm sure. Where's... we's mammas, Master Davy ?" repeated... Why hasn't she come out to the gate,

and what have we come in here for? Oh, Peggoty !" My eyes were full, and I felt as if I were going to tumble down.

..."Bless the precious boy!" cried Peggotty, taking hold of me. "What is it? Speak, my pet!"

..."Not dead, too! Oh, she's not dead, Peggot... y?"

...Peggotty cried out No! with an astonish... volume of voice; and then sat down, and began to pant, and said I had given her a turn.

...I gave her a hug to take away the turn, or to give her another turn in the right direction, and then stood before her, looking at her in anxious inquiry.

..."You see, dear, I should have told you before now," said Peggotty, "but I hadn't an opportuni... y. I ought to have made it, perhaps, but I... couldn't azackly—that was always the... substitue for exactly, in Peggotty's militia of words—... bring my mind to it."

..."Go on, Peggoty," said I, more frightened than before.

..."Master Davy," said Peggotty, untying her... bonnet with a shaking hand, and speaking in a... breathless sort of way. "What do you think?... You have got a Pa!"

...I trembled, and turned white. Something—I... don't know what, or how—connected with the... grave in the churchyard, and the raising of the... dead, seemed to strike me like an unwholesome wind.

..."A new one," said Peggotty.

..."A new one?" I repeated.

...Peggotty gave a gasp, as if she were swallowing... something that was very hard, and, putting... out her hand, said:

..."Come and see him."

..."I don't want to see him."

..."And your mammas," said Peggotty.

...I ceased to draw back, and we went straight to the... best parlor, where she left me. On one side... of the fire, sat my mother; on the other, Mr. Murdstone. My mother dropped her work, and... arose hurriedly, but timidly I thought.

..."Now, Clara my dear," said Mr. Murdstone. "Recollect I control yourself, always control yourself! Davy boy, how do you do?"

...I gave him my hand. After a moment of sus... pense, I went and kissed my mother: she kissed me, patted me gently on the shoulder, and sat down again to her work. I could not look at her, I could not look at him, I knew quite well that he was looking at us both; and I turned to the window and looked out there at some shrubs that were drooping their heads in the cold.

...As soon as I could creep away, I crept up... stairs. My old dear bedroom was changed, and I was to lie a long way off. I rambled down-stairs to find anything that was like itself, so altered it, all seemed; and roamed into the yard. I very soon started back from there, for the empty dog-kennel was filled up with a great dog—deep-mouthed and black-haired like Illm—and he wa
very angry at the sight of me, and sprang out to get at me.

CHAPTER IV.
I FALL INTO DISGRACE.

If the room to which my bed was removed were a somnolent thing that could give evidence, I might appeal to it at this day—who sleeps there now, I wonder—to bear witness for me what a heavy heart I carried to it. I went up there, hearing the dog in the yard bark after me all the way while I climbed the stairs; and, looking as blank and strange upon the room as the room looked upon me, sat down with my small hands crossed, and thought.

I thought of the oddest things. Of the shape of the room, of the cracks in the ceiling, of the paper on the wall, of the flaws in the window-glass making ripples and dimples on the prospect, of the washing-stand being rickety on its three legs, and having a discontented something about it, which reminded me of Mrs. Gummidge under the influence of the old one. I was crying all the time, but, except that I was conscious of being cold and dejected, I am sure I never thought why I cried. At last in my desolation I began to consider that I was dreadfully in love with little Emly, and had been torn away from her to come here where no one seemed to want me, or to care about me, half as much as she did. This made such a very miserable piece of business of it, that I rolled myself up in a corner of the counterpane, and cried myself to sleep.

I was awakened by somebody saying “Here he is!” and uncovering my hot head. My mother and Peggoty had come to look for me, and it was one of them who had done it.

“Davy,” said my mother. “What’s the matter?”

I thought it was very strange that she should ask me, and answered, “Nothing.” I turned over on my face, I recollect, to hide my tears, and pressed her face to mine with my hand, when she would have raised me up.

“Is your doing, Peggoty, you cruel thing!” said my mother. “I have no doubt at all about it. How can you reconcile it to your conscience, I wonder, to prejudice my own boy against me, or against anybody who is dear to me? What do you mean by it, Peggoty?”

Poor Peggoty lifted up her hands and eyes, and only answered, in a sort of paraphrase of the grace I usually repeated after dinner, “Lord forgive you, Mrs. Copperfield, and for what you have said this minute, may you never be truly sorry!”

“It’s enough to distract me,” cried my mother.

“In my honeymoon, too, when my most inveterate enemy might relent, one would think, and not envy me a little peace of mind and happiness. Davy, you naughty boy! Peggoty, you savage creature! Oh, dear me!” cried my mother, turning from one of us to the other, in her petulant, wilful manner. “What a troublesome world this is, when one has the most right to expect it is as agreeable as possible!”

I felt the touch of a hand that I knew was neither hers nor Peggoty’s, and slipped to my feet at the bed-side. It was Mr. Murdstone’s hand, and he kept it on my arm as he said:

“What’s this? Clara, my love, have you forgotten?—Firmness, my dear?”

“I am very sorry, Edward,” said my mother.

“I meant to be very good, but I am so unconfident.”

“Indeed!” he answered. “That’s a bad business, so soon, Clara.”

“I say it’s very hard I should be made so now,” returned my mother, pouting; “and it is—very hard—isn’t it?”

He drew her to him, whispered in her ear, and kissed her. I know as well, when I saw my mother’s head lean down upon his shoulder, and her arms touch his neck—I know as well that he could mould her plain features into any form he chose, as I know now, that he did it.

“Go you below, my love,” said Mr. Murstone, “David and I will come down, together. My friend,” turning a darkening face on Peggoty, when he had watched my mother out, and dismissed her with a nod and a smile: “do you know your mistress’s name?”

“She has been my mistress a long time, sir,” answered Peggoty. “I ought to know it.”

“That’s true,” he answered. “But I thought I heard you, as I came up-stairs, address her by a name that is not hers. She has taken mine, you know. Will you remember that?”

Peggoty, with some uneasy glances at me, curtsied herself out of the room without replying; seeing, I suppose, that she was expected to go, and had no excuse for remaining. When we two were left alone, he shut the door, and sitting on a chair, and holding me standing before him, looked steadily into my eyes. I felt my own attracted, no less steadily, to his. As I recall our being opposed thus, face to face, I seem again to hear my heart beat fast and high.

“David,” he said, making his lips thin, by pressing them together, “If I have an obstinate horse or dog to deal with, what do you think I do?”

“I don’t know.”

“I beat him.”

I had answered in a kind of breathless whisper, but I felt, in my silence, that my breath was shorter now.

“I make him wince, and smart. I say to myself, ‘I’ll conquer that fellow,’ and if it were to cost him all the blood he had, I should do it. What is that upon your face?”
MY POOR MOTHER SUPERSeded.

I said, it was the mark of tears as well as I had asked the question twenty times, with twenty blows, I believe my baby have burst before I would have told he have a good deal of intelligence for a e," he said, with a grave smile that him, "and you understand me very well then, and I have less doubt now, did have knocked me down without compassion, if I had hesitated.

my dear," he said, when I had done so, and he walked me into the parlor, and still on my arm; "you will not be uncomfortable any more, I hope. We shall see our youthful honors." p me, I might have been improved for life, I might have been made another chaps, for life, by a kind word at that word of encouragement and explanation for my childish ignorance, of which, of reassurance to me that it was all have made it dutiful to him in my, forth, instead of In my hypocritical might have made me respect instead. I thought my mother was sorry to cling in the room so seared and strange, recently, when I stole to a chair, she e with her eyes more sorrowfully still perhaps, some freedom in my childish the word was not spoken, and the time one.

at alone, we thee together. He seemed fond of my mother— I am afraid I liked the better for that—and she was very me. I gathered from what they said, or sister of his was coming to stay with that she was expected that evening. I gained whether I found out then or after, without being actively concerned in it, he had some share in, or some and upon the profits of a wine-merchant's stock, with which his family had been from his great grandfather's time, and is sister had a similar interest, but I on it in this place, whether or no.

nner, when we were sitting by the fire, meditating an escape to Peggs within; the hardness to slip away, let it and the master of the house, a coach to the garden gate, and he went out to visitor. My mother followed him. I following her, when she turned round re-door, in the dark, and taking me in as she had been used to do, while to love my new father and be obedient he did this hurriedly and secretly, as if mg, but tenderly; and, putting out her hand behind her, held mine in it, until we came near to where he was standing in the garden, where she let mine go, and drew hers through his arm.

It was Miss Murstone who was arrived, and a gloomy-looking lady was; dark, like her brother, whom she greatly resembled in face and voice; and with very heavy eyebrows, nearly meeting over her large nose, as if, being disabled by the wrongs of her sex from wearing whiskers, she had carried them to that account. She brought with her two uncompromising hard black boxes, with her initials on the lids in hard brass nails. When she paid the coachman she took her money out of a hard steel purse, and she kept the purse in a very jail of a bag which hung upon her arm by a heavy chain, and shut up like a bite. I had never, at that time, seen such a metallic lady altogether as Miss Murstone was; arm.

She was brought into the parlor with many tokens of welcome, and there formally recognized my mother as a new and near relation. Then she looked at me, and said:

"Is that your boy, sister-in-law?"

My mother acknowledged me.

"Generally speaking," said Miss Murstone, "I don't like boys. How d'ye do, boy?"

Under these encouraging circumstances, I replied that I was very well, and that I hoped she was the same; with such an indifferent grace, that Miss Murstone disposed of me in two words:

"Wants manner!"

Having uttered which with great distinctness, she begged the favor of being shown to her room, which became to me from that time forth a place of awe and dread, wherein the two black boxes were never seen open or known to be left unlocked, and where (for I peeped in once or twice when she was out) numerous little steel fetters and rivets, with which Miss Murstone embellished herself when she was dressed, generally hung upon the looking-glass in formidable array.

As well as I could make out, she had come for good, and had no intention of ever going again. She began to "help" my mother next morning, and was in and out of the store-closet all day, putting things to rights, and making havoc in the old arrangements. Almost the first remarkable thing I observed in Miss Murstone was, her being constantly haunted by a suspicion that the servants had a man secreted somewhere on the premises. Under the influence of this delusion, she dived into the coal-cecil at the most untimely hours, and scarcely ever opened the door of a dark cupboard without clapping it to again, in the belief that she had got him.

Though there was nothing very airy about Miss Murstone, she was a perfect Lark in point of getting up. She was up (and, as I believe, to this hour, looking for that man) before anybody in the house was stirring. Peggs gave it as her opinion that she even slept with one eye
open; but I could not concur in this idea; for I tried it myself after hearing the suggestion thrown out, and found it couldn't be done.

On the very first morning after her arrival she was up and ringing her bell at cock-crow. When my mother came down to breakfast and was going to make the tea, Miss Murdstone gave her a kind of peck on the cheek, which was her nearest approach to a kiss, and said:

"Now, Clara, my dear, I am come here, you know, to relieve you of all the trouble I can. You're much too pretty and thoughtful"—my mother blushed but laughed, and seemed not to dislike this character—"to have any duties imposed upon you that can be undertaken by me. If you'll be so good as give me your keys, my dear, I'll attend to all this sort of thing in future."

From that time, Miss Murdstone kept the keys in her own little jail all day, and under her pillow all night, and my mother had no more to do with them than that.

My mother did not suffer her authority to pass from her without a shadow of protest. One night when Miss Murdstone had been developing certain household plans to her brother, of which he signified his approbation, my mother suddenly began to cry, and said she thought she might have been consulted.

"Clara!" said Mr. Murdstone sternly.
"Clara! I wonder at you."
"Oh, it's very well to say you wonder, Edward," cried my mother, "and it's very well for you to talk about firmness, but you wouldn't like it yourself."

Firmness, I may observe, was the grand quality on which both Mr. and Miss Murdstone took their stand. However I might have expressed my comprehension of it at that time, if I had been called upon, I nevertheless did clearly comprehend in my own way, that it was another name for tyranny, and for a certain gloomy, arrogant, devil's humor, that was in them both. The creed, as I should state it now, was this, Mr. Murdstone was firm; nobody in his world was to be so firm as Mr. Murdstone; nobody else in his world was to be firm at all, for everybody was to be bent to his firmness. Miss Murdstone was an exception. She might be firm, but only by relationship, and in an inferior and tributary degree. My mother was another exception. She might be firm, and must be; but only in hearing their firmness, and firmly believing there was no other firmness upon earth.

"It's very hard," said my mother, "that in my own house—"

"My own house!" repeated Mr. Murdstone.

"Our own house, I mean," faltered my mother, evidently frightened. "I hope you must know what I mean, Edward—It's very hard that in your own house I may not have a word to say about domestic matters. I am sure I managed very well before we were married. There's evidence," said my mother sobbing: "ask Peggoty if she didn't do very well when I wasn't interfere with!"

"Edward," said Miss Murdstone, "let that be an end of this. I go to-morrow."

"Jane Murdstone," said her brother, "be silent! How dare you insinuate that you don't know my character better than your words imply?"

"I am sure," my poor mother went on, so grieve disadvantage, and with many tears, "I don't want anybody to see. I am so miserable and unhappy if anybody was to go, I don't ask much. I am not unreasonable. I only want to be consulted sometimes. I am very much obliged to anybody who assists me, and I only want to be consulted as a mere form, sometimes. I thought you were pleased, once, with my being a little inexperienced and girlish, Edward—I am sure you said so—but you seem to hate me for it now, you are so severe."

"Edward," said Miss Murdstone, again, "[a] there be an end of this, I go to-morrow."

"Jane Murdstone," thundered Mr. Murdstone.

"Will you be silent? How dare you?"

Miss Murdstone made a jail-delivery of her pocket-handkerchief, and held it before his eyes.

"Clara," he continued, looking at my mother, "you surprise me! You astound me! Yes, I had a satisfaction in the thought of marrying an inexperienced and artless person, and forming her character, and infusing into it some amount of that firmness and decision of which it stood in need. But when Jane Murdstone is kind enough to come to my assistance in this endeavor, and to assume, for my sake, a condition something like a housekeeper's, and when she meets with a base return—"

"Oh, pray, pray, Edward," cried my mother, "don't accuse me of being ungrateful. I am sure I am not ungrateful. No one ever said I was before. I have many faults, but not that, Oh, don't, my dear!"

"When Jane Murdstone meets, I say," he went on, after waiting until my mother was silent, "with a base return, that feeling of mine chilled and altered."

"Don't, my love, say that!" implored my mother very piteously. "Oh, don't, Edward! I can't bear to hear it. Whatever I am, I am affectionate. I know I am affectionate. I wouldn't say it, if I wasn't certain that I am. Ask Peggoty. I am sure she'll tell you I'm affectionate."

"There is no extent of mere weakness, Clara," said Mr. Murdstone in reply, "that can have the least weight with me. You lose breath."

"Pray let us be friends," said my mother, "I couldn't live under coldness or unkindness. I am so sorry. I have a great many defects, I know, and it's very good of you, Edward, with your strength of mind, to endeavor to correct them in me. Jane, I don't object to anything. I should be quite broken-hearted if you thought of leaving..."
My mother was too much overcome to finish her words. "Murdstone," said Mr. Murdstone to his son, "are any harsh words between us are, I hope, on. It is not my fault that so unusual an event has taken place to-night. I was bestowed upon it by another. Nor is it your fault. I betrayed it into by another. Let us both forget it. And as this," he added, after gnawing words, "is not a fit scene for us, go to bed!" I hardly find the door, through the tears dried in my eyes. I was so sorry for my distress; but I groped my way out, and my way up to my room in the dark, without having the heart to say good night to, or to get a candle from her. When her look to look for me, an hour or so afterwards, she said that my mother had gone to y, and that Mr. and Miss Murdstone were gone down next morning rather earlier than usual outside the parlor-door, on her mother's voice. She was very earnestly entreating Miss Murdstone's pardon, at lady granted, and a perfect reconciliation place. I never knew my mother after give an opinion on any matter, without asking to Miss Murdstone, or without we ascertained by some sure means, what Murdstone's opinion was; and I never saw Murdstone, when out of temper (she was in no way), move her hand towards her bag were going to take out the keys and sign them to my mother, without seeing mother was in a terrible fright.

oomy taint that was in the Murdstone darkness the Murdstone religion, which were and wrathful. I have thought, since, assuming that character was a necessary part of Mr. Murdstone's firmness, which allowed him to let anybody off from the sight of the severest penalties he could excuse for. Be this as it may, I well re the tremendous visages with which we go to church, and the changed air of the gain the dreaded Sunday comes round, into the old pew first, like a guarded ought to a condemned service. Again, Murdstone, in a black velvet gown, that fit had been made out of a pall, follows n me; then my mother; then her haure is no Peggotty now, as in the old ain, I listen to Miss Murdstone mum-recus and expressions, and emphasizing all the dread h a cruel relish. Again, I see her dark round the church when she says "misere-," as if she were calling all the con names. Again, I catch rare glimpses other, moving her lips timidly between with one of them muttering at each ear munder. Again, I wonder with a sudden her it is likely that our good old clergy- e wrong, and Mr. and Miss Murdstone right, and that all the angels in Heaven can be destroying angels. Again, if I move a finger or relax a muscle of my face, Miss Murdstone pokes me with her prayer-book, and makes my side ache.

Yes, and again, as we walk home, I note some neighbors looking at my mother and me, and whispering. Again, as the three go on arm-in-arm and I linger behind alone, I follow some of those looks, and wonder if my mother's step be really not so light as I have seen it, and if the gaiety of her beauty be really almost worried away. Again, I wonder whether any of the neighbors call to mind, as I do, how we used to walk home together, she and I; and I wonder stupidly about that, all the dreary, dismal day.

There had been some talk on occasions of my going to boarding-school. Mr. and Miss Murdstone had originated it, and my mother had of course agreed with them. Nothing, however, was concluded on the subject yet. In the meantime I learned lessons at home.

Shall I ever forget those lessons? They were presided over nominally by my mother, but really by Mr. Murdstone and his sister, who were always present, and found them a favorable occasion for giving my mother lessons in that misplaced firmness, which was the bane of both our lives. I believe I was kept at home for that purpose. I had been apt enough to learn, and willing enough, when my mother and I had lived alone together. I can faintly remember learning the alphabet at her knee. To this day, when I look upon the fat black letters in the primer, the puzzling novelty of their shapes, and the easy good nature of O and Q and S, seem to present themselves again before me as they used to do. But they recall no feeling of disgust or reluctance. On the contrary, I seem to have walked along a path of flowers as far as the crocodile-book, and to have been cheered by the gentleness of my mother's voice and manner all the way. But these solemn lessons which succeeded those, I remember as the death-blow at my peace, and a grievous daily drudgery and misery. They were very long, very numerous, very hard—perfectly unintelligible, some of them, to me—and I was generally as much bewildered by them as I believe my poor mother was herself.

Let me remember how it used to be, and bring one morning back again.

I come into the second-best parlor after breakfast, with my books, and an exercise-book, and a slate. My mother is ready for me at her writing-desk, but not half so ready as Mr. Murdstone in his easy-chair by the window (though he pretends to be reading a book), or as Miss Murdstone, sitting near my mother, stringing steel beads. The very sight of these two has such an influence over me, that I begin to feel the words I have been at infinite pains to get into my head, all sliding away, and going I don't know where. I wonder where they do go, by-the-bye?

I hand the first book to my mother. Perhapsa
it is a grammar, perhaps a history or geography? I take a last drowning look at the page as I gave it into her hand, and start off aloud at a running pace while I have got it fresh. I trip over a word. Mr. Murdstone looks up. I trip over another word. Miss Murdstone looks up. I redder, tumble over half-a-dozen words, and stop. I think my mother would show me the book if she dared, but she does not dare, and she says softly:

"Oh, Davy, Davy!"

"Now, Clara," says Mr. Murdstone, "be firm with the boy. Don't say, 'Oh, Davy, Davy!' That's childish. He knows his lesson, or he does not know it."

"He does not know it," Miss Murdstone interposes awfully.

"I am really afraid he does not," says my mother.

"Then, you see, Clara," returns Miss Murdstone, "you should just give him the book back, and make him know it."

"Yes, certainly," says my mother; "that is what I intend to do, my dear Jane. Now, Davy, try once more, and don't be stupid."

I obey the first clause of the injunction by trying once more, but am not so successful with the second, for I am very stupid. I tumble down before I get to the old place, at a point where I was all right before, and stop to think. But I can't think about the lesson. I think of the number of yards of not in Miss Murdstone's cap, or of the price of Mr. Murdstone's dressing-gown, or any such ridiculous problem that I have no business with, and don't want to have anything at all to do with. Mr. Murdstone makes a movement of impatience which I have been expecting for a long time. Miss Murdstone does the same. My mother glances submissively at them, shuts the book, and lays it by as an arrear to be worked out when my other tasks are done.

There is a pile of these arrears very soon, and it swells like a rolling snowball. The bigger it gets, the more stupid I get. The case is so hopeless, and I feel that I am wallowing in such a bog of nonsense, that I give up all idea of getting out, and abandon myself to my fate. The despairing way in which my mother and I look at each other, as I blunder on, is truly melancholy. But the greatest effect in these miserable lessons is when my mother (thinking nobody is observing her) tries to give me the cue by the motion of her lips. At that instant, Miss Murdstone, who has been lying in wait for nothing else all along, says in a deep warning voice:

"Clara!"

My mother startles, colors, and smiles faintly. Mr. Murdstone comes out of his chair, takes the book, throws it at me or boxes my ears with it, and turns me out of the room by the shoulders.

Even when the lessons are done, the worst is yet to happen, in the shape of an appalling sum. This is invented for me, and delivered to me orally by Mr. Murdstone, and begins, "If I go into a cheesemonger's shop, and buy five thousand double-Gloucester cheeses at fourpence-halfpenny each, present payment"—at which I see Miss Murdstone secretly overjoyed. I pore over these cheeses without any result or enlightenment until dinner time, when, having made a Mirratto of myself by getting the dirt of the slate into the joint of my skin, I have a slice of bread to help me out with the cheeses, and am considered in disgrace for the rest of the evening.

It seems to me, at this distance of time, as if my unfortunate studies generally took this course. I could have done very well if I had been with the Murdstones; but the influence of the Murdstones upon me was like the fascination of two snakes on a wretched young bird. Even when I did get through the morning with tolerable credit, there was not much gained but dinner; for Mr. Murdstone never could endure to see me unsatiate, and if I really made any show of being employed, called her brother's attention to me by saying, "Clara, my dear, there's nothing like work—give your boy an exercise;" which caused me to be clapped down to some new labor there and then. As to any recreation with other children of my age, I had very little of that; for the gloomy theology of the Murdstones made all children out to be a swarm of little vipers (though there was a child once set in the midst of the Disciples), and had that they contaminated one another.

The natural result of this treatment, continued I suppose, for some six months or more, was to make me sulky, dull, and dogged. I was not made the less sa, by my sense of being daily more and more shut out and alienated from my mother. I believe I should have been almost stupid for one circumstance.

It was this. My father had left a small collection of books in a little room up-stairs, in which I had access (for it adjoined my own) and which nobody else in our house ever troubled. Even that blessed little room, Rodderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, the Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, and Robinson Crusoe, came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time—they, and the Arabian Nights, and the Tales of the Gell, and did me no harm; for whatever harm was in some of them was not there for me: I knew nothing of it. It is astonisbing to me now, how I found time, in the midst of my porings and blunderings over heavy themes, to read those books as I did. It is curious to me how I could ever have consoled myself under my small troubles (which were great troubles to me), by impersonating my favorite characters in them—as I did—and by putting Mr. and Miss Murdstone into all the bad ones—which did too, I have been Tom Jones (a child's Tom Jones, a harmless creature) for a week together. I have sustained my own idea of Rodderick Random for a month at a stretch, I verily believe, had a greedy relish for a few volumes of Great
I FALL INTO DEEP DISGRACE.

and Travels—I forget what, low—that were on
those shelves; and for days and days I can re-
member to have gone about my region of our
house, armed with the centre-piece out of an old
set of boot-trees—the perfect realisation of Cap-
tain Somebody, of the Royal British Navy, in
gar of being beset by savages, and resolved to
tell his life at a great price. The Captain never
lost dignity, from having his ears boxed with the
Latin Grammar. I did; but the Captain was a
Captain and a hero, in despite of all the grammars
of all the languages in the world, dead or alive.

This was my only and my constant comfort.

When I think of it, the picture always rises in my
mind, of a summer evening, the boys at play in
the churchyard, and I sitting on my bed, reading
as if for life. Every barn in the neighborhood,
every stone in the church, and every foot of the
churchyard, had some association of its own, in
my mind, connected with these books, and stood
for some locality made famous in them. I have
seen Tom Pipes go climbing up the church-stee-
ples; I have watched Stap, with the knapsack on
his back, stopping to rest himself upon the wicket-
gate; and I know that Commodore Trunnion held
that Club with Mr. Pickle, in the parlor of our
little village alehouse.

The reader now understands, as well as I do,what I was when I came to that point of my
youthful history to which I am now coming
again.

One morning when I went into the parlor with
my books, I found my mother looking anxious,
Miss Murstone looking firm, and Mr. Murstone
binding something round the bottom of a cane—a
tube and timber cane, which he left off binding
when I came in, and poised and switched in the air.

"I tell you, Clara," said Mr. Murstone, "I
have been often flogged myself."

"To be sure; of course," said Miss Mur-
stone.

"Certainly, my dear Jane," faltered my moth-
er, weekly. "But—but do you think it did Ed-
ward good?"

"Do you think it did Edward harm, Clara?"
asked Mr. Murstone, gravely.

"That's the point," said his sister.

To this my mother returned, "Certainly, my
dear Jane," and said no more.

I felt apprehensive that I was personally inter-
ested in this dialogue, and sought Mr. Murstone's
eye as it lighted on mine.

"Now, David," he said—and I saw that cast
again as he said it—"you must be far more care-
ful to-day than usual." He gave the cane another
pounce, and another switch; and having finished
his preparation of it, laid it down beside him,
with an impressive look, and took up his
book.

This was a good fresherner to my presence of
mind, as a beginning. I felt the words of my
lessons slipping off, not one by one, or line by
line, but by the entire page; I tried to lay hold
of them; but they seemed, if I may so express it,
to have put skates on, and to skim away from me
with a smoothness there was no checking.

We began badly, and went on worse. I had
come in, with an idea of distinguishing myself
rather, conceiving that I was very well prepared;
but it turned out to be quite a mistake. Book
after book was added to the heap of failures, Miss
Murstone being firmly watchful of us all the
time. And when we came at last to the five
thousand cheeses (canes he made it that day, I
remember), my mother burst out crying.

"Clara!" said Miss Murstone, in her warn-
ing voice.

"I am not quite well, my dear Jane, I think,"said my mother.

I saw him wink, solemnly, at his sister, as he
rose and said, taking up the cane:

"Why, Jane, we can hardly expect Clara to
bear, with perfect firmness, the worry and tor-
ment that David has occasioned her to-day. That
would be stocial. Clara is greatly strengthened
and improved, but we can hardly expect so much
from her. David, you and I will go up-stairs, boy."

As he took me out at the door, my mother ran
towards us. Miss Murstone said, "Clara! are
you a perfect fool?" and interfered. I saw my
mother stop her ears then, and I heard her crying.

He walked me up to my room slowly and
gravely—I am certain he had a delight in that
formal parade of executing justice—and when we
got there, suddenly twisted my head under his
arm.

"Mr. Murstone! Sir!" I cried to him.

"Don't! Pray don't beat me! I have tried to
learn, sir, but I can't learn while you and Miss
Murstone are by. I can't indeed!"

"Can't you, indeed, David?" he said. "We'll
try that."

He had my head as in a vice, but I twined
round him somehow, and stopped him for a
moment, entreating him not to beat me. It was
only for a moment that I stopped him, for he cut
me heavily an instant afterwards, and in the same
instant I caught the hand with which he held me
in my mouth, between my teeth, and bit it
through. It sets my teeth on edge to think of it.

He beat me then, as if he would beat me to
death. Above all the noise we made, I heard
them running up the stairs, and crying out—I
heard my mother crying out—and Peggy
t. Then he was gone; and the door was locked
outside; and I was lying, fevered and hot, and
torn, and sore, and raging in my puny way, upon
the floor.

How well I recollect, when I became quiet,what an unnatural stillness seemed to reign
through the whole house! How well I remem-
ber, when my smart and passion began to cool,
how wicked I began to feel!

I sat listening for a long while, but there was
not a sound. I crawled up from the floor, and
saw my face in the glass, so swollen, red, and
ugly that it almost frightened me. My stripe
were sore and stiff, and made me cry afresh, when I moved; but they were nothing to the guilt I felt. It lay heavier on my breast than if I had been a most atrocious criminal, I dare say.

It had begun to grow dark, and I had shut the window (I had been lying, for the most part, with my head upon the sill, by turns crying, dozing, and looking listlessly out), when the key was turned, and Miss Murdstone came in with some bread and meat, and milk. These she put down upon the table without a word, glaring at me the while with exemplary firmness, and then retired, locking the door after her.

Long after it was dark I sat there, wondering whether anybody else would come. When this appeared improbable for that night, I undressed, and went to bed; and there, I began to wonder fearfully what would be done to me. Whether it was a criminal act that I had committed? Whether I should be taken into custody, and sent to prison? Whether I was at all in danger of being hanged?

I never shall forget the waking, next morning; the being cheerful and fresh for the first moment, and the then being weighed down by the staid and dismal oppression of remembrance. Miss Murdstone reappeared before I was out of bed; told me, in so many words, that I was free to walk in the garden for half an hour and no longer; and retired, leaving the door open, that I might avail myself of that permission.

I did so, and did so every morning of my imprisonment, which lasted five days. If I could have seen my mother alone, I should have gone down on my knees to her and besought her forgiveness; but I saw no one, Miss Murdstone excepted, during the whole time—except at evening prayers in the parlor; to which I was escorted by Miss Murdstone after everybody else was placed; where I was stationed, a young outlaw, all alone by myself near the door; and whence I was solemnly conducted by my jailer, before any one arose from the devotional posture. I only observed that my mother was as far off from me as she could be, and kept her face another way, so that I never saw it; and that Mr. Murdstone's hand was bound up in a large linen wrapper.

The length of those five days I can convey no idea of to my one. They occupy the place of years in my remembrance. The way in which I listened to all the incidents of the house that made themselves audible to me; the ringing of bells, the opening and shutting of doors, the murmuring of voices, the footsteps on the stairs; to any languid, whistling, or singing, outside, which seemed more disconcert than anything else to me in my solitude and disgrace—the uncertain pace of the hours, especially at night, when I would wake thinking it was morning, and find that the family were not yet gone to bed, and that all the length of night had yet to come—the depressed dreams and nightmares I had—the return of day, noon, afternoon, evening, when the boys played in the churchyard, and I watched them from a distance, within the room, being ashamed to show myself at the window lest they should know I was a prisoner—the strange sensation of never myself speak—the fleeting intervals of a sort like cheerfulness, which came with eating drinking, and went away with it—the set of rain one evening, with a fresh smell, coming down faster and faster between the church, until it and gathering night to quench me in gloom, and fear, and tears, all this appears to have gone round and round years instead of days, it is so vividly and so stamped on my remembrance.

On the last night of my restraint, I was ened by hearing my own name spoken in per. I started up in bed, and putting arms in the dark, said:

"Is that you, Peggoty?"

There was no immediate answer, but spyly I heard my name again, in a tone so very terious and awful, that I think I should be into a fit, if it had not occurred to me that have come through the keyhole.

I groped my way to the door, and put own lips to the keyhole, whispered:

"Is that you, Peggoty, dear?"

"Yes, my own precious Davy," she said.

"Be as soft as a mouse, or the Cat'll hear it," I understood this to mean Miss Murdstone and was sensible of the urgency of the case room being close by.

"How's mamma, dear Peggoty? Is angry with me?"

I could hear Peggoty crying softly on the keyhole, as I was doing on mine, she answered. "No. Not very."

"What is going to be done with me, P dear? Do you know?"

"School. Near London," was Peggoty's answer. I was obliged to get her to repeat that she spoke it the first time quite due throat, in consequence of my having forgot take my mouth away from the keyhole and my ear there; and though her words ticked a good deal, I didn't hear them.

"When, Peggoty?"

"To-morrow."

"Is that the reason why Miss Murdstone the clothes out of my drawers?" which done, though I have forgotten to mention it, "Yes," said Peggoty. "Box."

"Shan't I see mamma?"

"Yes," said Peggoty. "Morning."

Then Peggoty fitted her mouth close keyhole, and delivered these words thus with as much feeling and earnestness as has ever been the medium of commun will venture to assert: shooting in each little sentence in a convulsive little burst own.

"Davy, dear. If I ain't been exactly mate with you. Lately, as I used to be, because I don't love you. Just as well an my pretty puppet. It's because I thought ter for you. And for some one else.
Davy, my darling, are you listening? Can you hear me?"

"Ye—ye—ye—yes, Pegotty!" I sobbed.

"My own!" said Pegotty, with infinite compassion. "What I want to say, is. That you must never forget me. For I'll never forget you. And I'll take as much care of your mamma, Davy. As ever I took of you. And I won't leave her. The day may come when she'll be glad to lay her poor head. On her stupid, cross, old Pegotty's arm again. And I'll write to you, my dear. Though I ain't no scholar. And I'll— I'll—" Pegotty fell to kissing the keyhole, as she couldn't kiss me.

"Thank you, dear Pegotty!" said I. "Oh, thank you! Thank you! Will you promise me one thing, Pegotty? Will you write and tell Mr. Pegotty and little Em'ly, and Mrs. Gummidy and Ham, that I am not so bad as they might suppose, and that I sent 'em all my love—especially to little Em'ly? Will you, if you please, Pegotty?"

The kind soul promised, and we both of us kissed the keyhole with the greatest affection—I patted it with my hand, I recollect, as if it had been her honest face—and parted. From that night there grew up in my breast a feeling for Pegotty which I cannot very well define. She did not replace my mother: no one could do that; but she came into a vacancy in my heart, which closed upon her, and I felt towards her something I have never felt for any other human being. It was a sort of comical affection, too; and yet if she had died, I cannot think what I should have done, or how I should have acted out the tragedy it would have been to me.

In the morning Miss Murdstone appeared as usual, and told me I was going to school; which was not altogether such news to me as she supposed. She also informed me that when I was dressed, I was to come downstairs into the parlor, and have my breakfast. There I found my mother, very pale and with red eyes; into whose arms I ran, and begged her pardon from my suffering soul.

"Oh, Davy!" she said. "That you could hurt any one I love! Try to be better, pray to be better! I forgive you; but I am so grieved, Davy, that you should have such bad passions in your heart."

They had persuaded her that I was a wicked fellow, and she was more sorry for that, than for my going away. I felt it sorely. I tried to eat my parting breakfast, but my tears dropped upon my bread-and-butter, and trickled into my tea. I saw my mother look at me sometimes, and then glance at the watchful Miss Murdstone, and then look down, or look away.

"Master Copperfield's box there!" said Miss Murdstone, when wheels were heard at the gate.

I looked for Pegotty, but it was not she; neither nor Mr. Murdstone appeared. My lower acquaintance, the carrier, was at the door; his box was taken out to his cart, and lifted in.

"Clara!" said Miss Murdstone, in her warning note.

"Ready, my dear Jane," returned my mother. "Good bye, Davy. You are going for your own good. Good bye, my child. You will come home in the holidays, and be a better boy."

"Clara!" Miss Murdstone repeated.

"Certainly, my dear Jane," replied my mother, who was holding me. "I forgive you, my dear boy. God bless you!"

"Clara!" Miss Murdstone repeated.

Miss Murdstone was good enough to take me out to the cart, and to say on the way that she hoped I would repent, before I came to a bad end; and then I got into the cart, and the lazy horse walked off with it.

CHAPTER V.

WE might have gone about half a mile, and my pocket-handkerchief was quite wet through, when the carrier stopped short.

Looking out to ascertain what, I saw, to my amazement, Pegotty burst from a hedge and climb into the cart. She took me in both her arms, and squeezed me to her stays until the pressure on my nose was extremely painful, though I never thought of that till afterwards when I found it very tender. Not a single word did Pegotty speak. Releasing one of her arms, she put it down in her pocket to the elbow, and brought out some paper bags of cakes which she crammed into my pockets, and a purse which she put into my hand, but not one word did she say. After another and a final squeeze with both arms, she got down from the cart and ran away; and my belief is, has always been, without a solitary button on her gown. I picked up one, of several that were rolling about, and treasured it as a keepsake for a long time.

The carrier looked at me, as if to inquire if she were coming back. I shook my head, and said I thought not. "Then come up," said the carrier to the lazy horse; who came up accordingly.

Having by this time cried as much as I possibly could, I began to think it was of no use crying any more, especially as neither Roderick Random, nor that Captain in the Royal British Navy had ever cried, that I could remember, in trying situations. The carrier seeing me in this resolution, proposed that my pocket handkerchief should be spread upon the horse's back to dry. I thanked him, and assented; and particularly small it looked, under those circumstances.

I had now leisure to examine the purse. It was a stiff leather purse, with a snap, and had three bright shillings in it, which Pegotty had evidently polished up with whitening, for my greater delight. But its most precious contents were two half-crowns, folded together in a bit of paper, on which was written, in my mother's hand, "For Davy. With my love." I was so overcome by this, that I asked the carrier to be so good
...to reach my pocket handkerchief again; but he said he thought I had better do without it, and I thought I really had, so I wiped my eyes on my sleeve and stopped myself.

For good, too; though, in consequence of my previous emotion, I was still occasionally seized with a stormy sob. After we had jogged on for some little time, I asked the carrier if he was going all the way?

"All the way where?" inquired the carrier.

"There," I said.

"Where's there?" inquired the carrier.

"Near London," I said.

"Why that horse," said the carrier, jerking the rein to point him out, "would be deader than pork afore he got over half the ground."

"Are you only going to Yarmouth, then?" I asked.

"That's about it," said the carrier. "And there I shall take you to the stage-cut, and the stage-cut that'll take you to—wherever it is."

As this was a great deal for the carrier (whose name was Mr. Barkis) to say—he being, as I observed in a former chapter, of a phlegmatic temperament, and not at all conversational—I offered him a cake as a mark of attention, which he ate at one gulp, exactly like an elephant, and which made no more impression on his big face than it would have done on an elephant's.

"Did she make 'em, now?" said Mr. Barkis, always leaning forward, in his slouching way, on the footboard of the cart with an arm on each knee.

"Peggotty, do you mean, sir?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Barkis. "Her."

"Yes. She makes all our pastry and does all our cooking."

"Do she though?" said Mr. Barkis.

He made up his mouth as if to whistle, but he didn't whistle. He sat looking at the horse's ears, as if he saw something new there; and sat so for a considerable time. By-and-by, he said:

"No sweetheart, I believe?"

"Sweetmeats did you say, Mr. Barkis?" For I thought he wanted something else to eat, and had pointedly alluded to that description of refreshment.

"Hearts," said Mr. Barkis. "Sweethearts; no person walks with her."

"With Peggotty?"

"Ah!" he said. "Her."

"Oh, no. She never had a sweetheart."

"Didn't she, though?" said Mr. Barkis.

Again he made up his mouth to whistle, and again he didn't whistle, but sat looking at the horse's ears.

"So she makes," said Mr. Barkis, after a long interval of reflection, "all the apple pastries, and does all the cooking, do she?"

I replied that such was the fact.

"Well. I'll tell you what," said Mr. Barkis.

"Prep you might be writin' to her?"

"I shall certainly write to her," I rejoined.

"Ah!" he said, slowly turning his eyes towards me. "Well! If you was writin' to her, praps you'd recollect to say that Barkis was willin'; would you?"

"That Barkis was willing," I repeated insolently. "Is that all the message?"

"Ye-es," he said, considering. "Ye-es; Barkis is willin'."

"But you will be at Blunderstone again tomorrow, Mr. Barkis," I said, raising a little at the idea of my being far away from it then, "and could give your own message so much better."

As he repudiated this suggestion, however, with a jerk of his head, and once more contrasted his previous request by saying, with profound gravity, "Barkis is willin'. That's the message," I readily undertook its transmission.

While I was waiting for the coach in the hotel at Yarmouth that very afternoon, I procured a sheet of paper and an inkstand and wrote a note to Peggotty, which ran thus: "My dear Peggotty, I have come here safe. Barkis is willing. My love to mamma. Yours affectionately, F. S. He says he particularly wants you to know—Barkis is willing."

When I had taken this commission on myself prospectively, Mr. Barkis relapsed into perfect silence; and I, feeling quite worn out by all that had happened lately, lay down on a seat in the cart and fell asleep. I slept soundly until we got to Yarmouth: which was so entirely new and strange to me in the inn-yard to which we drew, that I at once abandoned a latent hope I had had of meeting with some of Mr. Peggotty's family there, perhaps even with little Emily herself.

The coach was in the yard, shining very much all over, but without any horses to it as yet; and it looked in that state as if nothing was more unlikely than its ever going to London. I was thinking this, and wondering what would ultimately become of my box, which Mr. Barkis had put down on the yard-pavement by the pole (having driven up the yard to turn his cart), and also what would ultimately become of me, when a lady looked out of a bow-window where some fowls and joints of meat were hanging up, and said:

"Is that the little gentleman from Blunderstone?"

"Yes, ma'am," I said.

"What name?" inquired the lady.

"Copperfield, ma'am," I said.

"That won't do," returned the lady. "Nobody's dinner is paid for here, in that name."

"Is it Murdstone, ma'am?" I said.

"If you're Master Murdstone," said the lady, "why do you go and give another name, first?"

I explained to the lady how it was, who then rang a bell, and called out, "William! show the coffee-room!" upon which a waiter came running out of a kitchen on the opposite side of the yard to show it, and seemed a good deal surprised when he was only to show it to me.

It was a large long room with some large maps in it. I doubt if I could have felt much stranger if
the maps had been real foreign countries, and I cast
away in the middle of them. I felt it was taking a
liberty to sit down, with my cap in my hand, on
the corner of the chair nearest the door; and
when the waiter laid a cloth on purpose for me,
and put a set of casters on it, I think I must have
turned red all over with modesty.

He brought me some chops, and vegetables,
and took the covers off in such a bouncing man-
er that I was afraid I must have given him some
offence. But he greatly relieved my mind by put-
ing a chair for me at the table, and saying very
politely, "Now, six-foot! come on!"

I thanked him, and took my seat at the board;
but found it extremely difficult to handle my knife
and fork with anything like dexterity, or to avoid
splashing myself with the gravy, while he was
standing opposite, staring so hard, and making
me blush in the most dreadful manner every time
I caught his eye. After watching me into the sec-
ond chop, he said:

"There's half a pint of ale for you. Will you
have it now?"

I thanked him and said "Yes." Upon which
he poured it out of a jug into a large tumbler,
and held it up against the light, and made it look
beautiful.

"My eye!" he said. "It seems a good deal,
does it?"

"It does seem a good deal," I answered with a
smile. For it was quite delightful to me to find
him so pleasant. He was a twinkling-eyed, plush-
promaded man, with his hair standing upright all
over his head; and as he stood with one arm
akimbo, holding up the glass to the light with
the other hand, he looked quite friendly.

"There was a gentleman here yesterday," he
said—"a stout gentleman, by the name of Top-
sy-wotsers—perhaps you know him?"

"No," I said, "I don't think——"

"In breeches and gaiters, broad-brimmed hat,
grey coat, speckled choker," said the waiter.

"No," I said bashfully, "I haven't the plea-
sure—"

"He came in here," said the waiter, looking
at the light through the tumbler, "ordered a glass
of this ale—would order it—I told him not—drank
it, and fell dead. It was too old for him. It
can't be drawn; that's the fact."

I was very much shocked to hear of this mol-
archal accident, and said I thought I had better
have some water.

"Why you see," said the waiter, still looking
at the light through the tumbler, with one of his
eyes shut up, "our people don't like things being
ordered and left. It offends 'em. But I'll drink
it, if you like. I'm used to it, and use is every-
ting. I don't think it'll hurt me, if I throw my
head back, and take it off quick. Shall I?"

I replied that he would much oblige me by
drinking it, if he thought he could do it safely,
but by no means otherwise. When he did throw
his head back, and take it off quick, I had a hor-
rible fear, I confess, of seeing him meet the fate
of the lamented Mr. Topsy-what's the name?
and fall lifeless on the carpet. But it didn't hurt him. On
the contrary, I thought he seemed the freer for it.

"What have we got here?" he said, putting a
fork into my dish. "Not chops?"

"Chops," I said.

"Lord bless my soul!" he exclaimed, "I didn't
know they were chops. Why a chop's the very
ting to take off the bad effects of that beer!
Ain't it lucky?"

So he took a chop by the bone in one hand,
and a potato in the other, and ate away with a
very good appetite, to my extreme satisfaction.
He afterwards took another chop, and another
potato; and after that another chop and another
potato. When he had done, he brought me a
pudding, and having set it before me, seemed to
ruminate, and to become absent in his mind for
some moments.

"How's the pie?" he said, rousing himself.

"It's a pudding," I made answer.

"Pudding!" he exclaimed. "Why, bless me,
so it is! What!" looking at it nearer. "I don't
mean to say it's a better-pudding?"

"Yes, it is indeed."

"Why, a better-pudding," he said, taking up
a table-spoon, "is my favorite pudding! Ain't
that lucky? Come on, little 'un, and let's see
who'll get most."

The waiter certainly got most. He entreated
me more than once to come in and try, but after
with his table-spoon to my tea-spoon, his dis-
patch to my dispatch, and his appetite to my
appetite, I was left far behind at the first mouthful,
and had no chances with him. I never saw any
one enjoy a pudding so much, I think; and he
laughed, when it was all gone, as if his enjoyment
of it lasted still.

Finding him so very friendly and companion-
able, it was then that I asked for the pen and ink
and paper, to write to Pegotty. He not only
brought it immediately, but was good enough to
look over me while I wrote the letter. When I
had finished it, he asked me where I was going to
school.

I said, "Near London," which was all I knew.

"Oh! my eye!" he said, looking very low-
spirited, "I am sorry for that."

"Why?" I asked him.

"Oh, Lord!" he said, shaking his head,
"that's the school where they broke the boy's
ribs—two ribs—a little boy he was. I should
say he was—let me see—how old are you, about?"

I told him between eight and nine.

"That's just his age," he said. "He was
eight years and six months old when they broke
his first rib; eight years and eight months old
when they broke his second, and did for him."

I could not disguise from myself, or from the
waiter, that this was an uncomfortable coinci-
dence, and inquired how it was done. His
answer was not cheering to my spirits, for it con-
stisted of two dismal words. "With who's pig."

The blowing of the coach-horn in the yard was
a seasonable diversion, which made me get up and hesitatingly inquire, in the mingled pride and diffidence of having a purse (which I took out of my pocket), if there were anything to pay.

"There's a sheet of letter-paper," he returned.

"Did you ever buy a sheet of letter-paper?"

I could not remember that I ever had.

"It's dear," he said, "on account of the duty. There's that we're taxed in this country. There's nothing else, except the waiter. Never mind the ink. Those by that."

"What should you—what should I—how much ought I to—what would it be right to pay the waiter, if you please?" I stammered, blushing.

"If I hadn't a family, and that family hadn't the cowpock," said the waiter, "I wouldn't take a sixpence. If I didn't support a aged pair, and a lovely sister,—"—here the waiter was greatly agitated—"I wouldn't take a farthing. If I had a good place, and was treated well here, I should beg acceptance of a trifle, instead of taking of it. But I live on broken wittles—and I sleep on the coals"—here the waiter burst into tears.

I was very much concerned for his misfortunes, and felt that any recognition short of ninepence would be mere brutality and harshness of heart. Therefore I gave him one of my three bright shillings, which he received with much humility and veneration, and spun up with his thumb, directly afterwards, to try the goodness of it. It was a little disconcerting to me, to find, when I was being helped up behind the coach, that I was supposed to have eaten all the dinner without any assistance. I discovered this, from overhearing the lady in the bow-window say to the guard, "Take care of that child, George, or he'll burst!" and from observing that the women-servants who were about the place came out to look and giggle at me as a young phenomenon.

My unfortunate friend the waiter, who had quite recovered his spirits, did not appear to be disturbed by this, but joined in the general admiration without being at all confused. If I had any doubt of him, I suppose this half-awakened it; but I am inclined to believe that with the simple confidence of a child, and the natural reliance of a child upon superior years (qualities I am very sorry any children should prematurely change for worldly wisdom), I had no serious mistrust of him on the whole, even then.

I felt it rather hard, I must own, to be made, without deserving it, the subject of jokes between the coachman and guard as to the coach drawing heavy behind, on account of my sitting there, and as to the greater expendiency of my travelling by wagon. The story of my supposed appetite getting wind among the outside passengers, they were merry upon it likewise; and asked me whether I was going to be paid for, at school, as two brothers or three, and whether I was contracted for, or went upon the regular terms; with other pleasant questions. But the worst of it was, that I knew I should be ashamed to eat anything, when an opportunity offered, and that, after a rather light dinner, I should remain hungry all night—for I had left my cake behind, at the hotel, in my hurry. My apprehensions were realised. When we stopped for supper I couldn't muster courage to take any, though I should have liked it very much, but sat by the fire and said I didn't want anything. This did not save me from more jokes, either; for a husky-voiced gentleman with a rough face, who had been eating out of a sandwich-box nearly all the way, except when he had been drinking out of a bottle, said I was like a bon constrictor, who took enough at one meal to last him a long time; after which he actually brought a rash out upon himself with boiled beef.

We had started from Yarmouth at three o'clock in the afternoon, and we were due in London about eight next morning. It was midsummer weather, and the evening was very pleasant. When we passed through a village, I pictured to myself what the insides of the houses were like, and what the inhabitants were about; and when boys came running after us, and got up behind and swung there for a little way, I wondered whether their fathers were alive, and whether they were happy at home. I had plenty to think of, therefore, besides my mind running continually on the kind of place I was going to, which was an awful speculation. Sometimes, I remember, I resigned myself to thoughts of home and Peggoty; and to endeavoring, in a confused blind way, to recall how I felt, and what sort of boy I used to be, before I bit Mr. Marstone: which I couldn't satisfy myself about by any means, I seemed to have bitten him in such remote antiquity.

The night was not so pleasant as the evening, for it got chilly: and being put between two gentlemen (the rough-faced one and another) to prevent my tumbling off the coach, I was nearly smothered by their falling asleep, and completely blocking me up. They squeezed me so hard sometimes, that I could not help crying out, "Oh, if you please!"—which they didn't like at all, because it woke them. Opposite me was an elderly lady in a great far cloack, who looked in the dark more like a haystack than a lady, she was wrapped up to such a degree. This lady had a basket with her, and she hadn't known what to do with it for a long time, until she found that, on account of my legs being short, it could go underneath me. It cramped and hurt me so, that it made me perfectly miserable; but if I moved in the least, and made a glass that was in the basket rattle against something else (as it was sure to do), she gave me the cruellest poke with her foot, and said, "Come, don't you fidget. Your bones are young enough I'm sure!"

At last the sun rose, and then my companions seemed to sleep easier. The difficulties under which they had labored all night, and which had found utterance in the most terrific gasps and groans, were not to be conceived. As the sun got higher, their sleep became lighter, and as they...
I am left till called for.

gradually one by one awoke. I recollect being very much surprised by the faint everybody made, then, of not having been to sleep at all, and by the uncommon indignation with which every one repelled the charge. I labor under the same kind of astonishment to this day, having invariably observed that of all human weaknesses, the one to which our common nature is the least disposed to confess (I cannot imagine why) is the weakness of having gone to sleep in a coach.

What an amazing place London was to me when I saw it in the distance, and how I believed all the adventures of all my favorite heroes to be constantly enacted and re-enacted there, and how I vaguely made it out in my own mind to be full of wonders and wickedness than all the cities of the Earth, I need not stop here to relate. We approached it by degrees, and got, in due time, to the inn in the Whitechapel district, for which we were bound. I forget whether it was the Blue Bell, or the Blue Bear; but I know it was the Blue Something, and that its likeness was painted up on the back of the coach.

The guard's eye lighted on me as he was getting down, and he said at the booking-office door:

"Is there anybody here for a youngster booked in the name of Murdstone, from Blandstone, Suffolk, to be left till called for?"

Nobody answered.

"Try Copperfield, if you please, sir," said I, looking helplessly down.

"Is there anybody here for a youngster, booked in the name of Murdstone, from Blandstone, Suffolk, but owning to the name of Copperfield, to be left till called for?" said the guard. "Come! Is there anybody?

No. There was nobody. I looked anxiously around, but the inquiry made no impression on any of the bystanders. If I except a man in gaiters, with one eye, who suggested that they had better put a brass collar round my neck, and tie me up to be sold."

A ladder was brought, and I got down after the lady, who was like a haystack; not daring to stir, until her basket was removed. The coach was clear of passengers by that time, the luggage was very soon cleared out, the horses had been taken out before the luggage, and now the coach itself was wheeled and backed off by some hostlers, out of the way. Still, nobody appeared, to claim the dusty youngster from Blandstone, Suffolk.

More solitary than Robinson Crusoe, who had nobody to look at him, and see that he was solitary, I went into the booking-office, and, by initiation of the clerk on duty, passed behind the counter, and sat down on the scale at which they weighed the luggage. Here, as I sat looking at the parcels, packages, and books, and inhaling the smell of stables (ever since associated with that morning), a procession of most tremendous considerations began to march through my mind. Supposing nobody should ever fetch me, how long would they consent to keep me there? Would they keep me long enough to spend seven shillings? Should I sleep at night in one of those wooden bins, with the other luggage, and wash myself at the pump in the yard in the morning; or should I be turned out every night, and expected to come again to be left till called for, when the office opened next day? Supposing there was no mistake in the case, and Mr. Murdstone had devised this plan to get rid of me, what should I do? If they allowed me to remain there until my seven shillings were spent, I couldn't hope to remain there when I began to starve. That would obviously be inconvenient and unpleasant to the customers, besides entailing on the Blue Whatever-it-was, the risk of funeral expenses. If I started off at once, and tried to walk back home, how could I ever find my way, how could I ever hope to walk so far, how could I make sure of any one but Peggotty, even if I got back? If I found out the nearest proper authorities, and offered myself to go for a soldier, or a sailor, I was such a little fellow that it was most likely they wouldn't take me in. These thoughts, and a hundred other such thoughts, turned me burning hot, and made me giddy with apprehension and dismay. I was in the height of my fever when a man entered and whispered to the clerk, who presently started me off the scales, and pushed me over to him, as if I were weighed, bought, delivered, and paid for.

As I went out of the office, hand in hand with this new acquaintance, I stole a look at him. He was a gaunt, sallow young man, with hollow cheeks, and a chin almost as black as Mr. Murdstone's; but there the likeness ended, for his whiskers were shaved off, and his hair instead of being glossy, was rusty and dry. He was dressed in a suit of black clothes which were rather rusty and dry too, and rather short in the sleeves and legs; and he had a white neck-kerchief on that was not over clean. I did not, and do not, suppose that this neck-kerchief was all the linen he wore, but it was all he showed or gave any hint of.

"You're the new boy?" he said.

"Yes, sir," I said.

"I supposed I was. I didn't know.

"I'm one of the masters at Salem House," he said.

I made him a bow and felt very much overawed. I was so ashamed to allude to a common-place thing like my box, to a scholar and a master at Salem House, that we had gone some little distance from the yard before I had the hardihood to mention it. We turned back, on my humbly insinuating that it might be useful to me hereafter; and he told the clerk that the carrier had instructions to call for it at noon.

"If you please, sir," I said, when we had accomplished about the same distance as before, "is it far?"

"It's down by Blackheath," he said.

"Is that far, sir?" I diffidently asked.

"It's a good step," he said. "We shall go by stage-coach. It's about six miles."
I was so faint and tired, that the idea of holding out for six miles more was too much for me. I took heart to tell him that I had had nothing all night, and that if he would allow me to buy something to eat, I should be very much obliged to him. He appeared surprised at this—I see him stop and look at me now—and after considering for a few moments, said he wanted to call on an old person who lived not far off, and that the best way would be for me to buy some bread, or whatever I liked best that was wholesome and make my breakfast at her house, where we could get some milk.

Accordingly we looked in at a baker’s window, and after I had made a series of proposals to buy everything that was billows in the shop, and he had rejected them one by one, we decided in favor of a nice little loaf of brown bread, which cost me threepence. Then, at a grocer’s shop, we bought an egg and a slice of streaky bacon; which still left what I thought a good deal of change, out of the second of the bright shillings, and made me consider London a very cheap place. These provisions laid in, we went on through a great noise and uproar that confused my weary head beyond description, and over a bridge which, no doubt, was London Bridge (indeed I think he told me so, but I was half asleep), until we came to the poor person’s house, which was a part of some almshouses, as I knew by their look, and by an inscription on a stone over the gate, which said they were established for twenty-five poor women.

The Master at Salem House lifted the latch of one of a number of little black doors that were all alike, and had each a little diamond-paned window on one side, and another little diamond-paned window above; and we went into the little house of one of these poor old women, who was blowing a fire to make a little saucepan boil. On seeing the master enter, the old woman stopped with the bellows on her knee, and said something that I thought sounded like “My Charley!” but on seeing me come in too, she got up, and rubbing her hands made a confused sort of half curiosity.

“Can you cook this young gentleman’s breakfast for him, if you please?” said the Master at Salem House.

“Can I?” said the old woman. “Yes can I, sure!”

“How’s Mrs. Fibbitson to-day?” said the Master, looking at another old woman in a large chair by the fire, who was such a bundle of clothes that I feel grateful to this hour for not having sat upon her by mistake.

“Ah, she’s poorly,” said the first old woman.

“It’s one of her bad days. If the fire was to go out, through any accident, I verily believe she’d go out too, and never come to life again.”

As they looked at her, I looked at her also. Although it was a warm day, she seemed to think of nothing but the fire. I fancied she was jealous even of the saucepan on it; and I have reason to know that she took its impression into the service of boiling my egg and browning my bacon, in dudgeon; for I saw her, with my own disconsolate eyes, shake her fist at me once, when those culinary operations were going on, and no one else was looking. The sun streamed in at the little window, but she sat with her own back and the back of the large chair towards it, Screaming the fire as if she was sedulously keeping it warm, instead of it keeping her warm, and watching it in a most distrustful manner. The completion of the preparations for my breakfast, by relieving the fire, gave her such extreme joy that she laughed aloud—and a very unmelodious laugh she had, I must say.

I sat down to my brown loaf, my egg, and my rasher of bacon, with a basin of milk besides, and made a most delicious meal. While I was yet in the full enjoyment of it, the old woman of the house said to the Master:

“Have you got your flute with you?”

“Yes,” he returned.

“Have a blow at it,” said the old woman, complacently. “Do!”

The Master, upon this, put his hand underneath the skirts of his coat, and brought out his flute in three pieces, which he screwed together, and began immediately to play. My impression is, after many years of consideration, that there never can have been anybody in the world who played worse. He made the most dismal sounds I have ever heard produced by any means, natural or artificial. I don’t know what the tunes were—if there were such things in the performance at all, which I doubt—but the influence of the strain upon me was, first, to make me think of all my sorrows until I could hardly keep my tears back; then to take away my appetite; and lastly, to make me so sleepy that I couldn’t keep my eyes open. They begin to close again, and I begin to nod, as the recollection rises fresh upon me.

Once more the little room, with its open corner cupboard, and its square-backed chairs, and its angular little staircase leading to the room above, and its three peacock’s feathers displayed over the mantelpiece—I remember wondering when I first went in, what that peacock would have thought if he had known what his finery was doomed to come to—fades from before me, and I nod, and sleep. The flute becomes inaudible, the wheels of the coach are heard instead, and I am on my journey. The coach jolts, I wake with a start, and the flute has come back again, and the Master at Salem House is sitting with his legs crossed, playing it dolefully, while the old woman of the house looks on delightedly. She fades in her turn, and he fades, and all fades, and there is no flute, no Master, no Salem House, no David Copperfield, no anything but heavy sleep.

I dreamed, I thought, that once while he was blowing into this dismal flute, the old woman of the house, who had gone nearer and nearer to him in her ecstatic admiration, leaned over the back of his chair and gave him an affectionate squeeze round the neck, which stopped his playing for a moment. I was in the middle state between
I AM BADGED.

I gazed upon the school-room into which he took me, as the most forlorn and desolate place I had ever seen. I see it now. A long room, with three long rows of desks, and six of forms, and bristling all round with pegs for hats and slates. Scraps of old copy-books and exercises litter the dirty floor. Some silkworms' houses, made of the same materials, are scattered over the desks. Two miserable little white mice, left behind by their owner, are running up and down in a dusty castle made of pasteboard and wire, looking in all the corners with their red eyes for anything to eat. A bird, in a cage very little bigger than himself, makes a mournful rattle now and then in hopping on his perch, two inches high, or dropping from it; but neither sings nor chirps. There is a strange unwholesome smell upon the room, like mildewed corduroys, sweet apples wanting air, and rotten books. There could not well be more ink splashed about it, if it had been roofless from its first construction, and the skies had rained, snowed, hailed, and blown ink through the varying seasons of the year.

Mr. Mell having left me while he took his irreparable boots up-stairs, I went softly to the upper end of the room, observing all this as I crept along. Suddenly I came upon a pasteboard placard, beautifully written, which was lying on the desk, and bore these words: "Take care of him, He bites!"

I got upon the desk immediately, apprehensive of at least a great dog underneath. But, though I looked all round with anxious eyes, I could see nothing of him. I was still engaged in peering about when Mr. Mell came back, and asked me what I did up there?

"I beg your pardon, sir," says I, "if you please, I'm looking for the dog."

"Dog?" says he. "What dog?"

"Isn't it a dog, sir?"

"Isn't what a dog?"

"That's to be taken care of, sir; that bites?"

"No, Copperfield," says he, gravely, "that's not a dog. That's a boy. My instructions are, Copperfield, to put this placard on your back. I am sorry to make such a beginning with you, but I must do it."

With that he took me down, and tied the placard, which was neatly constructed for the purpose, on my shoulders like a knapsack; and wherever I went, afterwards, I had the consolation of carrying it.

What I suffered from that placard nobody can imagine. Whether it was possible for people to see me or not, I always fancied that somebody was reading it. It was no relief to turn round and find nobody; for wherever my back was, there I imagined somebody always to be. That cruel man with the wooden leg, aggravated my sufferings. He was in authority, and if he ever saw me leaning against a tree, or a wall, or the house, he roared out from his lodge-door in a strident voice, "Hallo, you sir! You Copperfield! Show that badge conspicuous, or I'll report you!"
The playground was a bare gravelled yard, open to all the back of the house and the offices; and I knew that the servants read it, and the butcher read it, and the baker read it; that everybody, in a word, who came backwards and forwards to the house, of a morning when I was ordered to walk there, read that I was to be taken care of, for I bit. I recollect that I positively began to have a dread of myself, as a kind of wild boy, who did bite until there was an old door in this playground, on which the boys had a custom of carving their names. It was completely covered with such inscriptions. In my dread of the end of the vacation and their coming back, I could not read a boy's name, without inquiring in what tone and with what emphasis he would read, "Take care of him. He bites." There was one boy—a certain J. Steerforth—who cut his name very deep and very often, who, I conceived, would read it in a rather strong voice, and afterwards pull my hair. There was another boy, one Tommy Tredles, who I dreaded would make game of it, and pretend to be dreadfully frightened of me. There was a third, George Demple, who I fancied would sing it. I have looked, a little shrinking creature, at that door, until the owners of all the names—there were five-and-forty of them in the school then, Mr. Mell said—seemed to send me to Coventry by general acclamation, and to cry out, each in his own way, "Take care of him. He bites!"

It was the same with the places at the desks and forms. It was the same with the groves of deserted bedsteads I peeped at, on my way to, and when I was in, my own bed. I remember dreaming night after night, of being with my mother as she used to be, or of going to a party at Mr. Peggotty's, or of travelling outside the stage-coach, or of dining again with my unfortunate friend the waiter, and in all these circumstances making people scream and stars, by the unhappy disclosure that I had nothing on but my little night-shirt, and that placard.

In the monotony of my life, and in my constant apprehension of the re-opening of the school, it was such an insupportable affliction! I had long tasks every day to do with Mr. Mell; but I did them, there being no Mr. and Miss Murdstone here, and got through them without disgrace. Before, and after them, I walked about—supervised, as I have mentioned, by the man with the wooden leg. How vividly I call to mind the dump about the house, the green cracked flag-stones in the court, an old leaky water-butt, and the discolored trunks of some of the grim trees, which seemed to have dripped more in the rain than other trees, and to have blown less in the sun! At one we dined, Mr. Mell and I, at the upper end of a long bare dining-room, full of deal-tables, and smelling of fat. Then, we had more tasks until tea, which Mr. Mell drank out of a blue tea-cup, and I out of a tin pot. All day long, and until seven or eight in the evening, Mr. Mell, at his own detached desk in the schoolroom, worked hard with pen, ink, ruler, box of writing-paper, making out the bills (as he had for last half-year. When he had put up his hat for night, he took out his flute, and blew it, until I almost thought he would gradually blow his whole being into the large hole at the nose away at the keys.

I picture my small self in the dimly-lit rooms, sitting with my head upon my hands, listening to the doleful performance of Mr. Mell, and through it to what used to be at home, the blowing of the wind on Yarmouth flats, and the rain, and the very sad and solitary. I picture myself up to bed, among the unmade rooms, and on my bedside crying for a comfortable warm Peggotty. I picture myself coming down in the morning, and looking through the ghastly glass of a staircase window at the bell hanging on the top of an oil-lamp, and the weathercock above it; and dreading when it shall ring J. Steerforth and the work. Such time is only second, in my life, to my apprehensions, to the time when the wooden leg shall unlock the rusty gate admission to the awful Mr. Creakle. I think I was a very dangerous character to these aspects, but in all of them I can see no harm, as I am never heard to.

Mr. Mell never said much to me, but he never harsh to me. I suppose we were always to each other, without talking. I forgotten to say that he would talk to himself sometimes and grin, and clench his fist, and grind his teeth, and pull his hair in an unaccountable way. But he had these peculiarities. At first I was frightened me, though I soon got used to.
of garden that looked pleasant after the playground, which was such a desert in
re, that I thought no one but a camel, or a
ry, could have felt at home in it. It
to me a bold thing even to take notice
passage looked comfortable, as I went on
, trembling to Mr. Creakle's presence:
o abashed me, when I was ushered into it,
ardly saw Mr. Creakle or Miss Creakle
ere both there, in the parlor), or anything
Creakle, a stout gentleman with a bunch
b-chain and seals, in an arm-chair, with a
and bottle beside him.
!
Mr. Creakle. "This is the young
an whose teeth are to be filed! Turn him
wooden-legged man turned me about so
hibit the placard; and having afforded
full survey of it, turned me about again,
face to Mr. Creakle, and posted himself
Creakle's side. Mr. Creakle's face was
es his eyes were small, and deep in his
had thick veins in his forehead, a little
large chin. He was bald on the top
; and had some thin wet-looking hair
just turning grey, brushed across each
so that the two sides interlaced on his
. But the circumstance about him which
ed me most, was that he had no voice,
whisper. The exertion this cost the
consciousness of talking in that feeble
de his angry face so much more angry,
 thick veins so much thicker, when he
hat I am not surprised, on looking back,
peculiarity striking me as his chief one.
w," said Mr. Creakle. "What's the re-
ere's nothing against him yet," returned
with the wooden leg. "There has been
venity.
ought Mr. Creakle was disappointed. I
Mrs. and Miss Creakle (at whom I now
for the first time, and who were, both,
quiet) were not disappointed,
me here, sir!" said Mr. Creakle, beckon-
me here!" said the man with the wooden
ting the gesture.
ave the happiness of knowing your father-
whispered Mr. Creakle, taking me by
"and a worthy man he is, and a man of a
character. He knows me, and I know
Do you know me? Hey?" said Mr.
, pinching my ear with ferocious playfuf-
t yet, sir," I said, flinching with the
yet? Hey?" repeated Mr. Creakle. "But
soon. Hey?" 
will soon. Hey?" repeated the man
the wooden leg. I afterwards found that he
y acted, with his strong voice, as Mr.
's interpreter to the boys.
very much frightened, and said I hoped
so, if he pleased. I felt, all this while, as if my
ear were blazing; he pinched it so hard.
"I'll tell you what I am," whispered Mr.
Creakle, letting it go at last, with a screw at par-
ing that brought the water into my eyes. "I'm a
Tartar."
"A Tartar," said the man with the wooden
leg.
"When I say I'll do a thing, I do it," said Mr.
Creakle; "and when I say I will have a thing
done, I will have it done."
"—Will have a thing done, I will have it
done," repeated the man with the wooden
leg.
"I am a determined character," said Mr.
That's what I do. My flesh and blood," he looked
at Mrs. Creakle as he said this, "when it rises
against me, is not my flesh and blood. I discard
it. Has that fellow," to the man with the wooden
leg, "been here again?"
"No," was the answer.
"No," said Mr. Creakle. "He knows better.
He knows me. Let him keep away. I say let
him keep away," said Mr. Creakle, striking his
hand upon the table, and looking at Mrs. Creakle,
"for he knows me. Now you have begun to
know me too, my young friend, and you may go.
Take him away."
I was very glad to be ordered away, for Mrs.
and Miss Creakle were both wiping their eyes,
and I felt as uncomfortable for them as I did for
myself. But I had a petition on my mind which
concerned me so nearly, that I couldn't help say-
ing, though I wondered at my own courage:
"If you please, sir—"
Mr. Creakle whispered, "Hah! What's this?"
and bent his eyes upon me, as if he would have
burnt me up with them.
"If you please, sir," I faltered, "if I might be
allowed (I am very sorry indeed, sir, for what
I did) to take this writing off, before the boys
came back—"
Whether Mr. Creakle was in earnest, or
whether he only did it to frighten me, I don't
know, but he made a burst out of his chair, before
which I precipitately retreated, without waiting
for the escort of the man with the wooden leg,
and never once stopped until I reached my own
bedroom, where, finding I was not pursued, I
went to bed, as it was time, and lay quaking, for
a couple of hours.
Next morning Mr. Sharp came back. Mr.
Sharp was the first master, and superior to Mr.
Mell. Mr. Mell took his meals with the boys, but
Mr. Sharp dined and supped at Mr. Creakle's
table. He was a limp, delicate-looking gentle-
man, I thought, with a good deal of nose, and a
way of carrying his head on one side, as if it
were a little too heavy for him. His hair was
very smooth and wavy; but I was informed by
the very first boy who came back that it was a
wig (a second-hand one he said), and that Mr.
Sharp went out every Saturday afternoon to get
it curled.
It was no other than Tommy Traddles who gave me this piece of intelligence. He was the first boy who returned. He introduced himself by informing me that he should find his name on the right-hand corner of the gate, over the top-bolt; upon that I said, "Traddles?" to which he replied, "The same," and then he asked me for a full account of myself and family.

It was a happy circumstance for me that Traddles came back first. He enjoyed my pleasure so much, that he saved me from the embarrassment of either disclosure or concealment, by presenting me to every other boy who came back, great or small, immediately on his arrival, in this form of introduction, "Look here! Here's a game!" Happily, too, the greater part of the boys came back low-spirited, and were not so boisterous at my expense as I had expected. Some of them certainly did dance about me like wild Indians, and the greater part could not resist the temptation of pretending that I was a dog, and patting and smoothing me, lest I should bite, and saying, "Lie down, sir!" and calling me Towzer. This was naturally confusing, among so many strangers, and cost me some tears, but on the whole it was much better than I had anticipated.

I was not considered as being formally received into the school; however, until J. Steerforth arrived. Before this boy, who was reputed to be a great scholar, and was very good-looking, and at least half-a-dozen years my senior, I was carried as before a magistrate. He inquired, under a shed in the playground, into the particulars of my punishment, and was pleased to express his opinion that it was "a folly shame," for which I became bond to him ever afterward.

"What money have you got, Copperfield?" he said, walking aside with me when he had disposed of my affair in these terms.

I told him seven shillings.

"You had better give it to me to take care of," he said. "At least, you can if you like. You needn't if you don't like."

I hastened to comply with his friendly suggestion, and opening Peggoty's purse, turned it upside down into his hand.

"Do you want to spend anything now?" he asked me.

"No, thank you," I replied.

"You can, if you like, you know," said Steerforth. "Say the word."

"No, thank you, sir," I repeated.

"Perhaps you'd like to spend a couple of shillings or so, in a bottle of currant-wine by-and-by, up in the bed-room?" said Steerforth. "You belong to my bed-room, I find."

It certainly had not occurred to me before, but I said, Yes, I should like that.

"Very good," said Steerforth. "You'll be glad to spend another shilling or so, in almond cakes, I dare say!"

I said, Yes, I should like that, too.

"And another shilling or so in bisque, and another in fruit, eh?" said Steerforth. "I say, young Copperfield, you're going it!"

I smiled because he smiled, but I was a little troubled in my mind, too.

"Well!" said Steerforth. "We must make it stretch as far as we can; that's all. I'll do the best in my power for you. I can go out when I like, and I'll smuggle the prod in." With these words he put the money in his pocket, and kindly told me not to make myself uneasy; he would take care it should be all right.

He was as good as his word. If that were all right which I had a secret misgiving was nearly all wrong—for I feared it was a waste of my mother's two half-crowns—though I had preserved the piece of paper they were wrapped in; which was a precious saving. When we went upstairs to bed, he produced the whole seven shillings' worth, and laid it out on my bed in the moonlight, saying:

"There you are, young Copperfield, and a royal spread you've got."

I couldn't think of doing the honors of the feast, at my time of life, while he was by; my hand shook at the very thought of it. I begged him to do me the favor of presiding; and my request being seconded by the other boys who were in that room, he ascended to it, and sat upon my pillow, leaning round the fancies—with perfect fairness, I must say—of drinking the currant-wine in a little glass without a foot, which was his own property. As to me, I sat on his left hand, and the rest were grouped about us, on the nearest beds and on the floor.

How well I recollect our sitting there, talking in whispers; or their talking, and my respectfully listening. I ought rather to say: the moonlight falling a little way into the room, through the window, painting a pale window on the floor, and the greater part of us in shadow, except when Steerforth dipped a match into a phosphorus-box, when he wanted to look for anything on the board, and shed a blue glare over us that was gone directly! A certain mysterious feeling, consequent on the darkness, the secrecy of the revel, and the whisper in which everything was said, steals over me again, and I listen to all they tell me with a vague feeling of solemnity and awe, which makes me glad that they are all so near, and frightens me (though I feign to laugh) when Traddles pretends to see a ghost in the corner.

I heard all kinds of things about the school and all belonging to it. I heard that Mr. Crockle had not preferred his claim to being a Tartar without reason; that he was the sternest and most severe of masters; that he laid about him, right and left, every day of his life, charging in among the boys like a trooper, and slashing away, mercilessly. That he knew nothing himself, but the art of slashing, being more ignorant (J. Steerforth said) than the lowest boy in the school; that he had been, a good many years ago, a small hop-dealer in the Borough, and had taken to the schooling business after being bankrupt in hops.
STEERFORTH BECOMES MY PROTECTOR.

ing away with Mrs. Creakle's money.

good deal more of that sort, which I won-
ted, they knew.

and that the man with the wooden leg
was Tungay, was an obstinate bar-
hothead; had formerly assisted in the hop busi-
ness, done into the scholastic line with
kle, in consequence, as was supposed
he boys, of his having broken his leg in
kle's service, and having done a deal of
work for him, and knowing his secrets.

that with the single exception of Mr.
Tungay considered the whole establish-
ments and boys, as his natural enemies,
the only delight of his life was to be sour-
acious. I heard that Mr. Creake had a
had not been Tungay's friend, and who
In the school, had once held some re-
ance with his father on an occasion when
alone was very cruelly exercised, and was
besides, to have protested against his
usage of his mother. I heard that Mr.
had turned him out of doors, in conse-
quence, and that Mrs. Creake had been
way, even since.

the greatest wonder that I heard of Mr.
was, there being one boy in the school
he never ventured to lay a hand, and
being J. Steerforth. Steerforth himself
that this when it was stated, and said that
likes to begin to see him do it. On
ked by a mild boy (not me) how he would
if he did begin to see him do it, he dipped
into his phrenological box on purpose to
see over his reply, and said he would
be by knocking him down with a blow
which the seven-and-sixpenny ink
sat always on the mantelpiece. We
dark for some time, breathless.

and that Mr. Sharp and Mr. Mell were both
d to be wretchedly paid; and that when
a hot and cold meat for dinner at Mr.
Table. Mr. Sharp was always expected
to prefer cold; which was again corro-
by J. Steerforth, the only parlor-boarder.
that Mr. Sharp's wig didn't fit him; and
needn't be so 'bouncy'—somebody
'bumptious'—about it, because his
hair was very plainly to be seen behind.

and that one boy, who was a coal-mec-
man, came as a set-off against the coal-bill,
called, on that account, "Exchange or
—a name selected from the arithmet-
expressing this arrangement. I heard
Table-beer was a robbery of parents, and
ling an imposition. I heard that Miss
was regarded by the school in general as
love with Steerforth; and I am sure, as I
dark, thinking of his nice voice, and his
and his easy manner, and his curling
ought it very likely. I heard that Mr.
not a bad sort of fellow, but hadn't a
; to bless himself with; and that there
ought that old Mrs. Mell, his mother, was

as poor as Job. I thought of my breakfast then,
and what had sounded like "My Charley!" but I
was, I am glad to remember, as mute as a mouse
about it.

The hearing of all this, and a good deal more,
outlasted the banquet some time. The greater
part of the guests had gone to bed as soon as the
eating and drinking were over; and we, who had
remained whispering and listening half undressed,
at last betook ourselves to bed, too.

"Good night, young Copperfield," said Steer-
forth. "I'll take care of you."

"You're very kind," I gratefully returned. "I
am very much obliged to you."

"You haven't got a sister, have you?" said
Steerforth, yawning.

"No," I answered.

"That's a pity," said Steerforth. "If you had
had one, I should think she would have been a
pretty, timid, little, bright-eyed sort of girl. I
should have liked to know her. Good night,
young Copperfield."

"Good night, sir," I replied.

I thought of him very much after I went to
bed, and raised myself, I recollect, to look at him
where he lay in the moonlight, with his hand-
some face turned up, and his head recumbent
on the arm. He was a person of great power in
my eyes; that was, of course, the reason of my
mind running on him. No veiled future dimly
glanced upon him in the moonbeams. There was
no shadowy picture of his footsteps, in the gar-
den that I dreamed of walking in all night.

CHAPTER VII.

MY "FIRST HALF" AT SALEM HOUSE.

School began in earnest next day. A profound
impression was made upon me, I remember, by
the roar of voices in the schoolroom suddenly
becoming hushed as death when Mr. Creake entered
after breakfast, and stood in the doorway looking
round upon us like a giant in a story-book sur-
veying his captives.

Tungay stood at Mr. Creake's elbow. He had
no occasion, I thought, to cry out "Silence!" so
ferociously, for the boys were all struck speech-
less and motionless.

Mr. Creake was seen to speak, and Tungay
was heard, to this effect.

"Now, boys, this is a new half. Take care
what you're about, in this new half. Come fresh
up to the lessons, I advise you, for I come fresh
up to the punishment. I won't flinch. It will be
of no use your rubbing yourselves; you won't rub
the marks out that I shall give you. Now get to
work, every boy!"

When this dreadful exordium was over, and
Tungay had stumped out again, Mr. Creake came
to where I sat, and told me that if I were famous
for biting, he was famous for biting, too. He then
showed me the cane, and asked me what I thought
of that, for a tooth? Was it a sharp tooth, hey?
Was it a double tooth, hey? Had it a deep wound,
hey? Did it bite, hey? Did it bite? At every question he gave me a shaky cut with it that made me writhe; so I was very soon made free of Salem House (as Steerforth said), and was very soon in tears also.

Not that I mean to say these were special marks of distinction, which only I received. On the contrary, a large majority of the boys (especially the smaller ones) were visited with similar instances of notice, as Mr. Crummles made the round of the schoolroom. Half the establishment was writhing and crying, before the day's work began; and how much of it had writhed and cried before the day's work was over, I am really afraid to recollect, lest I should seem to exaggerate.

I should think there never can have been a man who enjoyed his profession more than Mr. Crummles did. He had a delight in cutting at the boys, which was like the satisfaction of a craving appetite. I am confident that he couldn't resist a chubby boy, especially; that there was a fascination in such a subject, which made him restless in his mind, until he had scored and marked him for the day. I was chubby myself, and ought to know. I am sure when I think of the fellow now, my blood rises against him with the disinterested indignation I should feel if I could have known all about him without having ever been in his power; but it rises hotly, because I know him to have been an incapable brute, who had no more right to be possessed of the great trust he held, than to be Lord High Admiral, or Commander-in-chief—in either of which capacities, it is probable, that he would have done infinitely less mischief.

Miserable little propitiators of a remorseless Idol, how abject we were to him! What a launche in life I think it now, on looking back, to be so mean and servile to a man of such parts and pretensions!

Here I sit at the desk again, watching his eye dumbly watching his eye, as he rules a ciphering book for another victim whose hands have just been flattened by that identical ruler, and who is trying to write the string out with a pocket-handkerchief. I have plenty to do. I don't watch his eye in idleness, but because I am morbidly attracted to it, in a dread desire to know what he will do next, and whether it will be my turn to suffer, or somebody else's. A lane of small boys beyond me, with the same interest in his eye, watch it too. I think he knows it, though he pretends he don't. He makes dreadful moans as he rules the ciphering book; and now he throws his eye sideways down our lane, and we all drop over our books and tremble. A moment afterwards we are again cycling him. An unhappy culprit, found guilty of imperfect exercise, approaches at his command. The culprit falters excuses, and professes a determination to do better to-morrow. Mr. Crummles cuts a joke before he beats him, and we laugh at it,—misable little dogs, we laugh, with our visages as white as ashes, and our hearts ebbing into our boots.

Here I sit at the desk again, on a drowsy summer afternoon. A buzz and hum go up around me, as if the boys were so many blue-bottles. A cloggy sensation of the lukewarm fat of meat upon me (we dined an hour or two ago, and my head is as heavy as so much lead. I would give the world to go to sleep. I sit with my eyes, Mr. Crummles, blanking at him like a young cat when sleep overpowers me for a minute; he allows it, per lumps through my slumber, ruling those ciphering books, until he softly comes behind me and wakens me to plainer perception of him, with a red nose across my back.

Here I am in the playground, with my eyes fascinated by him, though I can't see him. The window at a little distance from which I know he is having his dinner, stands for him, and I see that instead. If he shows his face near it, mine assumes an imploring and submissive expression. If he looks out through the glass, the holdest boy (Steerforth excepted) stops in the middle of a shout or yell, and becomes contemplative. One day, Traddles (the most unfortunate boy in the world) breaks that window accidentally with a ball. I shudder at this moment with the tremendous sensation of seeing it done, and feeling that the ball has bounded on to Mr. Crummles's sacred head.

Poor Traddles! In a tight sky-blue suit that made his arms and legs like German sausages, and those poly puddings, he was the merriest and most miserable of all the boys. He was always being caned—I think he was camed every day that half-year, except one holiday Monday when he was only ruled on both hands—and was always going to write to his uncle about it, and never did. After laying his head on the desk for a little while, he would cheer up somehow, begin to laugh again, and draw skeletons all over his slate, before his eyes were dry. I used at first to wonder, what comfort Traddles found in drawing skeletons; and for some time looked upon him as a sort of hermit, who reminded himself by those symbols of mortality that canning couldn't last for ever. But I believe I only did it because they were easy, and didn't want any features.

He was very honorable, Traddles was, and held it as a solemn duty in the boys to stand by one another. He suffered for this on several occasions; and particularly once, when Steerforth laughed in church, and the Beadle thought it was Traddles, and took him out. I see him now, going away in custody, dejected by the congregation. He never said who was the real offender, though he smarted for it next day, and was imprisoned so many hours that he came forth with a whole churchyardful of skeletons swarming all over his Latin Dictionary. But he had his reward. Steerforth said there was nothing of the sneak in Traddles, and we all felt that to be the highest praise. For my part, I could have gone through a good deal (though I was much less brave than Traddles, and nothing like so old) to have won such a recompense.
To see Steerforth walk to church before us, arm-in-arm with Miss Creakle, was one of the sights of my life. I didn’t think Miss Creakle had little Emily in point of beauty, and I didn’t love her (I didn’t dare); but I thought her young lady of extraordinary attractions, and in point of gentility not to be surpassed. When Steerforth, in white trousers, carried her parasol and her, I felt proud to know him; and believed she could not choose but adore him with all her heart. Mr. Sharp and Mr. Moll were both respectable personages in my eyes; but Steerforth was to them what the sun was to two stars.

Steerforth continued his protection of me, and proved a very useful friend, since nobody dared to lay one whom he honored with his countenance. He couldn’t—or at all events he didn’t—mind me from Mr. Creakle, who was very severe on me; but whenever I had been treated worse than usual, he always told me that I wanted a little of his placid, and that he wouldn’t have stood for himself; which I felt I intended for encouragement, and considered to be very kind of him.

There was one advantage, and only one that I saw of, in Mr. Creakle’s severity. He found my hand in his way when he came up or down behind the form on which I sat, and wanted to make sure of me in passing; for this reason it was soon taken off, and I saw it no more.

As an accidental circumstance cemented the intimacy between Steerforth and me, in a manner that inspired me with great pride and satisfaction, though it sometimes led to inconvenience, it happened on one occasion, when he was doing the honor of talking to me in the playground, that I hazarded the observation that something or somebody—I forget what now—was like something or somebody in Peregrine Pickle. He said nothing at the time; but when I was going to bed that night, asked me if I had got that book?

I told him no, and explained how it was that I had read it, and all those other books of which I have made mention.

“And do you recollect them?” Steerforth said.

“You, yes,” I replied; I had a good memory, and I believed I recollected them very well.

“Then I tell you what, young Copperfield,” said Steerforth, “you shall tell ’em to me. I can’t sit to sleep very early at night, and I generally wake rather early in the morning. We’ll go over ’em one after another. We’ll make some regular Arabian Nights’ of it.”

I felt extremely flattered by this arrangement, and we commenced carrying it into execution that evening. What ravages I committed on my favorite authors in the course of my interpretation of them, I am not in a condition to say, and should be very unwilling to know; but I had a profound faith in them, and I had, to the best of my belief, a simple earnest manner of narrating what I did narrate; and these qualities went a long way.

The drawback was, that I was often sleepy at night, or out of spirits and indisposed to resume the story, and then it was rather hard work, and it must be done; for to disappoint or to displease Steerforth was of course out of the question. In the morning too, when I felt weary, and should have enjoyed another hour’s repose very much, it was a tiresome thing to be roused, like the Sultana Scheherazade, and forced into a long story before the getting-up bell rang; but Steerforth was resolute; and as he explained to me, in return, my sums and exercises, and anything in my tasks that were too hard for me, I was no loser by the transaction. Let me do myself justice, however. I was moved by no interested or selfish motive, nor was I moved by fear of him. I admired and loved him, and his approval was return enough. It was so precious to me, that I look back on these trifles, now, with an aching heart.

Steerforth was considerate too, and showed his consideration, in one particular instance, in an unflinching manner, and was a little tantalising, I suspect, to poor Traddles and the rest. Peggotty’s promised letter—what a comfortable letter it was!—arrived before “the half!” was many weeks old, and with it a cake in a perfect nest of oranges, and two bottles of cowslip wine. This treasure, as in duty bound, I laid at the feet of Steerforth, and begged him to dispense.

“Now, I’ll tell you what, young Copperfield,” said he: “the wine shall be kept to wet your whistle when you are story-telling.”

I blushed at the idea, and begged him, in my modesty, not to think of it. But he said he had observed I was sometimes hoarse—a little roopy was his exact expression—and it should be, every drop, devoted to the purpose he had mentioned. Accordingly, it was locked up in his box, and drawn off by himself in a phial, and administered to me through a piece of quill in the cork, when I was supposed to be in want of a restorative. Sometimes, to make it a more sovereign specific, he was so kind as to squeeze orange juice into it, or to stir it up with ginger, or dissolve a peppermint drop in it; and although I cannot assert that the flavor was improved by these experiments, or that it was exactly the compound one would have chosen for a stomachic, the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning, I drank it gratefully, and was very sensible of his attention.

We seem, to me, to have been months over Peregrine, and months more over the other stories. The institution never flagged for want of a story, I am certain, and the wine lasted out almost as well as the matter. Poor Traddles—I never think of that boy but with a strange disposition to laugh, and with tears in my eyes—was a sort of chorus, in general, and affected to be convulsed with mirth at the comic parts, and to be overcome with fear when there was any passage of an alarming character in the narrative. This rather put me out, very often. It was a great jest of his. I recollect, to pretend that he couldn’t keep his teeth from chattering, whenever mention was made of an Alguaziel in connection with the adventures of Gil Bias; and I remember that when Gil Bias was the captain of the robbers to Madrid,iste unehb}
joker counterfeited such an agony of terror, that he was overheard by Mr. Creakle, who was prowling about the passage, and handsomely flogged for disorderly conduct in the bedroom.

Whatever I had within me that was romantic and dreamy, was encouraged by so much story-telling in the dark; and in that respect the pursuit may not have been very profitable to me. But the being cherished as a kind of plaything in my room, and the consciousness that this accomplishment of mine was bruited about among the boys, and attracted a good deal of notice to me though I was the youngest there, stimulated me to exertion. In a school carried on by sheer cruelty, whether it is presided over by a clown or not, there is not likely to be much learned. I believe our boys were, generally, as ignorant a set as any schoolboys in existence; they were too much troubled and knocked about to learn; they could no more do that to advantage, than any one can do anything to advantage in a life of constant misfortune, torment, and worry. But my little vanity, and Steerforth's help, urged me on somehow; and without saving me from much, if anything, in the way of punishment, made me, for the time I was there, an exception to the general body, insomuch that I did steadily pick up some crumbs of knowledge.

In this I was much assisted by Mr. Mell, who had a liking for me that I am grateful to remember. It always gave me pain to observe that Steerforth treated him with systematic dispersagement, and seldom lost an occasion of wounded his feelings, or inducing others to do so. This troubled me the more for a long time, because I had soon told Steerforth, from whom I could no more keep such a secret than I could keep a cake or any other tangible possession, about the two old women Mr. Mell had taken me to see; and I was always afraid that Steerforth would let it out, and twit him with it.

We little thought, any one of us, I dare say, when I ate my breakfast that first morning, and went to sleep under the shadow of the peacock's feathers to the sound of the flute, what consequences would come of the introduction into those alma-moos of my insignificant person. But the visit had its unforeseen consequences; and of a serious sort, too, in their way.

One day when Mr. Creakle kept the house from indisposition, which naturally diffused a lively joy through the school, there was a good deal of noise in the course of the morning's work. The great relief and satisfaction experienced by the boys made them difficult to manage; and though the dreaded Tunstall brought his wooden leg in twice or thrice, and took notes of the principal offenders' names, no great impression was made by it, as they were pretty sure of getting into trouble to-morrow, as what they would, and thought it wise, no doubt, to enjoy themselves to-day.

_It was, properly, a half-holiday; being Saturday._ But as the noise in the playground would have disturbed Mr. Creakle, and the weather not favorable for going out walking, we ordered into school in the afternoon, a some lighter tasks than usual, which were for the occasion. It was the day of the which Mr. Sharp went out to get his wig, so Mr. Mell, who always did the drudgery ever it was, kept school by himself.

If I could associate the idea of a bull or with any one so mild as Mr. Mell, I should of him, in connection with that afternoon the uproar was at its height, as of one animals, baited by a thousand dogs. I recollecting his aching head, supported on bis hand, over the book on his desk, and was endeavoring to get on with his tiresome amidst an uproar that might have made Speaker of the House of Commons giddy, started in and out of their places, playing in-the-corner with other boys; there were boys, yelling boys, talking boys, boys, howling boys; boys shuffled with the boys whirled about him, grinning, making mimicking him behind his back and before his eyes; mimicking his poverty, his boots, his mother, everything belonging to him that should have had consideration for.

"Silence!" cried Mr. Mell, suddenly up, and striking his desk with the book, it does this mean? It's impossible to hear it maddening. How can you do it to me, boys?

It was my book that he struck his desk and as I stood beside him, following his it glanced round the room, I saw the boy stop, some suddenly surprised, some half and some sorry perhaps.

Steerforth's place was at the bottom school at the opposite end of the long room was lounging with his back against the and his hands in his pockets, and looked Mell with his mouth shut up as if he whistling, when Mr. Mell looked at him.

"Silence, Mr. Steerforth!" said Mr. Mr. "Silence yourself," said Steerforth, red. "Whom are you talking to?"

"Sit down," said Mr. Mell.

"Sit down yourself," said Steerforth, mind your business.

There was a titter, and some applause. Mr. Mell was so white, that silence imm immediately; and one boy, who had darted behind him to imitate his mother again, clutched his mind, and pretended to want a pen me.

"If you think, Steerforth," said Mr. "that I am not acquainted with the power can establish over any mind here"—he hand, without considering what he did (as posed), upon my head,—or that I have served you, within a few minutes, urging juniors on to every sort of outrage against you are mistaken.

"I don't give myself the trouble of think all about you," said Steerforth coolly; "not mistaken, as it happens."
when you make use of your position of here, sir," pursued Mr. Mell, with his ding very much, "to insult a gentle-

-where is he?" said Steerforth. somebody cried out, "Shame, J. Steer-
so bad!" It was Traddles; whom Mr.
untly discomfited by bidding him hold

 insult one who is not fortunate in life, he never gave you the least offence, and reasons for not insulting whom you are 
and wise enough to understand," said 
with his lip trembling more and more, 

"what a mean and base action. You can 
not stand up as you please, sir. Copper-

gpepfield," said Steerforth, coming 
p the room, "stop a bit. I tell you 
Mell, once for all. When you take the 
ailing me mean or base, or anything of 
you are an impudent beggar. You are 

 beggar, you know; but when you do 
re an impudent beggar." 

t clear whether he was going to strike 
or Mr. Mell was going to strike him, 
as any such intention on either side.

ystery come upon the whole school as if 
een turned into stone, and found Mr. 

 the midst of us, with Tungay at his 
hrs. and Miss Creakle looking in at the 
they were frightened. Mr. Mell, with 
s on his desk and his face in his 
for some moments, quite still.

tell," said Mr. Creakle, shaking him 

 and his whisper was so audible now, 
y felt it unnecessary to repeat his 

 you have not forgotten yourself, I 

ir, no," returned the Master, showing 
d shaking his head, and rubbing his 

reat agitation. "No, sir, no. I have 
d myself, I—no, Mr. Creakle, I have 
en myself. I—have remembered my— 
—could wish you had remembered 
 sooner, Mr. Creakle. It—it—would 

 more kind, sir, more just, sir. It would 

me something, sir." 

kle, looking hard at Mr. Mell, put his 

ay's shoulder, and got his feet upon 
one by, and sat upon the desk. After 
g hard at Mr. Mell from this throne, as 

head, and rubbed his hands, and re-
he same state of agitation, Mr. Creakle 
teforth, and said: 
sir, as he don't condescend to tell me, 

th evaded the question for a little 
in scor and anger on his oppo-

remaining silent. I could not help 
en in that interval, I remember, what 
low he was in appearance, and how 

plain Mr. Mell looked opposed to 


What did he mean by talking about favorites, 
then?" said Steerforth, at length. 

"Favorites?" repeated Mr. Creakle, with the 
veins in his forehead swelling quickly. "Who 
talked about favorites?"

"He did," said Steerforth.

"And pray, what did you mean by that, sir?" 
demanded Mr. Creakle, turning angrily on his as-

"I meant, Mr. Creakle," he returned in a low 
voice, "as I said; that no pupil had a right to 
vail himself of his position of favoritism to de-
grade me."

"To degrade you?" said Mr. Creakle. "My 
stars! But give me leave to ask you, Mr. What's- 
your name?" and here Mr. Creakle folded his 
arms, cane and all, upon his chest, and made such 
a knot of his brows that his little eyes were hardly 
visible below them; "whether, when you talk 
about favorites, you showed proper respect to me? 
To me, sir," said Mr. Creakle, darting his head at 

him suddenly, and drawing it back again, "the 
principal of this establishment, and your em-

ployer."

"It was not judicious, sir, I am willing to ad-
mit," said Mr. Mell. "I should not have done so, 
if I had been cool."

Here Steerforth struck in.

"Then he said I was mean, and then he said I 
was base, and then I called him a beggar. If I 

had been cool, perhaps I shouldn't have called him 

a beggar. But I did, and I am ready to take the 
consequences of it."

Without considering, perhaps, whether there 
were any consequences to be taken, I felt quite in 
a glow at this gallant speech. It made an impres-

sion on the boys, too, for there was a low stir 
among them, though no one spoke a word.

"I am surprised, Steerforth—although your 
candor does you honor, certainly—I am sur-

prised, Steerforth, I must say, that you should at-
tach such an epithet to any person employed and 
paid in Salem House, sir."

Steerforth gave a short laugh.

"That's not an answer, sir," said Mr. Creakle, 

"to my remark. I expect more than that from 

you, Steerforth."

If Mr. Mell looked homely, in my eyes, before 
the handsome boy, it would be quite impossible 
to say how homely Mr. Creakle looked.

"Let him dory it," said Steerforth.

"Deny that he is a beggar, Steerforth" cried 
Mr. Creakle. "Why, where does he go a beg-

ging?"

"If he is not a beggar himself, his near relation's 
one," said Steerforth. "It's all the same."

He glanced at me, and Mr. Mell's hand gently 
patted me upon the shoulder. I looked up with a 
flush upon my face and remorse in my heart, but 
Mr. Mell's eyes were fixed on Steerforth. He 
continued to pat me kindly on the shoulder, but 
he looked at him.

"Since you expect me, Mr. Creakle, to justify 

myself," said Steerforth, "and to say what I mean,
—what I have to say is, that his mother lives on charity in an almshouse."

Mr. Mell still looked at him, and still put me kindly on the shoulder and said to himself in a whisper, if I heard right: "Yes, I thought so."

Mr. Creake turned to his assistant, with a severe frown and laborious politeness:

"Now you hear what this gentleman says, Mr. Mell. Have the goodness, if you please, to set him right before the assembled school."

"He is right, sir, without correction," returned Mr. Mell, in the midst of a dead silence; "what he has said is true."

"Be so good then as declare publicly, will you," said Mr. Creake, putting his head on one side, and rolling his eyes round the school, "whether it ever came to my knowledge until this moment?"

"I believe not directly," he returned,

"Why, you know not," said Mr. Creake,

"Don't you, man?"

"I apprehend you never supposed my worldly circumstances to be very good," replied the assistant, "you know what my position is, and always has been here."

"I apprehend, if you come to that," said Mr. Creake, with his veins swelling again bigger than ever, "that you've been in a wrong position altogether, and mistook this for a charity school. Mr. Mell, we'll part, if you please. The sooner the better."

"There is no time," answered Mr. Mell, rising, "like the present."

"Sir, to you!" said Mr. Creake.

"I take my leave of you, Mr. Creake, and all of you," said Mr. Mell, glancing round the room, and again putting me gently on the shoulder, "James Steerforth, the best wish I can leave you is that you may come to be ashamed of what you have done to-day. At present I would prefer to see you anything rather than a friend, to me, or to any one in whom I feel an interest."

Once more he laid his hand upon my shoulder; and then taking his flute and a few books from his desk, and leaving the key in it for his successor, he went out of the school, with his property under his arm. Mr. Creake then made a speech, through Twugay, in which he thanked Steerforth for asserting (though perhaps too warmly) the independence and respectability of Salem House; and which he wound up by shaking hands with Steerforth, while we gave three cheers—I did not quite know what for, but I supposed for Steerforth, and so joined in them ardently, though I felt miserable. Mr. Creake then caned Tommy Traddles for being discovered in tears, instead of cheers, on account of Mr. Mell's departure; and went back to his sofa, or his bed, or wherever he had come from.

We were left to ourselves now, and looked very blank, I recollect, on one another. For myself, I felt so much self-reproach and contrition for my part in what had happened, that nothing would have enabled me to keep back my tears. I fear that Steerforth, who often looked so wise, might think it unkindly—or, I should say, considering our relative ages, and the way in which I regarded him, ungrateful—if the emotion which distressed me. He was angry with Traddles, and said he was glad to have caught it.

Poor Traddles, who had passed the morning with his head upon the desk, and believing himself as usual with a burst of tears, said he didn't care. Mr. Mell was ill-used.

"Who has ill-used him, you girl?" as he returned."

"Why, you have," returned Traddles.

"What have I done?" said Steerforth.

"What have you done?" retorted Mr. Mell.

"Hurt his feelings and lost him his situation," repeated Steerforth fully. "His feelings will soon get over it, I'll be bound. His feelings are not like Miss Traddles. As to his situation—we have a precious one, wasn't it?—do you suppose not going to write home, and take care of some money? Polly?"

We thought this intention very noble, for whose mother was a widow, and would do almost anything, it was said, asked her. We were all extremely glad Steerforth so put down, and exalted Steerforth's skies; especially when he told us, a descendant of the old family, that he had been doing expressly for us, and for our cause, he had conferred a great boon upon us by fairly doing it.

"But I must say that when I was going to tell you a story in the dark that night, Mr. Mell's seemed more than once to sound mournful to my ears; and that when at last Steerforth raised, and I lay down in my bed, I fancied there was a sorrowful somewhere, that I was wretched."

I soon forgot him in the contemplation of Steerforth, who, in an easy amateur without any book (he seemed to me) to everything by heart, took some of his until a new master was found. The new came from a grammar-school, and before he entered on his duties, dined in the parlour to be introduced to Steerforth. Steerforth proved him highly, and told us he was Without exactly understanding what distinction was meant by this, I respected greatly for it, and had no doubt whatever of superior knowledge: though he never complained with me—not that I was anybody. Mr. Mell had taken.

There was only one other event in that year, out of the daily school-life, that an impression upon me which still survives. It was the morning when we were all cast into a state of dire confusion, and Mr. Crummles was laying about him. A circular notice of
uled out in his usual strong way: "Vis-
Copperfield!")
words were interchanged between him
Creakle, as, who the visitors were, and
they were to be shown into; and then
and, according to custom, stood up on the
ment being made, and felt quite faint
ishment, was told to go by the back
I get a clean frill on, before I repaired to
room. These orders I obeyed, in such
and hurry of my young spirits as I had
own before; and when I got to the par-
and the thought came into my head that
be my mother—I had only thought of Mr.
Murdstone until then—I drew back my
n the lock, and stopped to have a sob
went in.
I saw nobody; but feeling a pressure
se door, I looked round it, and there, to
meet, were Mr. Peggotty and Ham,
me with their hats, and squeezing one
against the wall. I could not help laugh-
it was much more in the pleasure of
em, than at the appearance they made.
k hands in a very cordial way; and I
nd laughed, until I pulled out my pocket-
hief, and wiped my eyes.
Peggotty (who never shut his mouth once,
er, during the visit) showed great con-
h he saw me do this, and nudged Ham
ething.
er up, Mas'r Davy bor'!” said Ham,
pering way. “Why, how you have
I grown?” I said, drying my eyes. I
rying at anything in particular that I
; but somehow it made me cry, to see
ved, Mas’r Davy bor’? Ain't he grewed!”

he grewed!” said Mr. Peggotty.
made me laugh again by laughing at each
then we all three laughed until I was
of crying again.
you know how mamma is, Mr. Peg-
I said. “And how my dear, dear, old
is?”
common,” said Mr. Peggotty.
little Emly, and Mrs. Gummidge?”

common,” said Mr. Peggotty.
was a silence. Mr. Peggotty, to relieve
no prodigious lobsters, and an enormous
a large canvas bag of shrimps, out of
ta, and piled them up in Ham’s arms.
ree,” said Mr. Peggotty, “knowing as
artial to a little relish with your wittles:
was along with us, we took the liberty.
further biled ‘em, she did. Mrs. Gum-
ed ‘em. Yes,” said Mr. Peggotty, slow-
thought appeared to stick to the sub-
ount of having no other subject ready,
maid, I do assure you, she bled
ased my thanks. Mr. Peggotty, after
looking at Ham, who stood smiling sheepishly
over the shell-fish, without making any attempt

"We come, you see, the wind and tide making
in our favor, in one of our Yarmouth lugs to
Gravesend’. My sister she wrote to me the name
of this here place, and wrote to me as if ever I
chanced to come to Gravesen’, I was to come
over and inquire for Mas’r Davy, and give her
doody, humbly wishing him well, and reporting
of the family’ as they was uncommon to-be-sure.
Little Emly, you see, she’ll write to my sister
when I go back as I see you, and as you was simi-
larly uncommon, and so we make it quite a mer-
ry-go-rounders.”

I was obliged to consider a little before I un-

derstood what Mr. Peggotty meant by this figure,
expressive of a complete circle of intelligence. I
then thanked him heartily; and said, with a con-
sciousness of reddening, that I supposed little
Emly was altered too, since we used to pick up
shells and pebbles on the beach.

“She’s getting to be a woman, that’s wot she’s
getting to be,” said Mr. Peggotty. “Ask him.”

He meant Ham, who beamed with delight and
assent over the bag of shrimps.

“Her pretty face!” said Mr. Peggotty, with
his own shining like a light.

“Her learning!” said Ham.

“Her writing!” said Mr. Peggotty. “Why
it’s as black as jet! And so large it is, you might
see it anywhere.”

It was perfectly delightful to behold what
enthusiasm Mr. Peggotty became inspired when
he thought of his little favorite. He stands
before me again, his bluff hairy face irradiating
with a joyful love and pride for which I can find no
description. His honest eyes fire up, and sparkle,
as if their depths were stirred by something
bright. His broad chest heaves with pleasure.
His strong loose hands clench themselves, in his
earnestness; and he emphasizes what he says with
a right arm that shows, in my pigmy view, like a
sledge-hammer.

Ham was quite as earnest as he. I dare say
they would have said much more about her, if
they had not been abashed by the unexpected
coming in of Steerforth, who, seeing me in a cor-
ner speaking with two strangers, stopped in a
song he was singing, and said: “I didn’t know
you were here, young Copperfield!” (for it was
not the usual visiting-room) and crossed by us
on his way out.

I am not sure whether it was in the pride of
having such a friend as Steerforth, in the de-
sire to explain to him how I came to have such
a friend as Mr. Peggotty, that I called to him as he
was going away. But I said, modestly—Good
Heaven, how it all comes back to me this long
time afterwards!—

“Don’t go, Steerforth, if you please. These
are two Yarmouth boatmen—very kind, go-A
people—who are relations of my nurse, and have
come from Gravesend to see me.”
"Aye, aye?" said Steerforth, returning. "I am glad to see them. How are you both?"

There was an ease in his manner—a gay and light manner it was, but not swaggering—which I still believe to have borne a kind of enchantment with it. I still believe him, in virtue of this carriage, his animal spirits, his delightful voice, his handsome face and figure, and, for aught I know, of some inborn power of attraction besides (which I think a few people possess), to have carried a spell with him to which it was a natural weakness to yield, and which not many persons could withstand. I could not but see how pleased they were with him, and how they seemed to open their hearts to him in a moment.

"You must let them know at home, if you please, Mr. Peggotty," I said, "when that letter is sent, that Mr. Steerforth is very kind to me, and that I don't know what I should ever do here without him."

"Nonsense!" said Steerforth, laughing. "You mustn't tell them anything of the sort."

"And if Mr. Steerforth ever comes into Norfolk or Suffolk, Mr. Peggotty," I said, "while I am there, you may depend upon it I shall bring him to Yarmouth, if he will let me, to see your house. You never saw such a good house, Steerforth. It's made out of a boat!"

"Made out of a boat, is it?" said Steerforth. "It's the right sort of a house for such a thoroughly-built boatman.""

"So 'is, sir, so 'is, sir," said Ham, grinning. "You're right, young gen'l'm'n. Mas'r Davy, b'or, gen'l'm'n's right. A thoroughly-built boatman! Hor, hor! That's what he is, too!"

Mr. Peggotty was no less pleased than his nephew, though his modesty forbade him to claim a personal compliment so vociferously.

"Well, sir," he said, bowing and chuckling, and tucking in the ends of his neckerchief at his breast: "I thank ye, sir, I thank ye! I do my endeavors in my line of life, sir."

"The best of men can do no more, Mr. Peggotty," said Steerforth. He had got his name already.

"I'll pound it it's not you do yourself, sir," said Mr. Peggotty, shaking his head, "and not you do well—right well! I thank ye, sir. I'm obliged to you, sir, for your welcoming manner of me. I'm rough, sir, but I'm ready—best ways, I hope I'm ready, you understand. My house ain't much for to see, sir, but it's hearty at your service if ever you should come along with Mas'r Davy to see it. I'm a regular Dodman, I am," said Mr. Peggotty, by which he meant small, and this was an allusion to his being slow to go, for he had attempted to go after every sentence, and had somehow or other come back again; "but I wish you both well, and I wish you happy!"

Ham echoed this sentiment, and we parted with them in the heartiest manner. I was almost tempted that evening to tell Steerforth about pretty little Emmy, but I was too timid of mentioning her name, and too much afraid of laughing at me. I remember that I had been to a woman; but I decided that was sense.

We transported the shell-fish, or the as Mr. Peggotty had modestly called it, from room unobserved, and made a great that evening. But Traddles couldn't get out of it. He was too unfortunate even to through a supper like anybody else. I taken ill in the night—quite prostrate by a consequence of Crab; and after being with black draughts and blue pills, to and which Dampole (whose father was a dock enough to undermine a horse's count received a calming and six chapters of great merit for refusing to confess.

The rest of the half-year is a jumble recollection of the daily strife and struggle lives; of the waning summer and the ch season; of the frosty mornings when we rang out of bed, and the cold, cold snedark nights when we were rung into bed; evening schoolroom dimly lighted and lighly warmed, and the morning schoolroom was nothing but a great shivering-maid; the alternation of boiled beef with roast boiled mutton with roast mutton; of bread-and-butter dog's eared lesson-books cd slates, tear-blotched copy-books, cambrerings, hair-cuttings, rainy Sundays, snowings, and a dirty atmosphere of ink scum all.

I well remember though, how the days of the holidays, after seeming for an im time to be a stationary speck, began to towards us, and to grow and grow. Ho counting months, we came to weeks, and days; and how I then began to be afraid should not be sent for, and when I learned Steerforth that I had been sent for and w thinly to go home, had dim forebodings might break my leg first. How the bre day changed its place fast, at last, from the after next to next week, this week, the day to-morrow, to-morrow, to-day, to-night— was inside the Yarmouth mall, and going to I had many a broken sleep inside the mouth mall, and many an incoherent dream these things. But when I awoke at inter ground outside the window was not the ground of Salem House, and the sound in it was not the sound of Mr. Creakle giving Traddles, but was the sound of the c touching up the horses.

CHAPTER VIII.

MY HOLIDAYS. ESPECIALLY ONE HAPPY NOON.

When we arrived before day at the inn the mail stopped, which was not the but
I the waiter lived, I was shown up to a bedroom, with Dolphin painted on the very cold I was, I know, notwithstanding as they had given me before a large fire fire; and very glad I was to turn into the bed, pull the Dolphin’s blankets round and go to sleep. Barkis the carrier was to call for me in ling at nine o’clock. I got up at eight, a ly from the shortness of my night’s rest, ready for him before the appointed time. ed me exactly as if not five minutes had since we were last together, and I had 1 into the hotel to get change for six- something of that sort, a as I and my box were in the cart, and er was seated, the lazy horse walked us all at his accustomed pace.

look very well, Mr. Barkis,” I said, he would like to know it. Barkis rubbed his cheek with his cuff, and ed at his cuff as if he expected to find him bloom upon it; but made no other agement of the compliment. ve your message, Mr. Barkis,” I said: to Peggotty.”

"said Mr. Barkis.

Barkis seemed gruff, and answered drily, ’O’t right, Mr. Barkis?” I asked, after station.

; no,” said Mr. Barkis.

the message?”

message was right enough, perhaps,” Barkis: “but it come to an end there.” understanding what he meant, I repeated rly: “Came to an end, Mr. Barkis?” ng of it,” he explained, looking aways. “No answer.”

was an answer expected, was there, is?” I said, opening my eyes. For this vight to me.

a man says he’s willin’,” said Mr. Barkis. ng his glance slowly on me again; “it’s is to say, that man’s a waitin’ for a an-

Mr. Barkis?”

,” said Mr. Barkis, carrying his eyes his horse’s ears; “that man’s been a waitin’ ever since.”

you told her so, Mr. Barkis?”

so,” growled Mr. Barkis, reflecting about n’t got no call to go and tell her so. I id six words to her myself. I ain’t all her so.”

did you like me to do it, Mr. Barkis?” subtilly.

might tell her, if you would,” said Mr. with another slow look at me, “that Barkis waitin’ for a answer. Says you—what

name?”

” said Mr. Barkis, with a nod of his otty.”

“Chrisen name? Or nat’ral name?” said Mr. Barkis.

“O’er, it’s not her christian name. Her christian name is Clara.”

“Is it though?” said Mr. Barkis.

He seemed to find an immense fund of reflection in this circumstance, and sat pondering and inwardly whistling for some time.

“Well!” he resumed at length. “Says you, Peggotty! Barkis is a waitin’ for a answer. Says she, perhaps, ‘Answer to what?’ Says you, ‘To what I told you.’ ‘What is that?’ says she. ‘Barkis is willin’,’ says you.”

This extremely artful suggestion, Mr. Barkis accompanied with a nudge of his elbow that gave me quite a stitch in my side. After that, he slouched over his horse in his usual manner; and made no other reference to the subject except, half an hour afterwards, taking a piece of chalk from his pocket, and writing up, inside the till of the cart, “Clara Peggotty”—apparently as a private memorandum.

Ah, what a strange feeling it was to be going home when it was not home, and to find that every object I looked at, reminded me of the happy old home, which was like a dream I could never dream again! The days when my mother and I and Peggotty were all in all to one another, and there was no one to come between us, rose up before me so sorrowfully on the road, that I am not sure I was glad to be there—not sure but that I would rather have remained away, and forgotten it in Steerforth’s company. But there I was; and soon I was at our house, where the bare old elm trees wrung their many hands in the bleak wintry air, and shreds of the old roofs’ nests drifted away upon the wind.

The carrier put my box down at the garden gate, and left me. I walked along the path towards the house, glancing at the windows, and fearing at every step to see Mr. Murdstone or Miss Murdstone lowering out of one of them. No face appeared, however; and being come to the house, and knowing how to open the door, before dark, without knocking; I went in with a quiet, timid step.

God knows how infantile the memory may have been, that was awakened within me by the sound of my mother’s voice in the old parlor, when I set foot in the hall. She was singing in a low tone. I think I must have lain in her arms, and heard her singing so to me when I was but a baby. The strain was new to me, and yet it was so old that it filled my heart brimful; like a friend come back from a long absence.

I believed, from the solitary and thoughtful way in which my mother murmured her song, that she was alone. And I went softly into the room. She was sitting by the fire, suckling an infant, whose tiny hand she held against her neck. Her eyes were looking down upon its face, and she sat singing to it. I was so far right, that she had no other companion.

I spoke to her, and she started, and cried out.
But seeing me, she called me her dear Davy, her own boy! and coming half across the room to meet me, knelt down upon the ground and kissed me, and laid my head down on her bosom near the little creature that was nestling there, and put its hand up to my lips.

I wish I had died. I wish I had died then, with that feeling in my heart! I should have been more fit for Heaven than I ever have been since.

"He is your brother," said my mother, fondling me. "Davy, my pretty boy! My poor child!" Then she kissed me more and more, and clasped me round the neck. This she was doing when Peggotty came running in, and bounced down on the ground beside us, and went mad about us both for a quarter of an hour.

It seemed that I had not been expected so soon, the carriage being much before its usual time. It seemed, too, that Mr. and Miss Murdstone had gone out upon a visit in the neighborhood, and would not return before night, I had never hoped for this. I had never thought it possible that we three could be together undisturbed, once more; and I felt, for the time, as if the old days were come back.

We dined together by the fireside. Peggotty was in attendance to wait upon us, but my mother wouldn't let her do it, and made her dine with us. I had my own old plate, with a brown view of a man-of-war in full sail upon it, which Peggotty had hoarded somewhere all the time I had been away, and would not have had broken, she said, for a hundred pounds. I had my own old mug with David on it, and my own old knife and fork that wouldn't cut.

While we were at table, I thought it a favorable occasion to tell Peggotty about Mr. Barkis, who, before I had finished what I had to tell her, began to laugh, and throw her apron over her face.

"Peggotty," said my mother. "What's the matter?"

Peggotty only laughed the more, and held her apron tight over her face when my mother tried to pull it away, and cut as if her head were in a bag.

"What are you doing, you stupid creature?" said my mother, laughing.

"Oh, dat the man!" cried Peggotty. "He wants to marry me."

"It would be a very good match for you; wouldn't it?" said my mother.

"Oh! I don't know," said Peggotty. "Don't ask me. I wouldn't have him if he was made of gold. Nor I wouldn't have anybody."

"Then, why don't you tell him so, you ridiculous thing?" said my mother.

"Tell him so," retorted Peggotty, looking out of her apron. "He has never said a word to me about it. He knows better. If he was to make so bold as say a word to me, I should slap his face."

Her own was as red as ever I saw it, or any other face, I think; but she only covered for a few moments at a time, when she with a violent fit of laughter; and at three of those attacks, went on with it.

I remarked that my mother, though when Peggotty looked at her, became ones and thoughtful. I had seen her was changed. Her face was very pret. It looked careworn, and too delicate; her hand was so thin and white that it seemed to be almost transparent. But the which I now refer was superadded to it in her manner, which became anxious.

At last she said, putting out her laying it affectionately on the hand of I vant.

"Peggotty dear, you are not going ried?"

"Me, ma'am?" returned Peggotty.

"Lord bless you, no!"

"No just yet?" said my mother, "Never!" cried Peggotty.

My mother took her hand, and said.

"Don't leave me, Peggotty. Stay it will not be for long, perhaps. Whenever do without you?"

"Me leave you, my precious!" cried her.

"Not for all the world and his what's that in your silly little help Peggotty had been used of old to her sometimes, like a child.

But my mother made no answer, thank her, and Peggotty went running in own fashion.

"Me leave you? I think I see my Peggotty go away from you? I should die her at it! No, no, no," said Peggotty, her head, and folding her arms; "no dear. It isn't that there ain't some would be well enough pleased if sh they shan't be pleased. They shall be If I'll stay with you till I am a cross crum man. And when I'm too deaf, and too too blind, and too numbly for want of of any use at all, even to be found then I shall go to my Davy, and ask him in."

"And Peggotty," says I, "I shall see you, and I'll make you as well queen."

"Bless your dear heart! I know you will!" And she kissed me with grateful acknowledgment of my love. After that, she covered her head up with again, and had another laugh about me. After that, she took the baby out of its sile, and nursed it. After that, she set the dinner-table; after that, came in with cup on, and her work-box, and the yard and the bit of wax candle, all just the same.

We sat round the fire, and talked of the I told them what a hard master Mr. Cr and they pitied me very much. I told a fine fellow Steerforth was, and what
My Mother, Peggotty, and I.

I suppose she wouldn't be inclined to forgive him now," hinted Peggotty.

"Why should she be inclined to forgive him now?" said my mother, rather sharply.

"Now that he's got a brother, I mean," said Peggotty.

My mother immediately began to cry, and wondered how Peggotty dared to say such a thing.

"As if this poor little innocent in its cradle had ever done any harm to you or anybody else, you jealous thing!" said she. "You had better go and marry Mr. Barkis, the carrier. Why don't you?"

"I should make Miss Murdstone happy, if I was to," said Peggotty.

"What a disposition you have, Peggotty!" returned my mother. "You are as jealous of Miss Murdstone as it is possible for a ridiculous creature to be. You want to keep the keys yourself, and give out all the things, I suppose? I shouldn't be surprised if you did. When you know that she only does it out of kindness and the best intentions! You know she does, Peggotty—you know it well?"

Peggotty muttered something to the effect of "Bother the best intentions!" and something else to the effect that there was a little too much of the best intentions going on.

"I know what you mean, you cross thing," said my mother. "I understand you, Peggotty, perfectly. You know I do, and I wonder you don't color up like fire. But one point at a time. Miss Murdstone is the point now, Peggotty, and you shan't escape from it. Haven't you heard her say, over and over again, that she thinks I am too thoughtless and too—a—a—"

"Pretty," suggested Peggotty.

"Well," returned my mother, half laughing, "and if she is so silly as to say so, can I be blamed for it?"

"No one says you can," said Peggotty.

"No, I should hope not, indeed!" returned my mother. "Haven't you heard her say, over and over again, that on this account she wishes to spare me a great deal of trouble, which she thinks I am not suited for, and which I really don't know myself that I am suited for; and isn't she up early and late, and going to and fro continually—and doesn't she do all sorts of things, and grope into all sorts of places, coal-holes and pantries and I don't know where, that can't be very agreeable—and do you mean to insinuate that there is not a sort of devotion in that?"

"I don't insinuate at all," said Peggotty.

"You do, Peggotty," returned my mother. "You never do anything else, except your work. You are always insinuating. You revel in it. And when you talk of Mr. Murdstone's good intentions—"

"I never talked of 'em," said Peggotty.

"No, Peggotty," returned my mother, "but you insinuated. That's what I told you just now. That's the worst of you. You will mean
ate. I said, at the moment, that I understood you, and you see I did. When you talk of Mr.
Murdstone's good intentions, and pretend to
sight them (for I don’t believe you really do, in
your heart, Peggotty), you must be as well con-
vinced as I am how good they are, and how they
actuate him in everything. If he seems to have
been at all stern with a certain person, Peggotty—
you understand, and so I am sure does Davy, that
I am not alluding to anybody present—it is solely
because he is satisfied that it is for a certain
person’s benefit. He naturally loves a certain per-
son, on my account; and acts solely for a certain
person’s good. He is better able to judge of it
than I am; for I very well know that I am a weak,
light, girlish creature, and that he is a firm, grave,
serious man. And he takes,” said my mother,
with the tears which were engendered in her
affectionate nature, stealing down her face, “he
takes great pains with me; and I ought to be
very thankful to him, and very submissive to
him even in my thoughts; and when I am not,
Peggotty, I worry and condemn myself, and feel
doubtful of my own heart, and don’t know what
to do.”

Peggotty sat with her chin on the foot of the
stocking, looking silently at the fire.

“There, Peggotty,” said my mother, changing
her tone, “don’t let us fall out with one another
for I couldn’t bear it. You are my true friend, I
know, if I have any in the world. When I call
you a ridiculous creature, or a vexatious thing, or
anything of that sort, Peggotty, I only mean that
you are my true friend, and always have been,
even since the night when Mr. Copperfield first
brought me home here, and you came out to the
gate to meet me.”

Peggotty was not slow to respond, and ratify
the treaty of friendship by giving me one of her
best hugs. I think I had some glimpses of the
real character of this conversation at the time;
but I am sure, now, that the good creature origi-
nated it, and took her part in it, merely that my
mother might comfort herself with the little con-
tadictory summary in which she had indulged.
The design was efficacious; for I remember that
my mother seemed more at ease during the rest
of the evening, and that Peggotty observed her
less.

When we had had our tea, and the ashes were
thrown up, and the candles snuffed, I read Pegg-
totty a chapter out of the Crocodile Book, in re-
embrance of old times—she took it out of her
pocket: I don’t know whether she had kept it
there ever since—and then we talked about Salem
House, which brought me round again to Steer-
forth, who was my great subject. We were very
happy; and that evening, as the last of its race,
and destined evermore to close that volume of
my life, will never pass out of my memory.

It was almost ten o’clock before we heard the
sound of wheels. We all got up then; and my
mother said hurriedly that, as it was so late, and
Mr. and Miss Murdstone approved of early hours
for young people, perhaps I had better go to
bed. I kissed her, and went up-stairs with my
head directly, before they came in. It appeared a
childish fancy, as I ascended to the house where
I had been imprisoned, that they brought
a cold blast of air into the house which blew
the old familiar feeling like a feather.

I felt uncomfortable about going down to
breakfast in the morning, as I had never seen
Mr. Murdstone since the day when I com-
mitted my memorable offence. However, as it
was to be done, I went down, after two or three
starts half-way, and as many runs back on two
legs to my own room, and presented myself in the
parlor.

He was standing before the fire with his back
to it, while Miss Murdstone made the tea. He
looked at me steadily as I entered, but made no
sign of recognition whatever.

I went up to him, after a moment of confu-
sion, and said: “I beg your pardon, sir. I am not
sorry for what I did, and I hope you will for-
rue.”

“I am glad to hear you are sorry, David,” he
replied.

The hand he gave me was the hand I had be-
ten. I could not restrain my eye from resuming:
an instant on a red spot upon it; but it was as
red as I turned, when I met that sinister ex-
pression in his face.

“How do you do, ma’am?” I said to Mrs.
Murdstone.

“Ah, dear me!” sighed Miss Murdstone, tak-
ing me the tea-caddy scoop instead of her finger.

“How long are the holidays?”

“A month, ma’am.”

“Counting from when?”

“From to-day, ma’am.”

“Oh!” said Miss Murdstone. “Then there
will be one day off.”

She kept the calendar of the holidays in the
way, and every morning checked a day off in ex-
actly the same manner. She did it gloomily at
first, but after she got into two or three, she came
to ten, and when she got into ten, she became
more hopeful, and, as she was advanced, even
jocular.

It was on this very first day that I had the
misfortune to throw her, though she was not
subject to such weakness in general, into a state
of violent consternation. I came into the room
where she and my mother were sitting; and the
baby (who was only a few weeks old) being on
my mother’s lap, I took it very carefully in her
arms. Suddenly Miss Murdstone gave such a
scream that I all but dropped it.

“My dear Jane!” cried my mother.

“Good heavens, Clara, do you see?” exclaimed Miss Murdstone.

“See what, my dear Jane?” said my mother.

“Where?”

“He’s got it!” cried Miss Murdstone. “The
boy has got the baby!”

She was limp with horror; but stiffened her-
self to make a dart at me, and took the boy in
... Then, she turned faint; and was so very
that they were obliged to give her cherry-
dy. I was solemnly interdicted by her, on
recovery, from touching my brother any more
my pretence whatever; and my poor mother,
I could see, wished otherwise, meekly con-
tined the interdict, by saying: "No doubt you
right, my dear Jane."

On another occasion, when we three were to-
er, this same dear baby—it was truly dear to
for our mother's sake—was the innocent oc-
asion of Miss Murdstone's going into a passion.
mother, who had been looking at its eyes as
by upon her lap, said:
"Davy! come here!" and looked at mine.
I saw Miss Murdstone lay her head down...
"I declare," said my mother, gently, "they are
ody alike. I suppose they are mine. I think
y are the color of mine. But they are wonder-
ally alike."

"What are you talking about, Clara?" said
Murdstone.

"My dear Jane," faltered my mother, a little
shed by the harsh tone of this inquiry, "I find
the baby's eyes and Davy's are exactly
.

"Clara!" said Miss Murdstone, rising angrily,
y are a positive fool sometimes."

"My dear Jane," remonstrated my mother.

"A positive fool," said Miss Murdstone.
Who else could compare my brother's baby with
our boy? They are not at all alike. They are ex-
ly unlike. They are utterly dissimilar in all
pects. I hope they will ever remain so. I will
ot sit here, and hear such comparisons made." With
that she stalked out, and made the door bang
her.

In short, I was not a favorite with Miss Mur-
dstone. In short, I was not a favorite there with
obody, not even with myself; for those who
like me could not show it, and those who did
not showed it so plainly that I had a sensitive con-
sciousness of always appearing constrained, boor-
ly, and dull.

I felt that I made them as uncomfortable as
they made me. If I came into the room where
were, and they were talking together and my
ther seemed cheerful, an anxious cloud would
al over her face from the moment of my en-
ence. If Mr. Murdstone were in his best humor,
hecked him. If Miss Murdstone were in her
wast, I intensified it. I had perception enough
to know that my mother was the victim always;
that she was afraid to speak to me, or be kind to
me, lest she should give them some offence by her
maner of doing so, and receive a lecture after-
ards; that she was not only ceaselessly afraid of
her own offending, but of my offending, and un-
estly watched their looks if I only moved. There-
fore I resolved to keep myself as much out of their
way as I could; and many a wintry hour did I
ear the church-clock strike, when I was sitting
in my cheerless bed-room, wrapped in my little

In the evening, sometimes, I went and sat
with Peggoty in the kitchen. There I was com-
fortable, and not afraid of being myself. But
ether of these resources was approved of in the
parlor. The tormenting humor which was dom-
nant there stopped them both. I was still held
to be necessary to my poor mother's training, and,
as one of her trials, could not be suffered to absent
myself.

"David," said Mr. Murdstone, one day after
dinner when I was going to leave the room as
usual; "I am sorry to observe that you are of a
sullen disposition."

"As sulky as a bear!" said Miss Murdstone.
I stood still, and hung my head.

"Now, David," said Mr. Murdstone, "a sul-
len obdurate disposition is, of all temper, the
worst."

"And the boy's is, of all such dispositions that
ever I have seen," remarked his sister, "the most
confirmed and stubborn. I think, my dear Clara,
even you must observe it?"

"I beg your pardon, my dear Jane," said my
mother, "but are you quite sure—I am certain
you'll excuse me, my dear Jane—that you under-
stand Davy?"

"I should be somewhat ashamed of myself, 
Clara," returned Miss Murdstone, "if I could not
understand the boy, or any boy. I don't profess
to be profound; but I do lay claim to common
sense."

"No doubt, my dear Jane," returned my moth-
er, "your understanding is very vigorous."

"Oh dear, no! Pray don't say that, Clara,"
terposed Miss Murdstone, angrily.

"But I am sure it is," resumed my mother;
"and everybody knows it is. I profit so much by
it myself, in many ways—at least I ought to—that
no one can be more convinced of it than myself:
and therefore I speak with great diffidence, my
dear Jane, I assure you."

"We'll say I don't understand the boy, Clara,"
returned Miss Murdstone, arranging the little let-
ters on her wrists. "We'll agree, if you please,
that I don't understand him at all. He is much
too deep for me. But perhaps my brother's pene-
tration may enable him to have some insight into
his character. And I believe my brother was
speaking on the subject when we—not very decen-
tly—interrupted him."

"I think, Clara," said Mr. Murdstone, in a
low grave voice, "that there may be better and
more dispassionate judges of such a question than
you."

"Edward," replied my mother, timidly, "you
are a far better judge of all questions than I
pretend to be. Both you and Jane are. I only
said—"

"You only said something weak and incon-
siderate," he replied. "Try not to do it again,
my dear Clara, and keep a watch upon yourself."

My mother's lips moved, as if she answered.
"Yes, my dear Edward," but she said nothing
aloud.
"I was sorry, David, I remarked," said Mr. Murdstone, turning his head and his eyes stiffly towards me, "to observe that you are of a sullen disposition. This is not a character that I can suffer to develop itself beneath my eyes without an effort at improvement. You must endeavor, sir, to change it. We must endeavor to change it for you."

"I beg your pardon, sir," I faltered. "I have never meant to be sullen since I came back."

"Don't take refuge in a lie, sir!" he returned so fiercely, that I saw my mother involuntarily put out her trembling hand as if to interpose between us. "You have withdrawn yourself in your sullenness to your own room. You have kept your own room when you ought to have been here. You know now, once for all, that I require you to be here, and not there. Further, that I require you to bring obedience here. You know me, David. I will have it done."

Miss Murdstone gave a hoarse chuckle.

"I will have a respectful, prompt, and ready bearing towards myself," he continued, "and towards Jane Murdstone, and towards your mother. I will not have this room shunned as if it were infested at the pleasure of a child. Sit down."

He ordered me like a dog, and I obeyed like a dog.

"One thing more," he said. "I observe that you have an attachment to low and common company. You are not to associate with servants. The kitchen will not improve you. In the many respects in which you need improvement. Of the woman she, you say nothing—since you, Clara," addressing my mother in a lower voice, "from old associations and long-established fancies, have a weakness respecting her which is not yet overcome."

"A most unaccountable delusion it is!" cried Miss Murdstone.

"I only say," he resumed, addressing me, "that I disapprove of your preferring such company as Mistress Peggoty, and that it is to be abandoned. Now, David, you understand me; and you know what will be the consequences if you fail to obey me to the letter."

I knew well—better perhaps than he thought, as far as my poor mother was concerned—and I obeyed him to the letter. I retreated to my own room no more; I took refuge with Peggoty no more; but sat hourly in the parlor, day after day, looking forward to night, and bedtime.

WhatThose constraints I underwent, sitting in the same attitude hours upon hours, afraid to move an arm or a leg lest Miss Murdstone should complain (as she did on the least pretext) of my restlessness, and afraid to move an eye lest she should light on some look of dislike or scanty that would find new cause for complaint in mine! What intolerable dulness to sit listening to the ticking of the clock; and watching Miss Murdstone's little shiny steel beads as she strung them; and wondering whether she would ever be married, and if so, to what sort of unhappy man; and counting the divisions in the moulding on the chimney-piece; and wandering away, with my eyes, to the ceiling, among the curls and the screws in the paper on the wall!

What walks I took alone, down muddy lane, in the bad winter weather, carrying that piece, and Mr. and Miss Murdstone in it, everywhere a monstrous load that I was obliged to bear a daymare that there was no possibility of bearing in a weight that brooded on my wit, and blunted them!

What meals I had in silence and embarrassment, always feeling that there were a knife and fork too many, and those mine; an appetite too small, and that mine; a plate and chair too small, and those mine; a somebody too many; and that!

What evenings, when the candles came, and I was expected to employ myself, but not daring to read an entertaining book, pored over some last-headed harder-hearted treatise on arithmetic, when the tables and weights and measures themselves to tunes, as Rule Britannia, or Away with Melancholy: when they wouldn't stand still to be learned, but would go threading my grandmother's needle through my unfortunate head, at one end and out at the other!

What yawns and dozes I lapsed into, in spite of all my care; what start I came out of exalted sleep with; what answers I never got to little observations that I rarely made; what a blank space I seemed, which everybody overlooked, and yet was in everybody's way; what a heavy relief it was to hear Miss Murdstone say the first stroke of nine at night, and order me to bed!

Thus the holidays dragged away, until the morning came when Miss Murdstone said:

"Here's the last day off!" and gave me the closing cup of tea of the vacation.

I was not sorry to go. I had lapsed into a stupid state; but I was recovering a little and looking forward to Steerforth, almost Mr. Crisp seemed behind him. Again Mr. Barkis appeared at the gate, and again Miss Murdstone in her warning voice, said: "Clara!" when my mother went over to bid me farewell.

I kissed her, and my baby brother, and was very sorry then: but not sorry to go away, for the gulf between us was there, and the parting was there, every day. And it is not so much the absence gave me, that lives in my mind, though it was so fervent as could be, as what followed the embrace.

I was in the carriage's cart when I heard her calling to me. I looked out, and she stood at the garden-gate alone, holding her baby up in her arms for me to see. It was cold still weather and not a hair of her head, nor a fold of her dress was stirred, as she looked intently at me, holding up her child.

So I lost her. So I saw her afterwards, in my sleep at school—a silent presence near my bed—looking at me with the same intent face, holding up her baby in her arms.
I looked at her earnestly.

"When you came away from home at the end of the vacation," said Mrs. Creakle, after a pause, "were they all well?" After another pause, "Was your mamma well?"

I trembled without distinctly knowing why, and still looked at her earnestly, making no attempt to answer.

"Because," said she, "I grieve to tell you that I hear this morning your mamma is very ill."

A mist rose between Mrs. Creakle and me, and her figure seemed to move in it for an instant. Then I felt the burning tears run down my face, and it was steady again.

"She is very dangerously ill," she added.

I knew all now.

"She is dead."

There was no need to tell me so. I had already broken out into a desolate cry, and felt an orphan in the wide world.

She was very kind to me. She kept me there all day, and left me alone sometimes; and I cried, and wore myself to sleep, and woke and cried again. When I could cry no more, I began to think; and then the oppression on my breast was heaviest and my grief a dull pain that there was no ease for.

And yet my thoughts were idle; not intent on the calamity that weighed upon my heart, but idly lording near it. I thought of our house shut up and hushed. I thought of the little baby, who, Mrs. Creakle said, had been pining away for some time, and who, they believed, would die too. I thought of my father's grave in the churchyard, by our house, and of my mother lying there beneath the tree I knew so well. I stood upon a chair when I was left alone, and looked into the glass to see how red my eyes were, and how sorrowful my face. I considered, after some hours were gone, if my tears were really hard to flow now, as they seemed to be, what, in connection with my loss, it would affect me most to think of when I drew near home—for I was going home to the funeral. I am sensible of having felt that a dignity attached to me among the rest of the boys, and that I was important in my affliction.

If ever child were stricken with sincere grief, I was. But I remember that this importance was a kind of satisfaction to me, when I walked in the playground that afternoon while the boys were in school. When I saw them glancing at me out of the windows, as they went up to their classes, I felt distinguished, and looked more melancholy, and walked slower. When school was over, and they came out and spoke to me, I felt it rather good in myself not to be proud to any of them, and to take exactly the same notice of them all, as before.

I was to go home next night; not by the mail, but by the heavy night-coach, which was called the Farmer, and was principally used by country people travelling short intermediate distances upon the road. We had no story-telling.
No, indeed," returned his daughter. "We are all pretty gay here, thank Heaven! I don't wish it to return."

"I hope so, my dear," said Mr. Omer. "At least I have got my breath now. I think I'll measure the yellow scholar. Would you walk into the shop Master Copperfield?"

I preceded Mr. Omer, in compliance with his request: and after showing me a roll of cloth which he said was extra super, and too good for anything short of a peer, he took my various dimensions, and put them down in a book. While he was recording them he called my attention to his stock in trade, and to certain fashions which he said had "just come up," and to certain other fashions which he said had "just gone out."

"And by that sort of thing we very often get a little mint of money," said Mr. Omer. "But fashions are like human beings. They come and go, no one knows when, why, or how, and they go out, nobody knows when, why, or how. Everything is like life, in my opinion. If you look at it from that point of view."

I was too sorrowful to discuss the question, which would possibly have been beyond me under any circumstances; and Mr. Omer took me back into the parlor, breathing with some difficulty on the way.

He then called down a little back-parlor range of steps behind a door: "Bring up that tea and bread-and-butter!" which, after some time, during which I sat looking about me and thinking, and listening to the stitching in the room and the sound of hammering that kept a kind of music: Rat-tat-tat, rat-tat-tat, rat-tat-tat, rat-tat-tat, without any variation.

"Well," said my conductor to one of the three young women. "How do you get on, Minnie?"

"I shall be ready by the trying-on time," she replied, gaily, without looking up. "Don't you be afraid, father."

Mr. Omer took off his broad-brimmed hat, and sat down and panted. He was so fat that he was obliged to pant some time before he could say:

"That's right.
"Father!" said Minnie, playfully. "What a surmise you do grow!
"Well, I don't know how it is, my dear," he replied, considering about it. "I am rather so, at least," said Minnie. "You are such a comfortable man, you see, mother.
"No such thing, my dear," said Mr. Omer, "or otherwise, my dear," said Mr. Omer.
LOVE AMONG THE COFFINS.

I should spot the mourning that was with my tears. She was a pretty girl, and put my hair away from my face with a soft kind touch; but she was very nearly finished her work and bed time, and was so different from me! The tune left off, and a good-looking van came across the yard into the room. In his hand, and his mouth was nails, which he was obliged to take so he could speak.

"Joram!" said Mr. Omer. "How do you do, sir?" Joram colored a little, and the other two girls another.

"You were at it by candle-light last night. Were you at the club, then?" Mr. Omer, shutting up one eye, said Joram. "As you said we could e trip of it, and go over together, if it Binnie and me—and you."

thought you were going to leave me out," said Mr. Omer, laughing till he was so good as to say that," re-youn, "why I turned to with a Will, you give me your opinion of said Mr. Omer, rising. "My dear;" he ped and turned to me; "would you our—" her," Minnie interposed.

ght it might be agreeable, my dear," her. "But perhaps you're right." say how I knew it was my dear, de flin that they went to look at. I had one making; I had never seen one of: but it came into my mind what as, while it was going on; and when an entered, I am sure I knew what doing.

k being now finished, the two girls, as I had not heard, brushed the shreds from their dresses, and went into the that to rights, and wait for customers. ed behind to fold up what they had sack in two baskets. This she did, humming a lively little tune the, um, who I had no doubt was her lover. I stole a kiss from her while she was in't appear to mind me, at all), and her was gone for the chaise, and he haste and got himself ready. Then again; and then she put her thimble s in her pocket, and stuck a needle ith black thread neatly in the bosom n, and put on her outer clothing. Little glass behind the door, in which reflection of her pleased face.

I observed, sitting at the table in my head leaning on my hand, and my ring on very different things. The chaise soon came round to the front of the shop, and the baskets being put in first, I was put in next, and those three followed. I remember it as a kind of half chaise-cart, half piano-forte van, painted of a sombre color, and drawn by a black horse with a long tail. There was plenty of room for us all.

I do not think I have ever experienced so strange a feeling in my life. I am wiser now, perhaps) as that of being with them, remembering how they had been employed, and seeing them enjoy the ride. I was not angry with them; I was more afraid of them, as if I were cast away among creatures with whom I had no community of nature. They were very cheerful. The old man sat in front to drive, and the two young people sat behind him, and whenever he spoke to them leaned forward, the one on one side of his chubby face and the other on the other, and made a great deal of him. They would have talked to me too, but I held back, and moped in my corner; scared by their love-making and hilarity, though it was far from boisterous, and almost wondering that no judgment came upon them for their hardness of heart.

So, when they stopped to bait the horse, and ate and drank and enjoyed themselves, I could touch nothing that they touched, but kept my fast unbroken. So, when we reached home, I dropped out of the chaise behind, as quickly as possible, that I might not be in their company before those solemn windows, looking blindly on me like closed eyes once bright. And oh, how little need I had had to think what would move me to tears when I came back—seeing the window of my mother's room, and next it that which, in the better time, was mine!

I was in Peggotty's arms before I got to the door, and she took me into the house. Her grief burst out when she first saw me; but she controlled it soon, and spoke in whispers, and walked softly, as if the dead could be disturbed. She had not been in bed, I found, for a long time. She sat up at night still, and watched. As long as her poor dear pretty was above the ground, she said, she would never desert her.

Mr. Murdstone took no heed of me when I went into the parlor, where he was, but sat by the fireside, weeping silently, and pondering in his elbow-chair. Miss Murdstone, who was busy at her writing-desk, which was covered with letters and papers, gave me her cold finger-nails, and asked me, in an iron whisper, if I had been measured for my mourning.

I said: "Yes."

"And your shirts," said Miss Murdstone; "have you brought 'em home?"

"Yes, ma'am. "I have brought home all my clothes."

This was all the consolation that her firmness administered to me. I do not doubt that she had a choice pleasure in exhibiting what she called her self-command, and her firmness, and her strength of mind, and her common sense, and c
whole diabolical catalogue of her unamiable qualities, on such an occasion. She was particularly 
proud of her turn for business; and she showed 
it now in reducing everything to pen and ink, 
and being moved by nothing. All the rest of that 
day, and from morning to night afterwards, she 
sat at that desk: scratching comically with a 
hard pen, speaking in the same imperceptible 
whisper to everybody; never relaxing a muscle 
of her face, or softening a tone of her voice, or 
appearing with an atom of her dress astray. 

Her brother took a book sometimes, but never 
read it that I saw. He would open it and look at 
it as if he were reading, but would remain for a 
whole hour without turning the leaf, and then put 
it down to walk to and fro in the room. I used to 
sit with folded hands watching him, and counting 
his footsteps, hour after hour. He very seldom 
spoke to her, and never to me. He seemed to be 
the only restless thing, except the clocks, in the 
whole motionless house.

In these days before the funeral, I saw but 
little of Peggotty, except that, in passing up or 
down stairs, I always found her close to the room 
where my mother and her baby lay, and except 
that she came to me every night, and sat by my 
bed's head while I went to sleep. A day or two 
before the burial—I think it was a day or two be 
fore, but I am conscious of confusion in my mind 
about that heavy time, with nothing to mark its 
progress—she took me into the room. I only 
recollect that underneath came white covering on 
the bed, with a beautiful cleanliness and freshness 
all around it, there seemed to me to lie embodied 
the solemn stillness that was in the house; and 
that when she would have turned the cover gently 
back, I cried: "Oh no! oh no!" and held her 
hand.

If the funeral had been yesterday, I could not 
recollect it better. The very air of the best 
parlor, when I went in at the door, the bright 
condition of the fire, the shining of the wine in 
the decanters, the patterns of the glass and plates, 
the faint sweet smell of cake, the odor of Miss 
Murdstone's dress, and our black clothes. Mr. 
Chillip is in the room, and comes to speak to me.

"And how is Master David?" he says kindly.

I cannot tell him very well. I give him my 
hand, which he holds in his.

"Dear me!" says Mr. Chillip, meekly smiling, 
with something shining in his eye. "Our little 
friends grow up around us. They grow out of 
our knowledge, ma'am?"

This is to Miss Murdstone, who makes no 
reply.

"There is a great improvement here, ma'am?" 
says Mr. Chillip.

Miss Murdstone merely answers with a frown 
and a formal bend; Mr. Chillip, discomfited, 
goes into a corner, keeping me with him, and 
opens his mouth no more.

I remark this, because I remark everything 
that happens, not because I care about myself, 
or have done since I came home. And now 
bell begins to sound, and Mr. Ormer and Mr. 
come to make us ready. As Peggotty was 
told not to sound, the followers of my fate the 
same grave were made ready in the 
room.

There are Mr. Murdstone, our neighbor 
Grayer, Mr. Chillip, and I. When we got 
to the door, the Boreaces and their load are 
garden; and they move before us down the 
and past the elms, and through the gate, and 
the churchyard, where I have so often heard 
birds sing on a summer morning.

We stand around the grave. The day 
different to me from every other day, as 
alight not of the same color—of a sadder. 
Now there is a solemn hush, which we 
brought from home with what is resting I 
would; and while we stand bare-headed, 
the voice of the clergyman, sounding 
the open air, and yet distinct and plain, say 
"I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith 
Lord!" Then I hear sobs; and, standing 
among the lookers-on, I see that good and 
plain, whom of all the people upon earth 
the best, and unto whom my childish love 
certain that the Lord will one day say: "I 
done."

There are many faces that I know, among 
little crowd; faces that I knew in church, 
mine was always wandering there; face 
first saw my mother when she came to that 
in her youthful bloom. I do not mind that 
thing nothing but my grief—and yet I see 
them all; and even in the background 
away, see Minnie looking on, and her eye 
cing on her sweetheart, who is near me.

It is over, and the earth is filled in, as 
turn to come away. Before us stands our 
so pretty and unchanged, so linked in my 
with the young idea of what is gone, that 
sorrow has been nothing to the sorrow in 
forth. But they take me on; and Mr. Chillip 
to me; and when we get home, put some 
to my lips; and when I ask his leave to go 
my room, dismisses me with the gentleness 
woman.

All this, I say, is yesterday's event. Every 
late date have floated from me to the shore 
all forgotten things will reappear, but this 
like a high rock in the ocean.

I knew that Peggotty would come to me 
room. The Sabbath stillness of the time 
day was so like Sunday! I have forgotten 
sailed to us both. She sat down by me 
upon my little bed; and holding my hand 
sometimes putting it to her lips, and some 
smoothing it with hers, as she might have 
sorted my little brother, told me in her way 
that she had to tell concerning what hap 
pened.

"She was never well," said Peggotty, "a 
long time. She was uncertain in her wh
. When her baby was born, I thought it would get better, but she was more sad and sunk a little every day. She used to alone before her baby came, and then but afterwards she used to sing to it—oh Davy! the time had come when my first parting words to you were true—when she was glad to lay her poor head on her stupid cross old Peggotty's arm—and she died like a child that had gone to sleep!"

Thus ended Peggotty's narration. From the moment of my knowing of the death of my mother, the idea of her as she had been of late had vanished from me. I remembered her, from that instant; only as the young mother of my earliest impressions, who had been used to wind her bright curls round and round her finger, and to dance with me at twilight in the parlor. What Peggotty had told me now, was so far from bringing me back to the latter period, that it rooted the earlier image in my mind. It may be curious, but it is true. In her death she winged her way back to her calm untroubled youth, and cancelled all the rest.

The mother who lay in the grave, was the mother of my infancy; the little creature in her arms, was myself, as I had once been, hushed for ever on her bosom.

CHAPTER X.

I BECOME NEGLECTED, AND AM PROVIDED FOR.

The first act of business Miss Murdstone performed when the day of the solemnity was over, and light was freely admitted into the house, was to give Peggotty a month's warning. Much as Peggotty would have disliked such a service, I believe she would have retained it, for my sake, in preference to the best one upon earth. She told me we must part, and told me why; and we consoled with one another, in all sincerity.

As to me or my future, not a word was said, or a step taken. Happy they would have been, I dare say, if they could have dismissed me at a month's warning too. I mustered courage once, to ask Miss Murdstone when I was going back to school; and she answered dryly, she believed I was not going back at all. I was told nothing more. I was very anxious to know what was going to be done with me, and so was Peggotty; but neither she nor I could pick up any information on the subject.

There was one change in my condition, which, while it relieved me of a great deal of present uneasiness, might have made me, if I had been capable of considering it closely, yet more uncomfortable about the future. It was this. The constraint that had been put upon me, was quite abandoned. I was so far from being required to keep my dull post in the parlor, that on several occasions, when I took my seat there, Miss Murdstone turned to me to go away. I was so far from being warned off from Peggotty's society, that, provided I was
But seeing me, she called me her dear Davy, her
own boy! and coming half across the room to
meet me, kneed down upon the ground and
kissed me, and laid my head down on her bosom
near the little creature that was nestling there,
and put its hand up to my lips.
I wish I had died. I wish I had died then,
with that feeling in my heart! I should have
been more fit for Heaven than I ever have been
since.

"He is your brother," said my mother, fondling
me. "Davy, my pretty boy! My poor child!"

Then she kissed me more and more, and clasped
me round the neck. This she was doing when
Peggotty came running in, and bounded down on
the ground beside us, and went mad about us
both for a quarter of an hour.

It seemed that I had not been expected so
soon, the carrier being much before his usual
time. It seemed, too, that Mr. and Miss Murd-
stone had gone out upon a visit in the neighbor-
hood, and would not return before night. I had
never hoped for this. I had never thought it
possible that we three could be together undis-
turbed, once more; and I felt, for the time, as if
the old days were come back.

We dined together by the fireside. Peggotty
was in attendance to wait upon us, but my mother
wouldn’t let her do it, and made her dine with
us. I had my own old plate, with a brown view of a
man-of-war in full sail upon it, which Peggotty
had hoarded somewhere all the time I had been
away, and would not have broken, she said,
far a hundred pounds. I had my own old mug
with Davy on it, and my own old knife and fork
that wouldn’t cut.

While we were at table, I thought it a favor-
able occasion to tell Peggotty about Mr. Barkis,
who, before I had finished what I had to tell her,
begun to laugh, and throw her apron over her face.

"Peggotty," said my mother. "What’s the
matter?"

Peggotty only laughed the more, and held her
apron tight over her face when my mother tried
to pull it away, and sat as if her head were in
a bag.

"What are you doing, you stupid creature?" said
my mother, laughing.

"Oh, drat the man!" cried Peggotty. "He
wants to marry me."

"It would be a very good match for you;
wouldn’t it?" said my mother.

"Oh! I don’t know," said Peggotty. "Don’t
ask me. I wouldn’t have him if he was made of
gold. Nor I wouldn’t have anybody."

"Then, why don’t you tell him so, you ridi-
ulous thing?" said my mother.

"Tell him so," retorted Peggotty, looking out
of her apron. "He has never said a word to me
about it. He knows better. If he was to make
so bold as say a word to me, I should slap his
face."

Her own was as red as ever I saw it, or any
other face, I think; but she only covered
for a few moments at a time, when she
with a violent fit of laughter; and at
three of those attacks, went on with her

I remarked that my mother, though
when Peggotty looked at her, became
one and thoughtful. I had seen at first
was changed. Her face was very pret-
looked careworn, and too delicate
hand was so thin and white that it see
be almost transparent. But the
which I now refer was superadded to this
in her manner, which became anxiou-
tered. At last she said, putting out her
laying it affectionately on the hand of her
vant:

"Peggotty dear, are you not going
ried?"

"Me, ma’am?" returned Peggotty
"Lord bless you, no!"

"Not just yet?" said my mother, to

"Never believe it, Peggotty."

My mother took her hand, and said:

"Don’t leave me, Peggotty. Stay,
It will not be for long, perhaps. We
ever do without you?"

"Me leave you, my precious!" cried

"Not for all the world and his wife
what’s put that in your silly little head.
Peggotty had been used of old to his
mother sometimes, like a child.

But my mother made no answer,
thank her, and Peggotty went running
own fashion.

"Me leave you? I think I see my
ngo away from you? I should like
her at it! No, no, no," said Peggotty
her head, and folding her arms; "no
dear. It isn’t that there ain’t some
what’s put that in your silly little head.
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Peggotty had been used of old to his
mother sometimes, like a child.
MY MOTHER, PEGGOTTY, AND I.

Peggotty said she would walk a score of miles to see him. I took the little baby in my arms, and nursed it lovingly. As I awoke, I crept close to my mother, according to my old custom, brooding time, and sat with my arms emasculated, and my little red cheek on her knee, like a pet. I used to recollect and was very happy in recollecting.

sat thus, looking at the fire, and seeing the red-hot coals. I almost believed she were such pictures, and would vanish; and got low; and that there was nothing that I remembered, save my mother, and I.

I darted away at a stocking as long as she, and sat with it drawn on her foot, and her needle in her right hand, and another stitch whenever there was an unfailing supply of stockings in the castle. I was always darning, and the keys themselves were on fire. I could not conceive whose stockings they were. I was always darning, and the keys themselves were on fire. I could not conceive whose stockings they were.

Peggotty, I observed my mother, roused me from a reverie, "What nonsense you can have put such a person in your way to look at her, I wonder how it is," said Peggotty. "You are as jealous of Miss Murdstone as it is possible for a ridiculous creature to be. You want to keep the keys yourself, and give out all the things, I suppose? I don't know what you are doing. When you know that she only does it out of kindness and the best intentions! You know she does, Peggotty—"

You know it well.

Peggotty muttered something to the effect of "Miss Murdstone is the point now, Peggotty, and you shan't escape. Haven't you heard her say, over and over again, that she thinks I am too thoughtless and too—"

Peggotty returned my mother, "What a bad disposition you have, Peggotty!" said my mother. "You are as jealous of Miss Murdstone as it is possible for a ridiculous creature to be. You want to keep the keys yourself, and give out all the things, I suppose? I don't know what you are doing. When you know that she only does it out of kindness and the best intentions! You know she does, Peggotty—"

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ate. I said, at the moment, that I understood you, and you see I did. When you talk of Mr. Murdstone’s good intentions, and pretend to slight them (for I don’t believe you really do, in your heart, Pegotty), you must be as well convinced as I am how good they are, and how they nu- 


ture him in everything. If he seems to have been at all stern with a certain person, Pegotty—

you understand, and so I am sure does Davy, that I am not alluding to anybody present—it is solely

because he is satisfied that it is for a certain person’s benefit. He naturally loves a certain per-

son, on my account; and acts solely for a certain person’s good. He is better able to judge of it

than I am; for I very well know that I am a weak, light, girlish creature, and that he is a firm, grave, serious man. And he takes,” said my mother, with the tears which were engendered in her affectionate nature, stealing down her face, “he takes great pains with me; and I ought to be very thankful to him, and very submissive to him even in my thoughts; and when I am not, Pegotty, I worry and condemn myself, and feel doubtful of my own heart, and don’t know what to do.”

Pegotty sat with her chin on the foot of the stocking, looking silently at the fire.

“‘Thair, Pegotty,” said my mother, changing her tone, “don’t let us fall out with one another, for I couldn’t bear it. You are my true friend, I know, if I have any in the world. When I call you a ridiculous creature, or a vexatious thing, or anything of that sort, Pegotty, I only mean that you are my true friend, and always have been, ever since the night when Mr. Copperfield first brought me home here, and you came out to the gate to meet me.”

Pegotty was not slow to respond, and ratify the treaty of friendship by giving me one of her best hugs. I think I had some glimpses of the real character of this conversation at the time; but I am sure, now, that the good creature originated it, and took her part in it, merely that my mother might comfort herself with the little contradictory summary in which she had indulged. The design was efficacious; for I remember that my mother seemed more at ease during the rest of the evening, and that Pegotty observed her less.

When we had had our tea, and the ashes were thrown up, and the candles snuffed, I read Pegotty a chapter out of the Crocodile Book, in remembrance of old times—she took it out of her pocket: I don’t know whether she had kept it there ever since—and then we talked about Salem House, which brought me round again to Steerforth, who was my great subject. We were very happy; and that evening, as the last of its race, and destined evermore to close that volume of my life, will never pass out of my memory.

It was almost ten o’clock before we heard the sound of wheels. We all got up then; and my mother said hurriedly that, as it was so late, and Mr. and Miss Murdstone approved of early hours for young people, perhaps I had better go. I kissed her, and went up-stairs with my hat directly, before they came in. It appeared as childish fancy, as I ascended to the part where I had been imprisoned, that they had cold blast of air into the house which blew the old familiar feeling like a feather.

I felt uncomfortable about going at breakfast in the morning, as I had never seen Mr. Murdstone since the day when I met my memorable offence. However, as I was to be done, I went down, after two or the first half-way, and as many runs back on my own room, and presented myself in the

He was standing before the fire with his back to it, while Miss Murdstone made the tea. She looked at me steadily as I entered, but not with any sign of recognition whatever.

I went up to him, after a moment of embarrassment, and said: “I beg your pardon, sir. I am sorry for what I did, and I hope you will forgive me.”

“I am glad to hear you are sorry,” Davy replied.

The hand he gave me was the hand I had seen so often in the red spot upon it; but it was not so red as I turned, when I met that stiff expression in his face.

“How do you do, ma’am?” I said to Murdstone.

“Ah, dear Jane!” said Miss Murdstone, giving me the tea-caddy scoop instead of her hand. “How long are the holidays?”

“A month, ma’am.”

“Counting from when?”

“From to-day, ma’am.”

“Oh!” said Miss Murdstone. “Then they are one day off.”

She kept the calendar of the holidays to herself, and every morning checked a day off, exactly the same manner. She did it gloomily, when she came to ten, but when she got into the shops she became more hopeful, and, as she advanced, even jovial.

It was on this very first day that I had the misfortune to throw her, though she was subject to such weakness, in general, into violent consternation. I came into the room where she and my mother were sitting; a baby (who was only a few weeks old) in my mother’s lap, I took it very carefully in my arms. Suddenly Miss Murdstone gave a scream that I all but dropped it.

“My dear Jane!” cried my mother.

“Good heavens, Clara, do you see?” exclaimed Miss Murdstone.

“See what, my dear Jane?” said my mother.

“Where?”

“He’s got it!” cried Miss Murdstone.

“Boy has got the baby!”

She was limp with horror; but stifled it self to make a start at me, and took a cowl
Then, she turned faint; and was so very
t they were obliged to give her cherry-
. I was solemnly interdicted by her, on
every, from touching my brother any more
pretense whatever; and my poor mother,
could see, wished otherwise, meekly con-
the interdict, by saying: "No doubt you
it, my dear Jane."
another occasion, when we three were to-
this same dear baby—it was truly dear to
our mother's sake—was the innocent oc-
of Miss Murdstone's going into a passion.
ther, who had been looking at its eyes as
pon her lap, said:
ivy I come here!" and looked at mine.
Miss Murdstone lay her head down...
declare," said my mother, gently, "they are
alike. I suppose they are mine. I think
the color of mine. But they are wonder-
that are you talking about, Clara?" said
murdstone.
"dear Jane," faltered my mother, a little
by the harsh tone of this inquiry, "I find
baby's eyes and Davy's are exactly
ira!" said Miss Murdstone, raving angrily,
are a positive fool sometimes."
"dear Jane," remonstrated my mother.

positive fool," said Miss Murdstone.
else could compare my brother's baby with
y? They are not at all alike. They are ex-
alike. They are utterly dissimilar in all
. I hope they will ever remain so. I will
here, and hear such comparisons made.
hat she stalked out, and made the door bang
hort, I was not a favorite with Miss Murd-
short, I was not a favorite there with
, not even with myself; for those who
me could not show it, and those who did
ed it so plainly that I had a sensitive con-
ness of always appearing constrained, boor-
lull.
that I made them as uncomfortable as
me. If I came into the room where
re, and they were talking together and my
seemed cheerful, an anxious cloud would
her face from the moment of my en-
Mr. Murdstone were in his best humor,
ed him. If Miss Murdstone were in her
intensified it. I had perception enough
that my mother was the victim always;
was afraid to speak to me, or be kind to
should give them some offence by her
of doing so, and receive a lecture after
that she was not only ceasingly afraid of
offending, but of my offending, and un-
retched their looks if I only moved. There-
solved to keep myself as much out of their
I could; and many a wintry hour did I
church-clock strike, when I was sitting
cheerless bed-room, wrapped in my little
at, poring over a book.

In the evening, sometimes, I went and sat
with Peggotty in the kitchen. There I was
comfortable, and not afraid of being myself. But
neither of these resources was approved of in the
parlor. The tormenting humor which was domi-
nant there stopped them both. I was still held
to be necessary to my poor mother's training, and,
as one of her trials, could not be suffered to absent
myself.

"David," said Mr. Murdstone, one day after
dinner when I was going to leave the room as
usual; "I am sorry to observe that you are of a
sullen disposition."

"As sulkry as a bear!" said Miss Murdstone.

I stood still, and hung my head.

"Now, David," said Mr. Murdstone, "a sul-
len obdurate disposition is, of all tempers, the
worst."

"And the boy's is, of all such dispositions that
ever I have seen," remarked his sister, "the most
confirmed and stubborn. I think, my dear Clara,
even you must observe it?"

"I beg your pardon, my dear Jane," said my
mother, "but are you quite sure—I am certain
you'll excuse me, my dear Jane—that you under-
stand Davy?"

"I should be somewhat ashamed of myself,
Clara," returned Miss Murdstone, "if I could not
understand the boy, or any boy. I don't profess
to be profound; but I do lay claim to common
sense."

"No doubt, my dear Jane," returned my moth-
er, "your understanding is very vigorous."

"Oh dear, no! Pray don't say that, Clara,"
terposed Miss Murdstone, angrily.

"But I am sure it is," resumed my mother;
"and everybody knows it is. I profit so much by
it myself, in many ways—at least I ought to—that
no one can be more convinced of it than myself;
and therefore I speak with great diffidence, my
dear Jane, I assure you."

"We'll say I don't understand the boy, Clara,"
returned Miss Murdstone, arranging the little fet-
ters on her wrists. "We'll agree, if you please,
that I don't understand him at all. He is much
too deep for me. But perhaps my brother's pen-
etration may enable him to have some insight into
his character. And I believe my brother was
speaking on the subject when we—not very de-
cently—interrupted him."

"I think, Clara," said Mr. Murdstone, in a
low grave voice, "that there may be better and
more dispassionate judges of such a question than
you."

"Edward," replied my mother, timidly, "you
are a far better judge of all questions than I
pretend to be. Both you and Jane are. I only
said—"

"You only said something weak and incon-
siderate," he replied. "Try not to do it again,
my dear Clara, and keep a watch upon yourself."

My mother's lips moved, as if she answered.
"Yes, my dear Edward," but she said nothing
aloud.
"I was sorry, David, I remarked," said Mr. Murdstone, turning his head and his eyes stiffly towards me, "to observe that you are of a sullen disposition. This is not a character that I can suffer to develop itself beneath my eyes without an effort at improvement. You must endeavor, sir, to change it. We must endeavor to change it for you."

"I beg your pardon, sir," I faltered. "I have never meant to be sullen since I came back."

"Don't take refuge in a lie, sir!" he returned so fiercely, that I saw my mother involuntarily put out her trembling hand as if to interpose between us, "You have withdrawn yourself in your sullenness to your own room. You have kept your own room when you ought to have been here. You know now, once for all, that I require you to be here and not there. Further, that I require you to bring obedience here, You know me, David. I will have it done."

Miss Murdstone gave a hoarse chuckle.

"I will have a respectful, prompt, and ready bearing towards myself," he continued, "and towards Jane Murdstone, and towards your mother, I will not have this room shunned as if it were infected at the pleasure of a child. Sit down."

He ordered me like a dog, and I obeyed like a dog.

"One thing more," he said, "I observe that you have an attachment to law and common company. You are not to associate with servants. The kitchen will not improve you. In the many respects in which you need improvement. Of the woman who abets you, I say nothing—since you, Clara, addressing my mother in a lower voice, "from old associations and long-established fancies, have a weakness respecting her which is not yet overcome."

"A most unaccountable delusion it is!" cried Miss Murdstone.

"I only say," he resumed, addressing me, "that I disapprove of your preferring such company as Mistress Peggoty, and that it is to be abandoned. Now, David, you understand me, and you know what will be the consequences if you fail to obey me to the letter."

I knew well—better perhaps than he thought, as far as my poor mother was concerned—and I obeyed him to the letter. I retreated to my own room no more; I took refuge with Peggoty no more; but sat wearily in the parlor day after day looking forward to night, and bedtime.

What insurmountable constraint I underwent, sitting in the same attitude hours upon hours, afraid to move an arm or a leg lest Miss Murdstone should complain (as she did on the least pretext) of my restlessness, and afraid to move an eye lest she should light on some look of dislike or scrutiny that would find new cause for complaint in mine! What intolerable dulness to sit listening to the ticking of the clock; and watching Miss Murdstone's little shiny steel beads as she strung them; and wondering whether she would ever be married, and if so, to what sort of unhappy man; and counting the divisions in the moulding on its chimney-piece; and wondering away, with my eyes, to the ceiling, among the curls and chair-screws in the paper on the wall!

What walks I took alone, down maddy lane, in the bad winter weather, carrying that press and Mr. and Miss Murdstone in it, everywhere a monstrous load that I was obliged to bear a daymare that there was no possibility of breaking in a weight that brooded on my soul, and blunted them!

What meals I had in silence and embarrassment, always feeling that there not knife and fork too many, and those mince; an appetite too many and that mine; a plate and chair too many, and those mince; a somebody too many, and that! What evenings, when the candles came, and I was expected to employ myself, but not daring to read an entertaining book, pored over some headed harder-hearted treatise on arithmetic; when the tables of weights and measures itself to tunes, as Rule Britannia, or Away with Melancholy; when they wouldn't stand still to be learned, but would go threading my grandmother's needle through my unfortunate head, fix one ear and out at the other!

What yawns and dozes I lapsed into, in spite of all my care; what startles I came out of concealed sleeps with; what answers I never got, to little observations that I rarely made; what a blank space I seemed, which everybody overlooked, and yet was in everybody's way; what heavy relief it was to hear Miss Murdstone halting the first stroke of nine at night, and order me to bed!

Thus the holidays lagged away, until the morning came when Miss Murdstone said: "Here's the last day off!" and gave me the closing cup of tea of the vacation.

I was not sorry to go. I had lapsed into a stupid state; but I was recovering a little and looking forward to Steerforth, albeit Mr. Cark's loomed behind him. Again Mr. Barkis appeared at the gate, and again Miss Murdstone in her warning voice, said: "Clara!" when my mother bent over me to bid me farewell.

I kissed her, and my baby brother, and was very sorry then; but not sorry to go away, for the gulf between us was there, and the parting was there, every day. And it is not so much the embrace she gave me, that lives in my mind, though it was an fervent as could be, as what followed the embrace.

I was in the carrier's cart when I heard her calling to me. I looked out, and she stood at the garden-gate alone, holding her baby up in her arms for me to see. It was cold still weather; and not a hair of her head, nor a fold of her dress was stirred, as she looked intently at me, holding up her child.

So I lost her. So I saw her afterwards, in my sleep at school—a silent presence near my bed—looking at me with the same intent face—holding up her baby in her arms.
I leave Salem House.

CHAPTER IX.

I HAVE A MEMORABLE BIRTHDAY.

Over all that happened at school, until the last day of my birthday came round in my mind, seems to have awak en all lesser recollections, and to exist in my mind, seems to have awak en all lesser recollections, and to exist difficult for me to believe that there of full two months between my return to the House and the arrival of that birthday. y understand that the fact was so, how it must have been so; otherwise I am convinced that there was no interval, the one occasion tending upon the other's

eall I recollect the kind of day it was there fog that hung about the place; I see roet, ghostly, through it; I feel my rinky plummy on my cheeks; I look along the pective of the school-room, with a spudle here and there to light up the sleet, and the breath of the boys breathing into the raw cold as they blow upon ers, and tap their feet upon the floor.

after breakfast, and we had been sum from the playground, when Mr. Sharp d said:

I Copperfield is to go into the parlor." reted a hamper from Peggoty, and bright- he order. Some of the boys about me air claim not to be forgotten in the dis of the good things, as I got out of my great salacity. t hurry, David," said Mr. Sharp. time enough, my boy, don't hurry." it have been surprised by the feeling which he spoke, if I had given it a but I gave it none until afterwards. I way to the parlor; and there I found Mr. sitting at his breakfast with the cane and per before him, and Mrs. Creakle with letter in her hand. But no hamper. d Copperfield," said Mrs. Creakle, lead a sofa, and sitting down beside me. "I speak to you very particularly. I have g to tell you, my child." reakle, at whom of course I looked, a head without looking at me, and up a sigh with a very large piece of but st.

are too young to know how the world every day," said Mrs. Creakle, "and how e in it pass away. But we all have to David; some of us when we are young, s when we are old, some of us at all rives."

I looked at her earnestly.

"When you came away from home at the end of the vacation," said Mrs. Creakle, after a pause, "were they all well?" After another pause, "Was your mamma well?"

I trembled without distinctly knowing why, and still looked at her earnestly, making no attempt to answer.

"Because," said she, "I grieve to tell you that I hear this morning your mamma is very ill."

A mist rose between Mrs. Creakle and me, and her figure seemed to move in it for an instant. Then I felt the burning tears run down my face, and it was steady again.

"She is very dangerously ill," she added.

I knew all now.

"She is dead."

There was no need to tell me so. I had already broken out into a desolate cry, and felt an orphan in the wide world.

She was very kind to me. She kept me there all day, and left me alone sometimes; and I cried, and wore myself to sleep, and woke and cried again. When I could cry no more, I began to think; and then the oppression on my breast was heaviest and my grief a dull pain that there was no ease for.

And yet my thoughts were idle; not intent on the calamity that weighed upon my heart, but idly loitering near it. I thought of our house shut up and smothered. I thought of the little baby, who, Mrs. Creakle said, had been pining away for some time, and who, they believed, would die too. I thought of my father's grave in the churchyard, by our house, and of my mother lying there beneath the tree I knew so well. I stood upon a chair when I was left alone, and looked into the glass to see how red my eyes were, and how sorrowful my face. I considered, after some hours were gone, if my tears were really hard to flow now, as they seemed to be, what, in connection with my loss, it would affect me most to think of when I drew near home—for I was going home to the funeral. I am sensible of having felt that a dignity attached to me among the rest of the boys, and that I was important in my affliction.

If ever child were stricken with sincere grief, I was. But I remember that this importance was a kind of satisfaction to me, when I walked in the playground that afternoon while the boys were in school. When I saw them glancing at me out of the windows, as they went up to their classes, I felt distinguished, and looked more melancholy, and walked slower. When school was over, and they came out and spoke to me, I felt it rather good in myself not to be proud to any of them, and to take exactly the same notice of them all, as before.

I was to go home next night; not by the mail, but by the heavy night-coach, which was called the Farmer, and was principally used by country people travelling short intermediate distances upon the road. We had no story-telling.
David Copperfield,

evening, and Traddles insisted on lending me his pillow. I don't know what good he thought it would do me, for I had one of my own; but it was all he had to lend. Poor fellow, except a sheet of letter-paper full of skeletons; and that he gave me at parting, as a soother of my sorrows and a contribution to my peace of mind.

I left Salem House upon the morrow afternoon. I little thought then that I left it, never to return. We travelled very slowly all night, and did not get into Yarmouth before nine or ten o'clock in the morning. I looked out for Mr. Barkis, but he was not there; and instead of him a fat, short-winded, merry-looking, little old man in black, with rusty little bunches of ribbons at the knees of his breeches, black stockings, and a broad-brimmed hat, came puffing up to the coach-window, and said:

"Master Copperfield?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you come with me, young sir, if you please?" he said, opening the door, "and I shall have the pleasure of taking you home?"

I put my hand in his, wondering who he was, and we walked away to a shop in a narrow street, on which was written Omer, Draper, Tailor, Haberdasher, Funeral Furnisher, &c. It was a close and stifling little shop; full of all sorts of clothing, made and unmade, including one window full of beaver-hats and bonnets. We went into a little back-parlor behind the shop, where we found three young women at work on a quantity of black materials, which were heaped upon the table, and little bits and cuttings of which were littered all over the floor. There was a good fire in the room, and a breathless smell of warm black crepe. I did not know what the small was then, but I know now.

The three young women, who appeared to be very industrious and comfortable, raised their heads to look at me, and then went on with their work. Stitch, stitch, stitch. At the same time there was noise from a work-room across a little yard outside the window, a regular sound of hammering that kept a kind of time: Ra-tat-tat, Ra-tat-tat, Ra-tat-tat, without any variation.

"Well," said my conductor to one of the three young women. "How do you get on, Minnie?"

"We shall be ready by the trying-on time," she replied gaily, without looking up. "Don't you be afraid, father."

Mr. Omer took off his broad-brimmed hat, and sat down and panted. He was so fat that he was obliged to pant some time before he could say:

"That's right."

"Father!" said Minnie, playfully. "What a purpose you do grow!"

"Well, I don't know how it is, my dear," he replied, considering about it. "I am rather so."

"You are such a comfortable man, you see," said Minnie. "You take things so easy."

"No use tak'ng 'em otherwise, my dear," said Mr. Omer.

"No, indeed," returned his daughter. "We are all pretty gay here, thank Heaven! Ain't we, father?"

"I hope so, my dear," said Mr. Omer. "I'll have got my breath now, I think I'll measure the young scholar. Would you walk into the shop, Master Copperfield?"

I preceded Mr. Omer, in compliance with his request; and after showing me a roll of cloth which he said was extra super, and too good mourning for anything short of parents, he took my various dimensions, and put them down in a book. While he was recording them he called my attention to his stock in trade, and to certain fashions which he said had "just come up," and to certain other fashions which he said had "just gone out."

"And by that sort of thing we very often let a little mint of money," said Mr. Omer. "But fashions are like human beings. They come in and out, nobody knows when, why, or how; and they come out, nobody knows when, why, or how. Everything is like life, in my opinion, if you look all at that point of view."

I was too sorrowful to discuss the question, which would possibly have been beyond me under any circumstances; and Mr. Omer took me back into the parlor, breathing with some difficulty on the way.

He then called down a little break-neck stair of steps behind a door: "Bring up that tea and bread-and-butter!" which, after some time, during which I sat looking about me and thinking and listening to the stitching in the room and the tune that was being hummed across the yard, appeared on a tray, and turned out to be for me.

"I have been acquainted with you," said Mr. Omer, after watching me for some minutes, during which I had not made much impression on the breakfast, for the black things destroyed my appetite, "I have been acquainted with you a long time, any young friend."

"Have you, sir?"

"All your life," said Mr. Omer. "I may say before it. I knew your father before you. He was five foot nine and a half, and he lays in five and twenty foot of ground."

"He lays in five and twenty foot of ground, if he lays in a fraction," said Mr. Omer, pleasantly. "It was either his request or her direction, I forget which."

"Do you know how my little brother is, sir?" I inquired.

Mr. Omer shook his head.

"He is in his mother's arms," said he.

"Oh, poor little fellow! Is he dead?"

"Don't mind it more than you can help," said Mr. Omer. "Yes. The baby's dead."

My wounds broke out afresh at this intelligence. I took the scarcely broken veranda, and went and rested my head on another table.
the little room, which Minnie hastily entered, and put my hair away from my face, with my tears. She was a pretty girl, and she left the room, and went to her work and played the piano, and was soon different from me. I saw the tune had nearly finished her work and curdled my blood, and was so different from me! A good-looking woman walked across the yard into the room. She had a bandage on her head, and her mouth was full of spines, which she was obliged to take out, as she could speak.

"Joram!" said Mr. Omer. "How do you like her?"

"She," said Joram. "I'm done, sir."

I colored a little, and the other two girls were also colored.

"You were at it by candle-light last night, I was at the cinch, then?" said Mr. Omer, shutting up one eye.

"As you said we could take it, and go over together, if it pleases you and me—and you," thought I was going to leave me her, said Mr. Omer, laughing till he was so good as to say that, young man, why I turned to with a smile. Will you give me your opinion of her?" said Mr. Omer, rising. "My dear;" I peeped and turned to; "I would you your—"

"I'm done, Miss Murdstone, if it might be agreeable, my dear," she said. "But perhaps you're right.

"I had two making; I had not seen one of; but it came into my mind what was, while it was going on; and when man entered, I am sure I knew it was a doing of the room. The girl was finished, the two girls, and I had not heard, brushed the shreds from their dresses, and went into the room to rights, and wait for customers. I walked behind to fold up what they had pack it in two baskets. This she did

"With the aid of some little tunes, which I had no doubt was her lover, stolen a kiss from her while she was left to mind me, at all, and then was gone for the chaise, and he haste and got himself ready. Then again; and then she put her thimble in her pocket, and stuck a needle with black thread neatly in the bosom of the woman, and put on her outer clothing a little glass behind the door, in which affection of her pleased face.

I observed, sitting at the table in the head leaning on my hand, and my eye on very different things. Then the chaise soon came round to the front of the shop, and the baskets being put in first, I was put in next, and those three followed. I remember it as a kind of half chaise-cart, half piano-forte van, painted of a sombre color, and drawn by a black horse with a long tail. There was plenty of room for us all.

I do not think I have ever experienced so strange a feeling in my life (I am wiser now, perhaps) as that of being with them, remembering how they had been employed, and seeing them enjoy the ride. I was not angry with them; I was more afraid of them, as if I were cast away among creatures with whom I had no community of nature. They were very cheerful. The old man sat in front to drive, and the two young people sat behind him, and whenever he spoke to them leaned forward, the one on one side of his chubby face and the other on the other, and made a great deal of him. They would have talked to me too, but I held back, and moped in my corner; scared by their love-making and hilarity, though it was far from bolsterous, and almost wondering that no judgment came upon them for their hardness of heart.

So, when they stopped to bait the horse, and ate and drank and enjoyed themselves, I could touch nothing that they touched, but kept my fast unbroken. So, when we reached home, I dropped out of the chaise behind, as quickly as possible, that I might not be in their company before those solemn windows, looking blindly on me like closed eyes once bright. And oh, how little need I had had to think what would move me to tears when I came back—seeing the window of my mother's room, and next it that which, in the better time, was mine!

I was in Peggoty's arms before I got to the door, and she took me into the house. Her grief burst out when she first saw me; but she controlled it soon, and spoke in whispers, and walked softly, as if the dead could be disturbed. She had not been in bed, I found, for a long time. She sat up at night still, and watched. As long as her poor dear pretty was above the ground, she said, she would never desert her.

Mr. Murdstone took no heed of me when I went into the parlor, where he was, but sat by the fireside, weeping silently, and pondering in his elbow-chair. Miss Murdstone, who was busy at her writing-desk, which was covered with letters and papers, gave me her cold finger-nails, and asked me, in an iron whisper, if I had been measured for my mourning.

I said, "Yes."

"And your shirt," said Miss Murdstone; "have you brought 'em home?"

"Yes, ma'am. "I have brought home all my clothes."

This was all the consolation that her firmness administered to me. I do not doubt that she had a choice pleasure in exhibiting what she called her self-command, and her firmness, and the strength of mind, and her common sense, and..."
whole diabolical catalogue of her unanswerable qualities, on such an occasion. She was particularly proud of her turn for business; and she showed it now in reducing everything to pen and ink, and being moved by nothing. All the rest of that day, and from morning to night afterwards, she sat at that desk: scratching composition with a hard pen, speaking in the same imperceptible whisper to everybody; never relaxing a muscle of her face, or softening a tone of her voice, or appearing with an atom of her dress astray.

Her brother took a book sometimes, but never read it that I saw. He would open it and look at it as if he were reading, but would remain for a whole hour without turning the leaf, and then put it down to walk to and fro in the room. I used to sit with folded hands watching him, and counting his footsteps, hour after hour. He very seldom spoke to her, and never to me. He seemed to be the only restless thing, except the clocks, in the whole motionless house.

In these days before the funeral, I saw but little of Peggotty, except that, in passing up or down stairs, I always found her close to the room where my mother and her baby lay, and except that she came to me every night, and sat by my bed's head while I went to sleep. A day or two before the burial—I think it was a day or two before, but I am conscious of confusion in my mind about that heavy time, with nothing to mark its progress—she took me into the room. I only recollect that underneath some while covering on the bed, with a beautiful cleanliness and freshness all around it, there seemed to me to lie embodied the solemn stillness that was in the house; and that when she would have turned the cover gently back, I cried; "Oh no! oh no!" and held her hand.

If the funeral had been yesterday, I could not recollect it better. The very air of the best parlor, where I went in at the door, the bright condition of the fire, the shining of the wine in the decanters, the patterns of the glass and plates, the faint sweet smell of cake, the odor of Miss Murdstone's dress, and our black clothes. Mr. Chilp is in the room, and comes to speak to me.

"And how is Master David?" he says kindly.

I cannot tell him very well. I give him my hand, which he holds in his.

"Dear me!" says Mr. Chilp, meekly smiling, with something shining in his eye. "Our little friends grow up around us. They grow out of our knowledge, ma'am?"

This is to Miss Murdstone, who makes no reply.

"There is a great improvement here, ma'am?" says Mr. Chilp.

Miss Murdstone merely answers with a frown and a formal bend; Mr. Chilp, discomfited, goes into a corner, keeping me with him, and opens his mouth no more.

I remark this, because I remark everything that happens, not because I care about myself, or have done since I came home. And now the bell begins to sound, and Mr. Omer and money come to make us ready. As Peggotty was wont to tell me long ago, the followers of my father in the same grave were made ready in the same room.

There are Mr. Murdstone, our neighbor Mr. Graper, Mr. Chilp, and I. When we go out to the door, the Reapers and their load are in the garden; and they move before us down the path, and past the elms, and through the gate, and into the churchyard, where I have so often heard the birds sing on a summer morning.

We stand around the grave. The day seems different to me from every other day, and the light not of the same color—of a sadder color. Now there is a solemn hush, which we have brought from home with what is resting in its mould; and while we stand bare-headed, I hear the voice of the clergyman, sounding remote to the open air, and yet distinct and plain, saying: "I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord!" Then I hear sobs; and, standing apart among the lookers-on, I see that good and faithful servant, whom of all the people upon earth I love the best, and unto whom my childish heart is certain that the Lord will one day say: "Well done!"

There are many faces that I know, among the little crowd; faces that I knew in church, when mine was always wandering there; faces that first saw my mother when she came to the village in her youthful bloom. I do not mind them—I mind nothing but my grief—and yet I see and know them all; and even in the background, far away, see Minnie looking on, and her eye glancing on her sweetheart, who is near me.

It is over, and the earth is filled in, and we turn to come away. Before us stands our house, so pretty and unchanged, so linked in my mind with the young idea of what is gone, that all my sorrow has been nothing to the sorrow it calls forth. But they take me on; and Mr. Chilp talks to me; and when we get home, put some water to my lips; and when I ask his leave to go up to my room, dismisses me with the gentleness of a woman.

All this, I say, is yesterday's event. Events of later date have floated from me to the shore where all forgotten things will reappear, but this stands like a high rock in the ocean.

I knew that Peggotty would come to me in my room. The Sabbath stillness of the day was so like Sunday! I have forgotten that was suited to us both. She sat down by my side upon my little bed; and holding my hand, and sometimes putting it to her lips, and sometimes smoothing it with hers, as she might have comforted my little brother, told me in her way, all that she had to tell concerning what had happened.

"She was never well," said Peggotty, "for a long time. She was uncertain in her mind, and
happy. When her baby was born, I thought she would get better, but she was more sickly, and sunk a little every day. She used to ask to sit alone before her baby came, and then we cried; but afterwards she used to sing to it—soft, that I once thought, when I heard her, it was like a voice up in the air, that was rising away.

"I think she got to be more timid, and more lightened-like, of late; and that a hard word was like a blow to her. But she was always the same to me. She never changed to her foolish Pegotty, didn’t my sweet girl."

Her Pegotty stopped, and softly beat upon my hand a little while.

"The last time that I saw her like her own old self, was the night when you came home, my dear. The day you went away, she said to me, ‘I never shall see my pretty darling again. Something tells me so, that tells the truth, I know.’"

"She tried to hold up after that; and many a time, when they told her she was thoughtless and un-hearted, made believe to be so; but it was a bygone then. She never told her husband what she had told me—she was afraid of saying it to anybody else—till one night, a little more than a week before it happened, when she said to him: ‘My dear, I think I am dying.’"

"‘It’s off my mind now, Pegotty,’ she told me, when I laid her in her bed that night. ‘He will believe it more and more, poor fellow, every day for a few days to come; and then it will be met. I am very tired. If this is sleep, sit by me while I sleep: don’t leave me. God bless both my children! God protect and keep my fatherless boy!’"

"‘I never left her afterwards,’ said Pegotty. "She often talked to them two down-stairs—for, she loved them; she couldn’t bear not to love any one who was about her—but when they went away from her bedside, she always turned to me, as if there was rest where Pegotty was, and never asleep in any other way."

"On the last night. In the evening, she kissed me, and said: ‘If my baby should die too, Pegotty, please let them lay him in my arms, and bury us together.’ (It was done; for the poor lamb lived but a day beyond her.) ‘Let my dearest boy go with us to our resting-place,’ she said, ‘and tell him that his mother, when she lay here, blessed him not once, but a thousand times.’"

Another silence followed this, and another gentle beating on my hand.

"It was pretty far in the night,” said Pegotty, “when she asked me for some drink; and when she had taken it, gave me such a patient smile, the dear!—so beautiful!"

"Daybreak had come, and the sun was rising, when she said to me, how kind and considerate Mr. Copperfield had always been to her, and how he had borne with her, and told her, when she doubted herself, that a loving heart was better and stronger than wisdom, and that he was a happy man in hers. ‘Pegotty, my dear,’ she said then, ‘put me nearer to you,’ for she was very weak. ‘Lay your good arm underneath my neck,’ she said, ‘and turn me to you, for your face is going far off, and I want it to be near.’ I put it as she asked; and oh Davy! the time had come when my first parting words to you were true—when she was glad to lay her poor head on her stupid cross old Pegotty’s arm—and she died like a child that had gone to sleep!’"

Thus ended Pegotty’s narration. From the moment of my knowing of the death of my mother, the idea of her as she had been of late had vanished from me. I remembered her, from that instant, only as the young mother of my earliest impressions, who had been used to wind her bright curls round and round her finger, and to dance with me at twilight in the parlor. What Pegotty had told me now, was so far from bringing me back to the latter period, that it rooted the earlier image in my mind. It may be curious, but it is true. In her death she winged her way back to her calm untroubled youth, and cancelled all the rest.

The mother who lay in the grave, was the mother of my infancy; the little creature in her arms, was myself, as I had once been, hushed for ever on her bosom.

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CHAPTER X.

I BECOME NEGLECTED, AND AM PROVIDED FOR.

The first act of business Miss Murdstone performed when the day of the solemnity was over, and light was freely admitted into the house, was to give Pegotty a month’s warning. Much as Pegotty would have disliked such a service, I believe she would have retained it, for my sake, in preference to the best one upon earth. She told me we must part, and told me why; and we consoled with one another, in all sincerity.

As to me or my future, not a word was said, or a step taken. Happy they would have been, I dare say, if they could have dismissed me at a month’s warning too. I mustered courage once, to ask Miss Murdstone when I was going back to school; and she answered drily, she believed I was not going back at all. I was told nothing more. I was very anxious to know what was going to be done with me, and so was Pegotty; but neither she nor I could pick up any information on the subject.

There was one change in my condition, which, while it relieved me of a great deal of present uneasiness, might have made me, if I had been capable of considering it closely, yet more uncomfortable about the future. It was this. The constraint that had been put upon me, was quite abandoned. I was so far from being required to keep my dull post in the parlor, that on several occasions, when I took my seat there, Miss Murdstone bade me to go away. I was so far from being wanted off from Pegotty’s society, that, provided I was
But seeing me, she called me her dear Davy, her own boy! and coming half across the room to meet me, kneeled down upon the ground and kissed me, and laid my head down on her bosom near the little creature that was nestling there, and put its hand up to my lips.

I wish I had died. I wish I had died then, with that feeling in my heart! I should have been more fit for Heaven than I ever have been since.

"He is your brother," said my mother, fondling me. "Davy, my pretty boy! My poor child!" Then she kissed me more and more, and clasped me round the neck. This was all that Peggotty had been doing since she had entered the room. Her face was very pale, and it looked careworn, and too delicate a hand was too thin and white that it soon seemed to be almost transparent. But the way in which she now spoke was superadded to this in her manner, which became anxious and tearful. At last she said, putting out her laying it affectionately on the hand that I want:

"Peggotty dear, are you not going to cry?"

"Me, ma'am?" returned Peggotty.

"Lord bless you, no!"

"Not just yet?" said my mother, to me.

"Never!" cried Peggotty.

My mother took her hand, and said:

"Don't leave me, Peggotty. Stay. It will not be for long, perhaps. Whatever ever do without you!"

"Me leave you, my precious!" cried Peggotty. "Not for all the world and his wife that's put that in your silly little heart! Peggotty had been used of old to mother, sometimes, like a child.

But my mother made no answer, thank her, and Peggotty went running on her own fashion.

"Me leave you? I think I see myself go away from you? I should like her at it! No, no, no," said Peggotty, her head, and folding her arms; "not dear. It isn't that there ain't some would be well enough pleased if she they shan't be pleased. They shall be at it. I'll stay with you till I am a cross crank man. And when I'm too deaf, and too too blind, and too mumbly for want of use at all, even to be found it then I shall go to my Davy, and ask him me in."

"And Peggotty," says I, "I shall see you, and I'll make you as well as queen."

"Bless your dear heart!" cried Peggotty, you know you will!" And she kissed me be grateful acknowledgment of my heart. After that, she covered her head up with it, and had another laugh about Mr. After that, she took the baby out of its cradle, and nursed it. After that, she closed the dinner-table; after that, came in with cap on, and her work-box, and yard, and the bit of wax candle, all just the same.

We sat round the fire, and talked of I told them what a hard master Mr. Crewe, and they pitied me very much. I told it
Peggotty said she would walk a score
see him. I took the little baby in my
it was awake, and nursed it lovingly.
was asleep again, I crept close to my
ide, according to my old custom, bro-
long time, and sat with my arms em-
waist, and my little red cheek on her
nd once more felt her beautiful hair
ver me—like an angel's wing as I used
I recollect—and was very happy in
sat thus, looking at the fire, and see-
ea in the red-hot coals, I almost believed
never been away; that Mr. and Miss
were such pictures, and would vanish
re got low; and that there was nothing
that I remembered, save my mother,
I.
y darned away at a stocking as long as
see, and then sat with it drawn on her
ke a glove, and her needle in her right,
ike another stitch whenever there was
cannot conceive whose stockings they
seen that Peggotty was always darning,
uch an unfailing supply of stockings in
urning can have come. From my
ancy she seems to have been always
in that class of needlework, and never
ince in any other.
"under," said Peggotty, who was some-
aced with a fit of wondering on some
pected topic, "what's become of Davy's
Peggotty! I observed my mother, rous-
from a reverie, "what nonsense you
but I really do wonder, ma'am," said

can have put such a person in your
quired my mother. "Is there nobody
world to come there?"
't know how it is," said Peggotty,
it's on account of being stupid, but my
ican pick and choose its people. They
they go, and they don't come and they
just as they like. I wonder what's be-
"
absurd you are, Peggotty!"

"One would suppose you wanted a
it from her."
forbid!" cried Peggotty.
then, don't talk about such uncom-
hings, there's a good soul," said my
"Miss Betsey is shut up in her cottage
, no doubt, and will remain there. At
, she is not likely ever to trouble us
mused Peggotty. "No, that ain't likely
onder, if she was to die, whether she'd
y anything!"

gracious me, Peggotty," returned my
what a nonsensical woman you are!
know that she took offence at the poor
ever being born at all!"

"I suppose she wouldn't be inclined to for-
give him now," hinted Peggotty.

"Why should she be inclined to forgive
now?" said my mother, rather sharply.

"Now that he's got a brother, I mean," said
Peggotty.

My mother immediately began to cry, and
wondered how Peggotty dared to say such a
thing.

"As if this poor little innocent in its crotch
had ever done any harm to you or any
ody else, you jealous thing!" said she. "You
had much better go and marry Mr. Barkis, the carter. Why
don't you?"

"I should make Miss Murdstone happy, if I
was to," said Peggotty.

"What a bad disposition you have, Peggotty!"
returned my mother. "You are as jealous of
Miss Murdstone as it is possible for a ridiculous
creature to be. You want to keep the keys your-
self, and give out all the things, I suppose? I
shouldn't be surprised if you did. When you
know that she only does it out of kindness and the
best intentions! You know she does, Peggotty—
you know it well."

Peggotty muttered something to the effect of
"Bother the other intentions!" and something else
to the effect that there was a little too much of the
best intentions going on.

"I know what you mean, you cross thing," said
my mother. "I understand you, Peggotty,
perfectly. You know I do, and I wonder you
don't color up like fire. But one point at a time.
Miss Murdstone is the point now, Peggotty, and
you shan't escape from it. Haven't you heard her
say, over and over again, that she thinks I am too
thoughtless and too— a — a—"

"Pretty," suggested Peggotty.

"Well," returned my mother, half laughing,
"and if she is so silly as to say so, can I be
blamed for it?"

"No one says you can," said Peggotty.

"No, I should hope not, indeed!" returned
my mother. "Haven't you heard her say, over
and over again, that on this account she wishes
to spare me a great deal of trouble, which she
thinks I am not suited for; and which I really
don't know myself that I am suited for; and isn't
she up early and late, and going to and fro con-
tinually—and doesn't she do all sorts of things,
and grope into all sorts of places, coal-holes and
pantries and I don't know where, that can't be
very agreeable—and do you mean to insinuate
that there is not a sort of devotion in that?"

"I don't insinuate at all," said Peggotty.

"You do, Peggotty," returned my mother.

"You never do anything else, except your work.
You are always insinuating. You revel in it.
And when you talk of Mr. Murdstone's good
intentions—"

"I never talked of 'em," said Peggotty.

"No, Peggotty," returned my mother, "but
you insinuated. That's what I told you just
now. That's the worst of you. You will never
ate. I said, at the moment, that I understood you, and you see I did. When you talk of Mr. Murdstone’s good intentions, and pretend to slight them (for I don’t believe you really do, in your heart, Peggotty), you must be as well convinced as I am how good they are, and how they actuate him in everything. He seems to have been at all stern with a certain person, Peggotty, you understand, and so I am sure does duty, that I am not alluding to anybody present—it is solely because he is satisfied that it is for a certain person’s benefit. He naturally loves a certain person, on my account; and acts solely for a certain person’s good. He is better able to judge of it than I am; for I very well know that I am a weak, light, girlish creature, and that he is a firm, grave, serious man. And he takes,” said my mother, with the tears which were engendered in her affectionate nature, stealing down her face, “he takes great pains with me; and I ought to be very thankful to him, and very submissive to him even in my thoughts; and when I am not, Peggotty, I worry and condemn myself, and feel doubtful of my own heart, and don’t know what to do.” Peggotty sat with her chin on the foot of the stocking, looking silently at the fire.

“Tore, Peggotty,” said my mother, changing her tone, “don’t let us fall out with one another, for I couldn’t bear it. You are my true friend, and if I have any in the world. When I call you a ridiculous creature, or a vexations thing, or anything of that sort, Peggotty, I only mean that you are my true friend, and always have been, ever since the night when Mr. Copperfield first brought me home here, and you came out to the gate to meet me.”

Peggotty was not slow to respond, and ratify the treaty of friendship by giving me one of her best hugs. I think I had some glimpses of the real character of this conversation at the time; but I am sure, now, that the good creature originated it, and took part in it, merely that my mother might comfort herself with the little contradictory summary in which she had indulged. The design was efficacious; for I remember that my mother seemed more at ease during the rest of the evening, and that Peggotty observed her less.

When we had had our tea, and the ashes were thrown up, and the candles snuffed, I read Peggotty a chapter out of the Crocodile Book, in remembrance of old times—she took it out of her pocket; I don’t know whether she had kept it there ever since—and then we talked about Salem House, which brought me round again to Steerforth, who was my great subject. We were very happy; and that evening, as the last of its race, and destined evermore to close that volume of my life, will never pass out of my memory.

It was almost ten o’clock before we heard the sound of wheels. We all got up then; and my mother said hurriedly that, as it was so late, and Mr. and Miss Murdstone approved of early hours for young people, perhaps I had better go to bed. I kissed her, and went up-stairs with my candle directly, before they came in. It appeared as a childish fancy, as I ascended to the bedroom where I had been imprisoned, that they breathed cold blast of air into the house which blew on the old familiar feeling like a feather. I felt uncomfortable about going down to breakfast in the morning, as I had never set foot on Mr. Murdstone since the day when I confessed my memorable offence. However, it must be done, I went down, after two or three more starts half-way, and as many runs back on, to my own room, and presented myself in that way.

He was standing before the fire with his hand to it, while Miss Murdstone made the tea. She looked at me steadily as I entered, but made no sign of recognition whatever.

“I went up to him, after a moment of suspense; and said: ‘I beg your pardon, sir; I am very sorry for what I did, and I hope you will forgive me.’

“I am glad to hear you are sorry,” said Mr. Murdstone.

“I am so,” said Miss Murdstone, giving me the tea-caddy scoop instead of her finger. “How long are the holidays?”

“‘A month, ma’am.’

“‘Counting from when?’

“‘From to-day, ma’am.’

“‘Oh!’ said Miss Murdstone. ‘Then there’s one day off.’

She kept the calendar of the holidays in the same manner, and every morning checked a day off in exactly the same manner. She did it gloomily; and she came to ten, but when she got into two figures she became more hopeful, and, as the term advanced, even jovial.

It was on this very first day that I had the misfortune to throw her, though she was subject to such weakness in general, into a sort of violent consternation. I came into the room where she and my mother were sitting; and the baby (who was only a few weeks old) being on my mother’s lap, I took it very carefully in my arms. Suddenly Miss Murdstone gave such a scream that I all but dropped it.

“My dear Jane!” cried my mother.

“Good heavens, Clara, do you see?” exclaimed Miss Murdstone.

“She’s got it!” cried Miss Murdstone. “The boy has got the baby!”

She was line with horror; but stiffened herself to make a dart at me, and raise herself up...
I AM UNDERSTOOD BY THE MURDSTONES.

In the evening, sometimes, I went and sat with Peggotty in the kitchen. There I was comfortable, and not afraid of being myself. But neither of these resources was approved of in the parlor. The tormenting humor which was dominant there stopped them both. I was still held to be necessary to my poor mother's training, and, as one of her trials, could not be suffered to absent myself.

"David," said Mr. Murdstone, one day after dinner when I was going to leave the room as usual; "I am sorry to observe that you are of a sullen disposition."

"As sulky as a bear!" said Miss Murdstone. I stood still, and hung my head.

"Now, David," said Mr. Murdstone, "a sullen obdurate disposition is, of all tempers, the worst."

"And the boy's is, of all such dispositions that ever I have seen," remarked his sister, "the most confirmed and stubborn. I think, my dear Clara, even you must observe it?"

"I beg your pardon, my dear Jane," said my mother, "but are you quite sure—I am certain you'll excuse me, my dear Jane—that you understand Davy?"

"I should be somewhat ashamed of myself, Clara," returned Miss Murdstone, "if I could not understand the boy, or any boy. I don't profess to be profound; but I do lay claim to common sense."

"No doubt, my dear Jane," returned my mother, "your understanding is very vigorous."

"Oh dear, no! Pray don't say that, Clara," interposed Miss Murdstone, angrily.

"But I am sure it is," resumed my mother; "and everybody knows it is. I profit so much by it myself, in many ways—at least I ought to—that no one can be more convinced of it than myself; and therefore I speak with great difidence, my dear Jane, I assure you."

"We'll say I don't understand the boy, Clara," returned Miss Murdstone, arranging the little fetters on her wrists. "We'll agree, if you please, that I don't understand him at all. He is much too deep for me. But perhaps my brother's penetration may enable him to have some insight into his character. And I believe my brother was speaking on the subject when we—not very decently—interrupted him."

"I think, Clara," said Mr. Murdstone, in a low grave voice, "that there may be better and more dispassionate judges of such a question than you."

"Edward," replied my mother, timidly, "you are a far better judge of all questions than I pretend to be. Both you and Jane are. I only said—"

"You only said something weak and inconsiderate," he replied. "Try not to do it again, my dear Clara, and keep a watch upon yourself."

My mother's lips moved, as she answered, "Yes, my dear Edward," but she said nothing aloud.
“I was sorry, David, I remarked,” said Mr. Murdstone, turning his head and his eyes stiffly towards me, “to observe that you are of a sullen disposition. This is not a character that I can suffer to develop itself beneath my eyes without an effort at improvement. You must endeavor, sir, to change it. We must endeavor to change it for you.”

“I beg your pardon, sir,” I faltered. “I have never meant to be sullen since I came back.”

“Don’t take refuge in a lie, sir!” he returned so fiercely, that I saw my mother involuntarily put out her trembling hand as if to interpose between us. “You have withdrawn yourself in your sullenness to your own room. You have kept your own room when you ought to have been here. You know now, once for all, that I require you to be here, and not there. Further, that I require you to bring obedience here. You know me, David. I will have it done.”

Miss Murdstone gave a loud chuckle.

“I will have a respectful, prompt, and ready bearing towards myself,” he continued, “and towards Jane Murdstone, and towards your mother. I will not have this room shammed as if it were infected at the pleasure of a child. Sit down.”

He ordered me like a dog, and I obeyed like a dog.

“One thing more,” he said. “I observe that you have an attachment to low and common company. You are not to associate with servants. The kitchen will not improve you, in the many respects in which you need improvement. Of the woman who shews you, Clara,” addressing my mother in a lower voice, “from old associations and long-established fancies, have a weakness respecting her which is not yet overcome.”

“A most unaccountable delusion it is!” cried Miss Murdstone.

“I only say,” he resumed, addressing me, “that I disapprove of your preferring such company as Miss Peggotty, and that it is to be abandoned. Now, David, you understand me, and you know what will be the consequences if you fail to obey me to the letter.”

I know well—better perhaps than he thought, as far as my poor mother was concerned—and I obeyed him to the letter. I retreated to my own room no more; I took refuge with Peggotty no more; but sat wearily in the parlor day after day looking forward to night, and bedtime. Without irksome constraint, I underwent, sitting in the same attitude hour after hour, afraid to move an arm or a leg lest Miss Murdstone should complain (as she did on the least pretense) of my restlessness, and afraid to move an eye lest she should light on some look of dislike or scrutiny that would find new cause for complaint in mine! What intolerable dulness to sit listening to the ticking of the clock; and watching Miss Murdstone’s little shabby steel beads as she strung them; and wondering whether she would ever be married, and if so, to what sort of unhappy man; and counting the divisions in the moulding on the chimney-piece; and wandering away, with my eyes, to the ceiling, among the curl’s and cone screws in the paper on the wall!

What walks I took alone, down muddy lane, in the bad winter weather, carrying that pain, and Mr. and Miss Murdstone in it, everywhere a monstrous load that I was obliged to bear a daymare that there was no possibility of breaking in, a weight that brooded on my wits, and blunted them!

What meals I had in silence and embarrassment, always feeling that there were a knife and fork too many, and those mine; an appetite too small, and that mine; a plate and chair too many, all those mine; somebody too many, and that mine.

What evenings, when the candles came, and I was expected to employ myself, but not daring to read an entertaining book, pored over some headed harder-hearted treatise on arithmetic; when the tables of weights and measures set themselves to tunes, as Rule Britannia, or Away with Melancholy: when they wouldn’t stand still to be learned, but would go throading my grandmother’s needle through my unfortunate head, in at one ear and out at the other!

What yawns and dozes I lapsed into, in spite of all my care; what starts I came out of concealed slept with; what answers I never got on little observations that I rarely made; what a blank space I seemed, which everybody over looked, and yet was in everybody’s way; what a heavy relief it was to hear Miss Murdstone tell the first stroke of nine at night, and order me to bed!

Thus the holidays lagged away, till the morning came when Miss Murdstone said: “Here’s the last day off!” and gave me the closing cup of tea of the vacation.

I was not sorry to go. I had lapsed into a stupid state; but I was recovering a little and looking forward to Steerforth, albeit Mr. Creakle loomed behind him. Again Mr. Barkis appeared at the gate, and again Miss Murdstone in her warning voice, said: “Clara!” when my mother bent over me to bid me farewell.

I kissed her, and my baby brother, and was very sorry then; but not sorry to go away, for the gulf between us was there, and the parting was there, every day. And it is not so much the embrace she gave me, that lives in my mind, though it was as fervent as could be, as what followed the embrace.

I was in the carrier’s cart when I heard her calling to me. I looked out, and she stood at the garden-gate alone, holding her baby up in her arms for me to see. It was cold still weather; and not a hair of her head, nor a fold of her dress, was stirred, as she looked intently at me, holding up her child.

So I lost her. So I saw her afterwards, in my sleep at school—a silent presence near my bed—looking at me with the same intent face—holding up her baby in her arms.
CHAPTER IX.

I have a memorable birthday.

over all that happened at school, until
ecessary of my birthday came round in
cept that Steerforth was more to be
han ever, I remember nothing. He was
ay at the end of the half-year, if not
wd was more spirited and independent re
my eyes, and therefore more enu
before; but beyond this I remember
The great remembrance by which that
arked in my mind, seems to have swal
all lesser recollections, and to exist
difficult for me to believe that there
of full two months between my return
ouse and the arrival of that birthday.
y understand that the fact was so, be
ow it must have been so; otherwise I
 convinced that there was no interval,
the one occasion trod upon the other's
well I recollect the kind of day it was
be fog that hung about the place; I see
est, ghastly, through it; I feel my riny
ammy on my cheek; I look along the
pective of the school-room, with a spud
é here and there to light up the foggy
nd the breath of the boys writhing
ng in the raw cold as they blow upon
rs, and tap their feet upon the floor.
after breakfast, and we had been sum
from the playground, when Mr. Sharp
id said:
"Copperfield is to go into the parlor."
sted a hamper from Peggoty, and bright
he order. Some of the boys about me
t claim not to be forgotten in the dis
of the good things, as I got out of my
great alacrity.

t hurry, David," said Mr. Sharp.
time enough, my boy, don't hurry." I
have been surprised by the feeling
which he spoke, if I had given it a
but I gave it none until afterwards. I
way to the parlor; and there I found Mr.
itting at his breakfast with the canes
nd before him, and Mrs. Creakle with
etter in her hand. But no hamper.
Copperfield," said Mrs. Creakle, lead
a sofa, and sitting down beside me. "I
peak to you very particularly. I have
g to tell you, my child." Creakle, at whom of course I looked,
is head without looking at me, and
up a sigh with a very large piece of but
.st.
are too young to know how the world
ey day," said Mrs. Creakle, "and how
in it pass away. But we all have to
David; some of us when we are young,
when we are old, some of us at all
lives."
I looked at her earnestly.
"When you came away from home at the end
of the vacation," said Mrs. Creakle, after a pause,
"were they all well?" After another pause,
"Was your mamma well?"
I trembled without distinctly knowing why,
and still looked at her earnestly, making no at
tempt to answer.
"Because," said she, "I grieve to tell you
that I hear this morning your mamma is very ill."
A mist rose between Mrs. Creakle and me, and
her figure seemed to move in it for an instant.
Then I felt the burning tears run down my face,
and it was steady again.
"She is very dangerously ill," she added.
I knew all now.
"She is dead."
There was no need to tell me so. I had already
broken out into a desolate cry, and felt an orphan
in the wide world.
She was very kind to me. She kept me there
all day, and left me alone sometimes; and I cried,
and wore myself to sleep, and woke and cried
again. When I could cry no more, I began to
think; and then the oppression on my breast was
heaviest, and my grief a dull pain that there was
no ease for.
And yet my thoughts were idle; not intent on
the calamity that weighed upon my heart, but idly
loitering near it. I thought of our house shut up
and buried. I thought of the little baby, who,
Mrs. Creakle said, had been pining away for some
time, and who, they believed, would die too. I
thought of my father's grave in the churchyard,
by our house, and of my mother lying there be
neath the tree I knew so well. I stood upon a
chair when I was left alone, and looked into the
glass to see how red my eyes were, and how sor
rowful my face. I considered, after some hours
were gone, if my tears were really hard to flow
now, as they seemed to be, what, in connection
with my loss, it would affect me most to think of
when I drew near home—for I was going home to
the funeral. I am sensible of having felt that a
dignity attached to me among the rest of the
boys, and that I was important in my affliction.
If ever child were stricken with sincere grief, I
was. But I remember that this importance was
a kind of satisfaction to me, when I walked in
the playground that afternoon while the boys
were in school. When I saw them glancing at
me out of the windows, as they went up to their
classes, I felt distinguished, and looked more
melancholy, and walked slower. When school
was over, and they came out and spoke to me, I
felt it rather good in myself not to be proud to
any of them, and to take exactly the same notice
of them all, as before.
I was to go home next night; not by the mail,
but by the heavy night-coach, which was called
the Farmer, and was principally used by country
people travelling short intermediate distance
upon the road. We had no story-telling.
evening, and Traddles insisted on lending me his pillow. I don't know what good he thought it would do me, for I had one of my own but it was all he had to lend, poor fellow, except a sheet of letter-paper full of skeletons; and that he gave me at parting, as a soother of my sorrow and a contribution to my peace of mind.

I left Salem House upon the morrow afternoon. I little thought then that I left it, never to return. We travelled very slowly all night, and did not get into Yarmouth before nine or ten o'clock in the morning. I looked out for Mr. Barkis, but he was not there; and instead of him a fat, short-winded, merry-looking, little old man in black, with rusty little bunches of ribbons at the knees of his breeches, black stockings, and a broad-brimmed hat, came putting up to the coach-window, and said:

"Master Copperfield?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you come with me, young sir, if you please," he said, opening the door, "and I shall have the pleasure of taking you home?"

I put my hand in his, wondering who he was, and we walked away to a shop in a narrow street, on which was written Omer, Draper, Tailor, Haberdasher, Funeral Furnisher, &c. It was a close and stifling little shop; full of all sorts of clothing, made and unmade, including one window full of beaver-hats and bonnets. We went into a little back-parlor behind the shop, where we found three young women at work on a quantity of black materials, which were heaped upon the table, and little bits and cuttings of which were littered all over the floor. There was a good fire in the room, and a breathless smell of warm black crape. I did not know what the smell was then, but I know now.

The three young women, who appeared to be very industrious and comfortable, raised their heads to look at me, and then went on with their work. Stitch, stitch, stitch. At the same time there came from a workshop across a little yard outside the window, a regular sound of hammering that kept a kind of time: Rat—tat-tat, rat—tat-tat, rat—tat-tat, without any variation.

"Well," said my conductor to one of the three young women, "How do you get on, Minnie?"

"We shall be ready by the trying-on time," she replied gaily, without looking up. "Don't you be afraid, father."

Mr. Omer took off his broad-brimmed hat, and sat down and panted. He was so fat that he was obliged to pant some time before he could say:

"That's right."

"Father!" said Minnie, playfully. "What a purpose you do grow!"

"Well, I don't know how it is, my dear," he replied, considering about it. "I am rather so."

"You are such a comfortable man, you see," said Minnie. "You take things so easy."

"No use tak ng 'em otherwise, my dear," said Mr. Omer. "No, indeed," returned his daughter. "We are all pretty gay here, thank Heaven! Ain't you, father?"

"I hope so, my dear," said Mr. Omer. "All got my breath now, I think I'll measure the young scholar. Would you walk into the shop, Master Copperfield?"

I preceded Mr. Omer, in compliance with his request; and after showing me a roll of cloth which he said was extra superfine, and too good mourning for anything short of parents, he told my various dimensions, and put them down in a book. While he was recording them he called my attention to his stock in trade, and to certain fashions which he said had "just come up," to certain other fashions which he said had "just gone out."

"And by that sort of thing we very often lost a little mint of money," said Mr. Omer. "But fashions are like human beings. They come and, nobody knows when, why, or how; and they go out, nobody knows when, why, or how. Everything is like life, in my opinion, if you look at it from that point of view."

I was too sorrowful to discuss the question, which would possibly have been beyond me under any circumstances; and Mr. Omer took me back into the parlor, breathing with some difficulty on the way.

He then called down a little break-neck range of steps behind a door; "Bring up that tea and bread-and-butter!" which, after some time, during which I sat looking about me and thinking, and listening to the stitching in the room and the tune that was being hammered across the yard, appeared on a tray, and turned out to be for me.

"I have been acquainted with you," said Mr. Omer, after watching me for some minutes, during which I had not made much impression on the breakfast, for the black things destroyed my appetite. "I have been acquainted with you a long time, my young friend."

"Have you, sir?"

"All your life," said Mr. Omer. "I may say before it. I knew your father before you. He was five foot nine and a half, and he lays in five and twenty foot of ground."


"He lays in five and twenty foot of ground, if he lays in a fraction," said Mr. Omer, pleasantly. "It was either his request or her direction, I forget which."

"Do you know how my little brother is, sir?"

I inquired.

Mr. Omer shook his head.


"He is in his mother's arms," said he.

"Oh, poor little fellow! Is he dead?"

"Don't mind it more than you can help," said Mr. Omer. "Yes. The baby's dead."

My wound's broke out anew at this intelligence. I left the scarcely tasted breakfast, and went and rested my head on another table.
the little room, which Minnie hastily left; I should spot the mourning that was with my tears. She was a pretty ed girl, and put my hair away from my a soft kind touch; but she was very having nearly finished her work and od time, and was so different from me! y the tune left off, and a good-looking w came across the yard into the room. ammer in his hand, and his mouth was e nails, which he was obliged to take he could speak.

"Joram!" said Mr. Omer. "How do t?"

"I colored a little, and the other two girls ne another. you were at it by candle-light last on I was at the club, then? Were I Mr. Omer, shutting up one eye.

"As you said we could like trip of it, and go over together, if it Minnie and me—and you. thought you were going to leave me her," said Mr. Omer, laughing till he

you was so good as to say that," re young man. "why I turned to with a e. Will, you give me your opinion of

"said Mr. Omer, rising. "My dear,; pipped and turned to me; "would you you—" ther," Minnie interposed.
ght it might be agreeable, my dear," ner. "But perhaps you're right," say how I knew it was my dear, dear un that they went to look at. I had d one making; I had never seen one r of: but it came into my mind what was, while it was going on; and when man entered, I am sure I knew what doing.

rk being now finished, the two girls, es I had not heard, brushed the shreds from their dresses, and went into the; that to rights, and wait for customers. yed behind to fold up what they had pack it in two baskets. This she did,nes, humming a lively little tune the am, who I had no doubt was her lover, blest a kiss from her while she was isn't appear to mind me, at all), and ther was gone for the chaise, and he haste and get himself ready. Then a again; and then she put her thimble as in her pocket, and stuck a needle ith black thread neatly in the bosom wn, and put on her outer clothing a little glass behind the door, in which effection of her pleased face.

I observed, sitting at the table in the my head leaning on my hand, and my ming on very different things. The chaise soon came round to the front of the shop, and the baskets being put in first, I was put in next, and those three followed. I remember it as a kind of half chaise-cart, half piano-forte van, painted of a sombre color, and drawn by a black horse with a long tail. There was plenty of room for us all.

I do not think I have ever experienced so strange a feeling in my life (I am wiser now, perhaps) as that of being with them, remembering how they had been employed, and among them enjoy the ride. I was not angry with them; I was more afraid of them, as if I were cast away among creatures with whom I had no community of nature. They were very cheerful. The old man sat in front to drive, and the two young people sat behind him, and whenever he spoke to them leaned forward, the one on one side of his chubby face and the other on the other, and made a great deal of him. They would have talked to me too, but I held back, and moped in my corner; scared by their love-making and hilarity, though it was far from bolderetous, and almost wondering that no judgment came upon them for their hardness of heart.

So, when they stopped to bait the horse, and ate and drank and enjoyed themselves, I could touch nothing that they touched, but kept my fast unbroken. So, when we reached home, I dropped out of the chaise behind, as quickly as possible, that I might not be in their company before those solemn windows, looking blindly on me like closed eyes once bright. And oh, how little need I had had to think what would move me to tears when I came back—seeing the window of my mother's room, and next it that which, in the better time, was mine!

I was in Peggotty's arms before I got to the door, and she took me into the house. Her grief burst out when she first saw me; but she controlled it soon, and spoke in whispers, and walked softly, as if the dead could be disturbed. She had not been in bed, I found, for a long time. She sat up at night still, and watched. As long as her poor dear pretty was above the ground, she said, she would never desert her.

Mr. Murdstone took no heed of me when I went into the parlor, where he was, but sat by the fireside, weeping silently, and pondering in his elbow-chair. Miss Murdstone, who was busy at her writing-desk, which was covered with letters and papers, gave me her cold finger-nails, and asked me, in an iron whisper, if I had been measured for my mourning.

I said: "Yes."

"And your shirts," said Miss Murdstone; "have you brought 'em home?"

"Yes, ma'am. "I have brought home all my clothes."

This was all the consolation that her firmness administered to me. I do not doubt that she had a choice pleasure in exhibiting what she called her self-command, and her firmness, and her strength of mind, and her common sense, and
whole diabolical catalogue of her unamiable qualities, on such an occasion. She was particularly proud of her turn for business; and she showed it now in reducing everything to pen and ink, and being moved by nothing. All the rest of that day, and from morning to night afterwards, she sat at that desk: scratching composedly with a hard pen, speaking in the same imperceptible whisper to everybody; never relaxing a muscle of her face, or softening a tone of her voice, or appearing with an atom of her dress astir.

Her brother took a book sometimes, but never read it that I saw. He would open it and look at it as if he were reading, but would remain for a whole hour without turning the leaf, and then put it down to walk to and fro in the room. I used to sit with folded hands watching him, and counting his footsteps, hour after hour. He very seldom spoke to her, and never to me. He seemed to be the only restless thing, except the clocks, in the whole motionless house.

In these days before the funeral, I saw but little of Pegotty, except that, in passing up or down stairs, I always found her close to the room where my mother and her baby lay, and except that she came to me every night, and sat by my bed’s head, while I went to sleep. A day or two before the burial—I think it was a day or two before, but I am conscious of confusion in my mind about that heavy time, with nothing to mark its progress—she took me into the room. I only recollect that underneath some white covering on the bed, with a beautiful cleanliness and freshness all around it, there seemed to me to lie embodied the solemn stillness that was in the house; and that when she would have turned the cover gently back, I cried: “Oh no! oh no!” and held her hand.

If the funeral had been yesterday, I could not recollect it better. The very air of the best parlor, when I went in at the door, the bright condition of the fire, the gleaming of the wine in the decanters, the patterns of the glass and plates, the faint sweet smell of cake, the odor of Miss Murdstone’s dress, and our black clothes. Mr. Chilp is in the room, and comes to speak to me.

“And how is Master David?” he says kindly.

I cannot tell him very well. I give him my hand, which he holds in his.

“Dear me!” says Mr. Chilp, meekly smiling, with something shining in his eye. “Our little friends grow up around us. They grow out of our knowledge, ma’am?”

This is to Miss Murdstone, who makes no reply.

“Is there a great improvement here, ma’am?” says Mr. Chilp.

Miss Murdstone merely answers with a frown and a formal nod; Mr. Chilp, discomfited, goes into a corner, keeping me with him, and opens his mouth no more.

I remark this, because I remark everything that happens, not because I care about myself, or have done since I came home. And now the bell begins to sound, and Mr. Omer and and some come to make us ready. As Pegotty was willing to tell me long ago, the followers of my father in the same grave were made ready in the same room.

There are Mr. Murdstone, our neighbor Mr. Grasper, Mr. Chilp, and I. When we go to the door, the Bearers and their load are in the garden; and they move us down the path, and past the elms, and through the gate, and into the churchyard, where I have so often heard the birds sing on a summer morning.

We stand around the grave. The day seems different to me from every other day, and the light not of the same color—of a sadder color. Now there is a solemn hush, which we have brought from home with what is resting in the mould; and while we stand bare-headed, I hear the voice of the clergyman, sounding remote in the open air, and yet distinct and plain, saying: “I am the Resurrection and the Life, the Lord!” Then I hear sobes; and, standing up among the lookers-on, I see that good and faithful servant, whom all of the people upon earth love the best, and unto whom my childish heart is certain that the Lord will one day say: “Well done.”

There are many faces that I know, among the little crowd; faces that I know in church, what mine was always wandering there; faces that I saw my mother when she came to the village in her youthful bloom. I do not mind them—mind nothing but my grief—and yet I see not know them all; and even in the background, or away, see Minnie looking on, and her eye glancing on her sweetheart, who is near me.

It is over, and the earth is filled in, and we turn to come away. Before us stands our house, so pretty and unchanged, so linked in my mind with the young idea of what is gone, that all my sorrow has been nothing to the sorrow it calls forth. But they take me on; and Mr. Chilp takes me to me; and when we get home, put some water to my lips; and when I ask his leave to go up to my room, dismisses me with the gentleness of a woman.

All this, I say, is yesterday’s event. Events of later date have floated from me to the shore where all forgotten things will reappear, but this stands like a high rock in the ocean.

I knew that Pegotty would come to me in my room. The Sabbath stillness of the time (the day was so like Sunday!) I have forgotten that it was suited to us both. She sat down by my side upon my little bed; and holding my hand, and sometimes putting it to her lips, and sometimes smoothing it with her, as she might have comforted my little brother, told me in her way, all that she had to tell concerning what had happened.

“She was never well,” said Pegotty, “for a long time. She was uncertain in her mind, and
I AM UNDERSTOOD BY THE MURDSTONES.

Then, she turned faint; and was so very ill that they were obliged to give her cherry brandy. I was solemnly interdicted by her, on her recovery, from touching my brother any more than pretend whatever; and my poor mother, Etc., I could see, wished otherwise, mocklyconfirmed the interdict, by saying: "No doubt you are right, my dear Jane."

On another occasion, when three were together, this same dear baby—it was truly dear to me for our mother's sake—was the innocent occasion of Miss Murdstone's going into a passion. My mother, who had been looking at its eyes as they rested upon her lap, said:

"Davy! come here!" and looked at mine.

I saw Miss Murdstone lay her head down.

"I declare," said my mother, gently, "they are exactly alike. I suppose they are mine. I think they are the color of mine. But they are wonderfully alike."

"What are you talking about, Clara?" said Miss Murdstone.

"My dear Jane," faltered my mother, a little crushed by the harsh tone of this inquiry, "I find that the baby's eyes and Davy's are exactly alike."

"Clara," said Miss Murdstone, rising angrily, "you are a positive fool sometimes."

"My dear Jane," remonstrated my mother.

"A positive fool," said Miss Murdstone. "Who else could compare my brother's baby with your boy? They are not at all alike. They are exactly unlike. They are utterly dissimilar in all respects. I hope they will ever remain so. I will not sit here, and hear such comparisons made."

With that she stalked out, and made the door bang after her.

In short, I was not a favorite with Miss Murdstone. In short, I was not a favorite there with anybody, not even with myself; for those who did like me could not show it, and those who did not showed it so plainly that I had a sensitive consciousness of always appearing constrained, boorish, and dull.

I felt that I made them as uncomfortable as they made me.

If I came into the room where they were, and they were talking together and my teacher seemed cheerful, an anxious cloud would steal over her face from the moment of my entrance. If Mr. Murdstone were in his best humor, I checked him. If Miss Murdstone were in her wont, I intensified it. I had perception enough to know that my mother was the victim always; that she was afraid to speak to me, or be kind to me, lest she should give them some offence by her manner of doing so, and receive a lecture afterwards; that she was not only unwillingly afraid of her own offending, but of my offending, and unusually watched their looks if I only moved. Therefore I resolved to keep myself as much out of their way as I could; and many a wintry hour did I hear the church-clock strike, when I was sitting in my cheerless bed-room, wrapped in my little smoketown, poring over a book.

In the evening, sometimes, I went and sat with Peggotty in the kitchen. There I was comfortable, and not afraid of being myself. But neither of these resources was approved of in the parlor. The tormenting humor which was dominant there stopped them both. I was still held to be necessary to my poor mother's training, and, as one of her trials, could not be suffered to absent myself.

"David," said Mr. Murdstone, one day after dinner when I was going to leave the room as usual; "I am sorry to observe that you are of a sulky disposition."

"As sulky as a bear!" said Miss Murdstone.

I stood still, and hung my head.

"Now, David," said Mr. Murdstone, "a sulky obdurate disposition is, of all tempers, the worst."

"And the boy's is, of all such dispositions that ever I have seen," remarked his sister, "the most confirmed and stubborn. I think, my dear Clara, even you must observe it?"

"I beg your pardon, my dear Jane," said my mother, "but are you quite sure—I am certain you'll excuse me, my dear Jane—that you understand Davy?"

"I should be somewhat ashamed of myself, Clara," returned Miss Murdstone, "if I could not understand the boy, or any boy. I don't profess to be profound; but I do lay claim to common sense."

"No doubt, my dear Jane," returned my mother, "your understanding is very vigorous."

"Oh dear, no! Pray don't say that, Clara," interposed Miss Murdstone, angrily.

"But I am sure it is," resumed my mother; "and everybody knows it is. I profit so much by it myself, in many ways—at least I ought to—that no one can be more convinced of it than myself; and therefore I speak with great diffidence, my dear Jane, I assure you."

"Well! we'll say I don't understand the boy, Clara," returned Miss Murdstone, arranging the little fators on her wrists. "We'll agree, if you please, that I don't understand him at all. He is much too deep for me. But perhaps my brother's penetration may enable him to have some insight into his character. And I believe my brother was speaking on the subject when we—not very decently—interrupted him."

"I think, Clara," said Mr. Murdstone, in a low grave voice, "that there may be better and more dispassionate judges of such a question than you."

"Edward," replied my mother, timidly, "you are a far better judge of all questions than I pretend to be. Both you and Jane are. I only say—"

"You only said something weak and inconsiderate," he replied. "Try not to do it again, my dear Clara, and keep a watch upon yourself."

My mother's lips moved, as if she answered "Yes, my dear Edward," but she said nothing aloud.
But seeing me, she called me her dear Davy, her own boy! and coming half across the room to meet me, kneeled down upon the ground and kissed me, and laid my head down on her bosom near the little creature that was nestling there, and put its hand up to my lips.

I wish I had died. I wish I had died then, with that feeling in my heart! I should have been more fit for Heaven than I ever have been since.

"He is your brother," said my mother, fondling me. "Davy, my pretty boy! My poor child!" Then she kissed me more and more, and clasped me round the neck. This she was doing when Peggotty came running in, and bounced down on the ground beside us, and went mad about us both for a quarter of an hour.

It seemed that I had not been expected so soon, the carriage being much before his usual time. It seemed, too, that Mr. and Miss Murdstone had gone out upon a visit in the neighborhood, and would not return before night. I had never hoped for this. I had never thought it possible that we three could be together undisturbed, once more; and I felt, for the time, as if the old days were come back.

We dined together by the fireside. Peggotty was in attendance to wait upon us, but my mother wouldn’t let her do it, and made her dine with us. I had my own old plate, with a brown view of a man-of-war in full sail upon it, which Peggotty had boarded somewhere all the time I had been away, and would not have had broken, she said, for a hundred pounds. I had my own old mug with David on it, and my own old little knife and fork that wouldn’t cut.

While we were at table, I thought it a favorable occasion to tell Peggotty about Mr. Barkis, who, before I had finished what I had to tell her, began to laugh, and throw her apron over her face.

"Peggotty," said my mother. "What’s the matter?"

Peggotty only laughed the more, and held her apron tight over her face when my mother tried to pull it away, and sat as if her head were in a bag.

"What are you doing, you stupid creature?" said my mother, laughing.

"Oh, drat the man!" cried Peggotty. "He wants to marry me."

"I would be a very good match for you; wouldn’t it?" said my mother.

"Oh! I don’t know," said Peggotty. "Don’t ask me. I wouldn’t have him if he was made of gold. Nor I wouldn’t have anybody."

"Then, why don’t you tell him so, you ridiculous thing?" said my mother.

"Tell him so," retorted Peggotty, looking out of her apron. "He has never said a word to me about it. He knows better. If he was to make so bold as say a word to me, I should slap his face."

Her own was as red as ever I saw it, or any other face, I think; but she only covered it up for a few moments at a time, when she was tied with a violent fit of laughter; and after some of those attacks, went on with her dinner.

I remarked that my mother, though she was when Peggotty looked at her, became more serious and thoughtful. I had seen at first that she was changed. Her face was very pretty still, if it looked careworn, and too delicate; and her hand was so thin and white that it seemed to be almost transparent. But the change, which I now refer was superadded to this, was in her manner, which became anxious and tendered. At last she said, putting out her hand, laying it affectionately on the hand of her daug

"Peggotty dear, you are not going to be married?"

"Me, ma’am?" returned Peggotty, smiling.

"Lord bless you, no!"

"Not just yet?" said my mother, tenderly.

"Never!" cried Peggotty.

My mother took her hand, and said:

"Don’t leave me, Peggotty. Stay with me. It will not be long, perhaps. What should I ever do without you?"

"Me leave you, my precious!" cried Peggotty. "Not for all the world and his wife. Why, what’s put that in your silly head?" Peggotty had been used of old to talk to mother sometimes, like a child. But my mother made no answer, except thank her, and Peggotty went running on in her own fashion.

"Me leave you? I think I see myself. Peggotty go away from you? I should like to see her at it! No, no, no," said Peggotty, shaking her head, and folding her arms; "not you, dear. It isn’t that there ain’t some Cats would be well enough pleased if she did, but they shan’t be pleased. They shall be aggravating. I’ll stay with you till I am a cross cranky old woman. And when I’m too deaf, and too lame, and too blind, and too mumbly for want of teeth, and of any use at all, even to be found fault with then I shall go to my Davy, and ask him to take me in."

"And Peggotty," says I, "I shall be glad to see you, and I’ll make you as welcome as queen."

"Bless your dear heart!" cried Peggotty. "I know you will!" And she kissed me beforehand in grateful acknowledgment of my hospitality. After that, she covered her head up with her apron again, and had another laugh about Mr. Barkis. After that, she took the baby out of its little cradle, and nursed it. After that, she cleared the dinner-table; after that, came in with another cap on, and her work-box, and the yard-measure and the bit of wax candle, all just the same as ever.

We sat round the fire, and talked delightfully. I told them what a hard master Mr. Creake was, and they pitied me very much. I told them what a fine fellow Steerforth was, and what a namec
I CHANGE MY LODGING.

was a quiet back-garret with a sloping roof, bearing a pleasant prospect of a timber-yard, when I took possession of it, with the reflection that Mr. Micawber's troubles had come to a last, I thought it quite a paradise.

At this time I was working at Murdstone and Grinby's in the same common way, and with the same companions, and with the same of unmerited degradation as at first. But I was happily for me no doubt, made a single instance, or spoke to any of the many boys that I saw daily in going to the warehouse, in looking for my paper in the streets in the interval. I led the same secretly unhappy but I led it in the same lonely, self-reliant way.

The only changes I am conscious of was, that I had grown more shabby, and sadly, that I was now relieved of much of the charge of Mr. and Mrs. Micawber's cares; for my relatives or friends had engaged to help them with their present pass, and they lived more comfortably out of the prison than they had lived for a long time. I used to breakfast with them in virtue of some arrangement, of which I had forgotten the details. I forget, too, at what the gates were opened in the morning, adding of my going in; but I know that I was too at six o'clock, and that my favorite thing-place in the interval was old London zoo, where I was wont to sit in one of the recesses, watching the people go by, or to sit over the balustrades at the sun shining in the street, and lighting up the golden flame on the top of the Monument. The Orfing met me here sometimes, to be told some astonishing fictions about the wharves and the Tower; of which, as say no more than that I hope I believed a part. In the evening I used to come back to prison, and walk up and down the parade in Mr. Micawber; or play casino with Mrs. Micawber, and hear reminiscences of her papa la mamma. Whether Mr. Murdstone knew me was, I am unable to say. I never told that at Murdstone and Grinby's.

Mr. Micawber's affairs, although past their best, were very much involved by reason of a bill "Deed," of which I used to hear a great deal, and which I suppose, now, to have been in former composition with his creditors, under which I was so far from being clear about it, that I am conscious of having confounded it in those demoniacal parchments which are held here, once upon a time, obtained to a great extent in Germany. At this last document appeared to go out of the way, somehow; at all events I was to be the rock a-head it had been; and a Micawber informed me that "her family" decided that Mr. Micawber should apply for release under the Insolvent Debtors' Act, which would set him free, she expected, in about six weeks.

"And then," said Mr. Micawber, who was there, "I have no doubt I shall, please Heaven, to be beforehand with the world, and to live in a perfectly new manner, if—in short, if anything turns up."

By way of going in for anything that might be on the cards, I call to mind that Mr. Micawber, about this time, composed a petition to the House of Commons, praying for an alteration in the law of imprisonment for debt. I set down this remembrance here, because it is an instance to myself of the manner in which I fitted my old books to my altered life, and made stories for myself, out of the streets, and out of men and women; and how some main points in the character I shall unconsciously develop, I suppose, in writing my life, were gradually forming all this while.

There was a club in the prison, in which Mr. Micawber, as a gentleman, was a great authority. Mr. Micawber had stated his idea of this petition to the club, and the club had strongly approved of the same. Wherefore Mr. Micawber, to the man who was a thoroughly good-natured man, and as active a creature about everything but his own affairs as ever existed, and never so happy as when he was busy about something that never could be of any profit to him) set to work at the petition, invented it, engrossed it on an immense sheet of paper, spread it out on a table, and appointed a time for all the club, and all within the walls if they chose, to come up to his room, and sign it.

When I heard of this approaching ceremony, I was so anxious to see them all come in, one after another, though I knew the greater part of them already, and they me, that I got an hour's leave of absence from Murdstone and Grinby's, and established myself in a corner for that purpose. As many of the principal members of the club as could be got into the small room without filling it supported Mr. Micawber in front of the petition, while my old friend Captain Hopkins (who had washed himself to do honor to so solemn an occasion) stationed himself close to it, to read it to all who were unacquainted with its contents. The door was then thrown open, and the general population began to come in, in a long file: several waiting outside, while one entered, affixed his signature, and went out. To everybody in succession, Captain Hopkins said: "Have you read it?" — "No." "Would you like to hear it read?" If he weakly showed the least disposition to hear it, Captain Hopkins, in a loud sonorous voice, gave him every word of it. The Captain would have read it twenty thousand times, if twenty thousand people would have heard him, one by one. I remember a certain histrionic roll he gave to such phrases as "The people's representatives in Parliament assembled," "Your petitioners therefore humbly approach your honourable house," "His gracious Majesty's unfortunate subjects," as if the words were something real in his mouth, and delicious to taste: Mr. Micawber, meanwhile, listening with a little of an author's vanity, and contemplating (not severely) the spikes on the opposite wall.

As I walked to and fro daily between South-
ate. I said, at the moment, that I understood you, and you saw I did. When you talk of Mr. Murdstone's good intentions, and pretend to slight them (for I don't believe you really do, in your heart, Peggotty), you must be as well convinced as I am how good they are, and how they actuate him in everything. If he seems to have been at all stern with a certain person, Peggotty—you understand, and so I am sure does Davy, that I am not alluding to anybody present—it is solely because he is satisfied that it is for a certain person's benefit. He naturally loves a certain person, on my account; and acts solely for a certain person's good. He is better able to judge of it than I am; for I very well know that I am a weak, light, girlish creature, and that he is a firm, grave, serious man. And he takes," said my mother, with the tears which were engendered in her affectionate nature, stealing down her face, "he takes great pains with me; and I ought to be very thankful to him, and very submissive to him even in my thoughts; and when I am not, Peggotty, I worry and condemn myself, and feel doubtful of my own heart, and don't know what to do."

Peggotty sat with her chin on the foot of the stocking, looking silently at the fire.

"There, Peggotty," said my mother, changing her tone, "don't let us fall out with one another, for I couldn't bear it. You are my true friend, I know, if I have any in the world. When I call you a ridiculous creature, or a vexatious thing, or anything of that sort, Peggotty, I only mean that you are my true friend, and always have been, ever since the night when Mr. Copperfield first brought me home here, and you came out to the gate to meet me."

Peggotty was not slow to respond, and ratify the treaty of friendship by giving me one of her big hugs. I think I had some glimpses of the real character of this conversation at the time; but I am sure, now, that the good creature originated it, and took her part in it, merely that my mother might comfort herself with the little contradictory summary in which she had indulged. The design was efficacious; for I remember that my mother seemed more at ease during the rest of the evening, and that Peggotty observed her less.

When we had had our tea, and the ashes were thrown up, and the candles snuffed, I read Peggotty a chapter out of the Crocodile Book, in remembrance of old times—she took it out of her pocket: I don't know whether she had kept it there ever since—and then we talked about Salem House, which brought me round again to Steerforth, who was my great subject. We were very happy; and that evening, as the last of its race, and destined evermore to close that volume of my life, will never pass out of my memory. It was almost ten o'clock before we heard the sound of wheels. We all got up then; and my mother said hurriedly that, as it was so late, and Mr. and Mrs. Murdstone approved of early hours for young people, perhaps I had better kiss her, and go up-stairs with her directly, before they came in. It was childish fancy, as I ascended to the room where I had been imprisoned, that the cold blast of air into the house which the old familiar feeling like a feather.

I felt uncomfortable about going to breakfast in the morning, as I had not seen Mr. Murdstone since the day when he had me to his house for my memorable offence. However, he was up, and after two or three half-way, and as many runs back to my own room, and presented myself for

He was standing before the fire with his back to it, while Miss Murdstone made me look at me steadily as I entered, in sign of recognition whatever.

I went up to him, after a moment or two, and said: "I beg your pardon, sir. I am sorry for what I did, and I hope you will forgive me."

"I am glad to hear you are sorry," replied.

The hand he gave me was the hand of a ten-year-old boy. I could not restrain my eye from an instant on a red spot upon it; but so red as I turned, when I met that expression in his face.

"How do you do, ma'am?" I said to Murdstone.

"Ah, dear me!" sighed Miss Murdstone, filling me with the tea-caddy scoop instead of the cup.

"How long are the holidays?"

"A month, ma'am."

"Counting from when?"

"From to-day, ma'am."

"Oh!" said Miss Murdstone. "Then one day off."

She kept the calendar of the holiday, and every morning checked a day exactly the same manner. She did it glumly, but when she got forwards she became more hopeful, and, as advanced, even jocular.

It was on this very first day that misfortune to throw her, though she subject to such weakness in general, in of violent consternation. I came into the room where she and my mother were sitting (the baby (who was only a few weeks old) was on my mother's lap, I took it very careful hands. Suddenly Miss Murdstone gave a scream that I am sure I did not hear it.

"My dear Jane!" cried my mother.

"Good heavens, Clara, do you claim Miss Murdstone!"

"See what, my dear Jane!" said my mother.

"What is it?"

"He's got it!" cried Miss Murdstone.

"Boy has got the baby!"

She was limp with horror; but still self to make a dart at me, and take
the little room, which Minnie hastily left, without my tears. She was a pretty girl, and put my hair away from my face with her soft kind touch; but she was very young, having nearly finished her work and had time, and was so different from me! the time left off, and a good-looking man came across the yard into the room. He was in a coat, and his mouth was a smile, which he was obliged to take care to speak.

"Joram!" said Mr. Omer. "How do you do?"

"Joram," said Joram. "Done, sir." colored a little, and the other two girls at another

"you were at it by candle-light last I was at the club, then?" asked Mr. Omer, shutting up one eye.

"As you said we could steal it, and go over together, if it pleased me—and you."

"I thought you were going to leave me her," said Mr. Omer, laughing till he could speak.

"You was so good as to say that," retorted young man, "why I turned to with a grin. Will you give me your opinion of me?"

"My dear;" said Mr. Omer, rising. "But perhaps you're right."

"Say how I knew it was my dear, dear min that they went to look at. I had to make one; I had never seen one of them before that came into my mind what was, while it was going on; and when man entered, I am sure I knew what was going on.

"Being now finished, the two girls, as I had not heard, brushed the shreds from their dresses, and went into the room to rights, and wait for customers. Red behind to fold up what they had packed in two baskets. This she did, humming a lively little tune the am, who I had no doubt was her lover, stole a kiss from her while she was not appearing to mind me, at all, and then was gone for the chaise, and he haste and get himself ready. Then again; and then she put her thimble in her pocket, and stuck a needle with black thread neatly in the bosom of her outer clothing. A little glass behind the door, in which affection of her pleased face.

"I observed, sitting at the table in the parlor, where he was, but sat by the fireside, weeping silently, and pondering in her elbow-chair. Miss Murdstone, who was busy at her writing-desk, which was covered with letters and papers, gave me her cold finger-nails, and asked me, in an iron whisper, if I had been reassured for my mourning.

"I said: "Yes,"

"And your shirts," said Miss Murdstone; "have you brought 'em home?"

"Yes, ma'am. "I have brought home all my clothes."

"This was all the consolation that her firmness administered to me. I do not doubt that she had a choice pleasure in exhibiting what she called her self-command, and her firmness, and her strength of mind, and her common sense, and the
whole diabolical catalogue of her unamiable qualities, on such an occasion. She was particularly proud of her turn for business; and she showed it now in reducing everything to pen and ink, and being moved by nothing. All the rest of that day, and from morning to night afterwards, she sat at that desk: scratching composily with a hard pen, speaking in the same imperceptible whisper to everybody; never relaxing a muscle either of her arm or of softening a tone of her voice, or appearing with an atom of her dress askew.

Her brother took a book sometimes, but never read it that I saw. He would open it and look at it as if he were reading, but would remain for a whole hour without turning the leaf, and then put it down to walk to and fro in the room. I used to sit with folded hands watching him, and counting his footsteps, hour after hour. He very seldom spoke to her, and never to me. He seemed to be the only restless thing, except the clocks, in the whole motionless house.

In these days before the funeral, I saw but little of Peggotty, except that, in passing up or down stairs, I always found her close to the room where my mother and her baby lay, and except that she came to me every night, and sat by my bed's head while I went to sleep. A day or two before the burial—I think it was a day or two before, but I am conscious of confusion in my mind about that heavy time, with nothing to mark its progress—she took me into the room. I only recollect that underneath some white covering on the bed, with a beautiful cleanliness and freshness all around it, there seemed to me to lie embodied the solemn stillness that was in the house; and that when she would have turned the cover gently back, I cried: "Oh no! oh no!" and held her hand.

If the funeral had been yesterday, I could not recollect it better. The very air of the best parlor, when I went in at the door, the bright condition of the fire, the snuffing of the wine in the decanters, the patterns of the glass and plates, the faint sweet smell of cake, the odor of Miss Murdstone's dress, and our black clothes. Mr. Chillip is in the room, and comes to speak to me.

"And how is Master David?" he says kindly.

I cannot tell him very well. I give him my hand, which he holds in his.

"Dear me!" says Mr. Chillip, weakly smiling, with something shining in his eye. "Our little friends grow up around us. They grow out of our knowledge, ma'am?"

This is to Miss Murdstone, who makes no reply.

"There is a great improvement here, ma'am?" says Mr. Chillip.

Miss Murdstone merely answers with a frown and a formal bend; Mr. Chillip, disappointed, goes into a corner, keeping me with him, and opens his mouth no more.

I remark this, because I remark everything that happens, not because I care about myself, or have done since I came home. And now the bell begins to sound, and Mr. Omor and now come to make us ready. As Peggotty was not to tell me long ago, the followers of my father in the same grave were made ready in the same room.

There are Mr. Murdstone, our neighbor, Mr. Grayser, Mr. Chillip, and I. When we go to the door, the bearers and their load are in the garden; and they move before us down the path and past the ashes and through the gate, and into the churchyard, where I have so often heard the birds sing on a summer morning.

We stand around the grave. The day seems different to me from every other day, and the light not of the same color—of a sadder color. Now there is a solemn hush, which we have brought from home, with what is resting in the mould; and while we stand bare-headed, I hear the voice of the clergyman, sounding remote in the open air, and yet distinct and plain, saying: "I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord!" Then I hear sobs; and, standing apart among the lookers-on, I see that good and kindly servant, whom of all the people upon earth I love the best, and unto whom my childish heart is certain that the Lord will one day say: "Well done!"

There are many faces that I know, among the little crowd; faces that I knew in church, when mine was always wandering there; faces that first saw my mother when she came to the village in her youthful bloom. I do not mind then—i mind nothing but my grief—and yet I see and know them all; and even in the background, far away, see Minnie looking on, and her eye glancing on her sweetheart, who is near me.

It is over, and the earth is filled in, and we turn to come away. Before us stands our house, so pretty and unchanged, so linked in my mind with the young idea of what is gone, that all my sorrow has been nothing to the sorrow it calleth forth. But they take me on; and Mr. Chillip looks at me; and when we get home, put some water to my lips; and when I ask his leave to go up to my room, dismisses me with the gentleness of a woman.

All this, I say, is yesterday's event. Events of later date have floated from me to the shore when all forgotten things will reappear, but this stands like a high rock in the ocean.

I knew that Peggotty would come to me in my room. The Sabbath stillness of the time (the day was so like Sunday! I have forgotten that was suited to us both). She sat down by my side upon my little bed; and holding my hand, and sometimes putting it to her lips, and sometimes smoothing it with her, as she might have comforted my little brother, told me in her way, all that she had to tell concerning what had happened.

"She was never well," said Peggotty, "for a long time. She was uncertain in her mind, and
I looked at her earnestly.

"When you came away from home at the end of the vacation," said Mrs. Creakele, after a pause, "were they all well?" After another pause, "Was your mamma well?"

I trembled without distinctly knowing why, and still looked at her earnestly, making no attempt to answer.

"Because," she said, "I grieve to tell you that I hear this morning your mamma is very ill."

A mist rose between Mrs. Creakele and me, and her figure seemed to move in it for an instant. Then I felt the burning tears run down my face, and it was steady again.

"She is very dangerously ill," she added.

I knew all now.

"She is dead."

There was no need to tell me so. I had already broken out into a desolate cry, and felt an orphan in the wide world.

She was very kind to me. She kept me there all day, and left me alone sometimes; and I cried, and wore myself to sleep, and woke and cried again. When I could cry no more, I began to think; and then the oppression on my breast was heaviest and my grief a dull pain that there was no ease for.

And yet my thoughts were idle; not intent on the calamity that weighed upon my heart, but idly loitering near it. I thought of our house shut up and hushed. I thought of the little baby, who, Mrs. Creakele said, had been pining away for some time, and who, they believed, would die too. I thought of my father's grave in the churchyard, by our house, and of my mother lying there beneath the tree I knew so well. I stood upon a chair when I was left alone, and looked into the glass to see how red my eyes were, and how sorrowful my face. I considered, after some hours were gone, if my tears were really hard to flow now, as they seemed to be, what, in connection with my loss, it would affect me most to think of when I drew near home—for I was going home to the funeral. I am sensible of having felt that a dignity attached to me among the rest of the boys, and that I was important in my affliction.

If ever child were stricken with sincere grief, I was. But I remember that this importance was a kind of satisfaction to me, when I walked in the playground that afternoon while the boys were in school. When I saw them glancing at me out of the windows, as they went up to their classes, I felt distinguished, and looked more melancholy, and walked slower. When school was over, and they came out and spoke to me, I felt it rather good in myself not to be proud to any of them, and to take exactly the same notice of them all, as before.

I was to go home next night: not by the mail, but by the heavy night-coach, which was called the Farmer, and was principally used by country people travelling short intermediate distances upon the road. We had no story-telling
evening, and Traddles insisted on lending me his pillow. I don't know what good he thought it would do me, for I had one of my own: but it was all he had to lend, poor fellow, except a sheet of letter-paper full of skeletons; and that he gave me at parting, as a soother of my sorrows and a contribution to my peace of mind.

I left Salem House upon the morrow afternoon. I little thought then that I left it, never to return. We travelled very slowly all night, and did not get into Yarmouth before nine or ten o'clock in the morning. I looked out for Mr. Barkis, but he was not there; and instead of him a fat, short-winded, merry-looking, little old man in black, with rusty little bunches of ribbons at the knees of his breeches, black stockings, and a broad-brimmed hat, came puffing up to the coach-window, and said:

"Master Copperfield?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you come with me, young sir, if you please," he said, opening the door, "and shall have the pleasure of taking you home?"

I put my hand in his, wondering who he was, and we walked away to a shop in a narrow street, on which was written Omer, Draper, Tailor, Haberdasher, Funeral Furnisher, &c. It was a close and stifling little shop; full of all sorts of clothing, made and unmade, including one window full of beaver-hats and bonnets. We went into a little back-parlour behind the shop, where we found three young women at work on a quantity of black materials, which were heaped upon the table, and little bits and cuttings of which were littered all over the floor. There was a good fire in the room, and a breathless smell of warm black crepe. I did not know what the smell was then, but I know now.

The three young women, who appeared to be very industrious and comfortable, raised their heads to look at us, and went on with their work. Stitch, stitch, stitch. At the same time there came from a workshop across a little yard outside the window, a regular sound of hammering that kept a kind of time: Rat-tat-tat, rat-tat-tat, rat-tat-tat, without any variation.

"Well," said my conductor to one of the three young women, "how do you get on, Minnie?"

"We shall be ready by the trying-on-time," she replied gaily, without looking up. "Don't you be afraid, father."

Mr. Omer took off his broad-brimmed hat, and sat down and panted. He was so fat that he was obliged to pant some time before he could say:

"That's right."

"Father!" said Minnie, playfully. "What a porpuse you do grow!"

"Well, I don't know how it is, my dear," he replied, considering about it. "I am rather so.

"You are such a comfortable man, you see," said Minnie. "You take things so easy."

"No use tak ng 'em otherwise, my dear," said Mr. Omer.

"No indeed," returned his daughter. "We are all pretty gay here, thank Heaven! Alas, father?"

"I hope so, my dear," said Mr. Omer. "All I have got my breath now, I think. I'll measure the young scholar. Would you walk into the shop, Master Copperfield?"

I preceded Mr. Omer, in compliance with his request; and after showing me a roll of cloth which he said was extra super, and too good mourning for anything short of parents, he took my various dimensions, and put them down in a book. While he was recording them he called my attention to his stock in trade, and to certain fashions which he said had "just come up," and to certain other fashions which he said had "just gone out."

"And by that sort of thing we very often lose a little mint of money," said Mr. Omer. "But fashions are like human beings. They come in; nobody knows when, why, or how; and they go out, nobody knows when, why, or how. Everything is like life, in my opinion, if you look at that point of view."

I was too sorrowful to discuss the question, which would possibly have been beyond me under any circumstances; and Mr. Omer took me back into the parlour, breathing with some difficulty on the way.

He then called down a little break-neck range of steps behind a door: "Bring up that tea and bread-and-butter!" which, after some time, during which I sat looking about me and thinking and listening to the stitching in the room and the tune that was being hammered across the yard, appeared on a tray, and turned out to be for me.

"I have been acquainted with you," said Mr. Omer, after watching me for some minutes, during which I had not made much impression on the breakfast, for the black things destroyed my appetite, "I have been acquainted with you a long time, my young friend."

"Have you, sir?"

"All your life," said Mr. Omer. "I may say before it. I knew your father before you. He was five foot nine and a half, and he lays in five and twenty foot of ground."


"He lays in five and twenty foot of ground, if he lays in a fraction," said Mr. Omer, pleasant ly. "It was either his request or her direction, forget which."

"Do you know how my little brother is, sir?" I inquired.

Mr. Omer shook his head.


"He is in his mother's arms," said he.

"Oh, poor little fellow! Is he dead?"

"Don't mind it more than you can help," said Mr. Omer. "Yes. The baby's dead."

My wound opened out, widest, at this intelligence. I left the scarcely tasted breakfast, went and rested my head on another table, in the
the little room, which Minnie hastily left I should spot the mourning that was e with my tears. She was a pretty red girl, and put her hair away from my a soft kind touch; but she was very t having nearly finished her work and good time, and was so different from me lly the tune left off, and a good-looking ow came across the yard into the room. summer in his hand, and his mouth was le nails, which he was obliged to take he could speak.

Joram!" said Mr. Omer. "How do yght," said Joram. "Done, sir." colored a little, and the other two girls one another.

1 you were at it by candle-light last en I was at the club, then? Were d Mr. Omer, shutting up one eye, said Joram. "As you said we could le trip of it, and go over together, if it Minnie and me—and you."

I thought you were going to leave me ther," said Mr. Omer, laughing till he you was so good as to say that," re young man, "Why I turned to with a e. Will you give me your opinion of n," said Mr. Omer, rising. "My dear; nipped and turned to me; "would you your—"

other," Minnie interposed. ight It might be agreeable, my dear," mer. "But perhaps you're right."

say how I knew it was my dear, dear illion that they went to look at. I had ad one making; I had never seen one w of: but it came into my mind what was, while it was going on; and when man entered, I am sure I knew what n doing.

ork being now finished, the two girls, yes I had not heard, brushed the shreds a from their dresses, and went into the t that to rights, and wait for customers. yed behind to fold up what they had pack it in two baskets. This she did knees, humming a lively little tune the ram, who I had no doubt was her lover, and stole a kiss from her while she was didn't appear to mind me, at all), and other was gone for the chaise, and he e haste and get himself ready. Then it again; and then she put her thimble er in her pocket, and stuck a needle with black thread neatly in the bosom own, and put on her outer clothing a little glass behind the door, in which reflection of her pleased face.

I observed, sitting at the table in the my head leaning on my hand, and my uling on very different things. The chaise soon came round to the front of the shop, and the baskets being put in first, I was put in next, and those three followed. I remember it as a kind of half chaise-cart, half piano-forte van, painted of a sombre color, and drawn by a black horse with a long tail. There was plenty of room for us all.

I do not think I have ever experienced so strange a feeling in my life (I am wheer now, perhaps) as that of being with them, remembering how they had been employed, and seeing them enjoy the ride. I was not angry with them; I was more afraid of them, as if I were cast away among creatures with whom I had no community of nature. They were very cheerful. The old man sat in front to drive, and the two young people sat behind him, and whenever he spoke to them leaned forward, the one on one side of his chubby face and the other on the other, and made a great deal of him. They would have talked to me too, but I held back, and moped in my corner; scared by their love-making and hilarity, though it was far from boastful, and almost wondering that no judgment came upon them for their hard-ness of heart.

So, when they stopped to bait the horse, and ate and drank and enjoyed themselves, I could touch nothing that they touched, but kept my fast unbroken. So, when we reached home, I dropped out of the chaise behind, as quickly as possible, that I might not be in the company be-fore those solemn windows, looking blindly on me like closed eyes once bright. And oh, how little need I had had to think what would move me to tears when I came back—seeing the win-dow of my mother's room, and next it that which, In the better time, was mine!

I was in Peggotty's arms before I got to the door, and she took me into the house. Her grief burst out when she first saw me; but she con-trolled it soon, and spoke in whispers, and walked softly, as if the dead could be disturbed. She had not been in bed, I found, for a long time. She sat up at night still, and watched. As long as her poor dear pretty was above the ground, she said, she would never desert her.

Mr. Murdstone took no heed of me when I went into the parlor, where he was, but sat by the fireside, weeping silently, and pondering in his elbow-chair. Miss Murdstone, who was busy at her writing-desk, which was covered with letters and papers, gave me her cold finger-nails, and asked me, in an iron whisper, if I had been measured for my mourning.

I said: "Yes."

"And your shirts," said Miss Murdstone; "have you brought 'em home?"

"Yes, ma'am. "I have brought home all my clothes."

This was all the consolation that her firmness administered to me. I do not doubt that she had a choice pleasure in exhibiting what she called her self-command, and her firmness, and her strength of mind, and her common sense,
whole diabolical catalogue of her unamanable qualities, on such an occasion. She was particularly proud of her turn for business; and she showed it now in reducing everything to pen and ink, and being moved by nothing. All the rest of that day, and from morning to night afterwards, she sat at that desk: scratching compositely with a hard pen, speaking in the same imperceptible way to everybody; never relaxing a muscle of her face, or softening one of her voice, or appearing with an atom of her dress astray.

Her brother took a book sometimes, but never read it that I saw. He would open it and look at it as if he were reading, but would remain for a whole hour without turning the leaf, and then put it down to walk to and fro in the room. I used to sit with folded hands watching him, and counting his footsteps, hour after hour. He very seldom spoke to her, and never to me. He seemed to be the only restless thing, except the clocks, in the whole motionless house.

In these days before the funeral, I saw but little of Peggotty, except that, in passing up or down stairs, I always found her close to the room where my mother and her baby lay, and except that she came to me every night, and sat by my bed's head while I went to sleep. A day or two before the burial—I think it was a day or two before, but I am conscious of confusion in my mind about that heavy time, with nothing to mark its progress—she took me into the room. I only recollect that underneath some white covering on the bed, with a beautiful cleanliness and freshness all around it, there seemed to me to lie embodied the solemn stillness that was in the house; and that when she would have turned the cover gently back, I cried: "Oh no! oh no!" and held her hand.

If the funeral had been yesterday, I could not recollect it better. The very air of the best parlor, when I went in at the door, the bright condition of the fire, the shining of the wine in the decanters, the patterns of the glass and plates, the faint sweet smell of cake, the odor of Miss Murdstone's dress, and our black clothes. Mr. Chillip is in the room, and comes to speak to me.

"And how is Master David?" he says kindly.

I cannot tell him very well. I give him my hand, which he holds in his.

"Dear me!" says Mr. Chillip, meekly smiling, with something shining in his eye. "Our little friends grow up around us. They grow out of our knowledge, ma'am?"

This is to Miss Murdstone, who makes no reply.

"There is a great improvement here, ma'am?" says Mr. Chillip.

Miss Murdstone merely answers with a frown and a formal bow; Mr. Chillip, discomforted, goes into a corner, keeping me with him, and opens his mouth no more.

**I remark this, because I remark everything that happens, not because I care about myself, or have done since I came home. And now the bell begins to sound, and Mr. Omer and others come to make us ready. As Peggotty was wont to tell me long ago, the followers of my father in the same grave were made ready in the same room.**

There are Mr. Murdstone, our neighbor Mr. Grapper, Mr. Chillip, and I. When we go out to the door, the Boarers and their load are in the garden; and they move before us down the path, and past the elms, and through the gate, and into the churchyard, where I have so often heard the birds sing on a summer morning.

We stand around the grave. The day seems different to me from every other day, and the light not of the same color—of a softer color. Now there is a solemn hush, which we have brought from home with what in resting in the mould; and while we stand bare-headed, I hear the voice of the clergyman, sounding remote in the open air, and yet distinct and plain, saying: "I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord!" Then I hear sobs; and, standing still among the lockers-on, I see that good and faithful servant, whom of all the people upon earth I love the best, and unto whom my childish heart is certain that the Lord will one day say: "Well done."

There are many faces that I know, among the little crowd; faces that I knew in church, when mine was always wandering there; faces that first saw my mother when she came to the village in her youthful bloom. I do not mind them—my mind nothing but my grief—and yet I see and know them all; and even in the background, far away, see Minnie looking on, and her eye glowing on her sweetheart, who is near me.

It is over, and the earth is filled in, and we turn to come away. Before us stands our house, so pretty and unchanged, so linked in my mind with the young idea of what is gone, that all my sorrow has been nothing to the sorrow it calls forth. But they take me on; and Mr. Chillip talks to me; and when we get home, put some water to my lips; and when I ask his leave to go up to my room, dismisses me with the gentleness of a woman.

All this, I say, is yesterday's event. Events of later date have floated from me to the shore where all forgotten things will reappear, but this stands like a high rock in the ocean.

I knew that Peggotty would come to me in my room. The Sabbath stillness of the time (the day was so like Sunday! I have forgotten that!) was suited to us both. She sat down by my side upon my little bed; and holding my hand, and sometimes putting it to her lips, and sometimes smoothing it with hers, as she might have comforted my little brother, told me in her own way, all that she had to tell concerning what had happened.

"She was never well," said Peggotty, "for a long time. She was uncertain in her mind, and..."
t happy. When her baby was born, I thought first she would get better, but she was more sickly, and sunk a little every day. She used to sit alone before her baby came, and then she cried; but afterwards she used to sing to it—softly, that I once thought, when I heard her, it was like a voice up in the air; that was rising away.

"I think she got to be more timid, and more lightened-like, of late; and that a hard word was like a blow to her. But she was always the one to me. She never changed to her foolish giddy, didn't my sweet girl."

Here Pegotty stopped, and softly beat upon the hand a little while.

"The last time that I saw her like her own old self, was the night you came home, my dear. The day you went away, she said to me, "I never all see my pretty darling again. Something tells me so, that tells the truth, I know."

"She tried to hold up after that; and many a time, when they told her she was thoughtless and heartless, made believe to be so; but it was a bygone then. She never told her husband she had told me—she was afraid of saying it to anybody else—till one night, a little more than a week before it happened, when she said to him: "By dear, I think I am dying."

"'It's off my mind now, Pegotty,' she told me, when I laid her in her bed that night. "He'll believe it more and more, poor fellow, every day for a few days to come; and then it will be too late. I am very tired. If this is sleep, sit by me while I sleep; don't leave me. God bless both your children! God protect and keep my fatherless ny!"

"I never left her afterwards," said Pegotty. She often talked to them two down-stairs—for, we loved them; she couldn't bear not to love any one who was about her—but when they went away from her bedside, she always turned to me, and asked if there was rest where Pegotty was, and never fell asleep in any other way.

"On the last night, in the evening, she kissed me, and said: "If my baby should die too, Pegotty, please let them lay him in my arms, and bury us together." (It was done; for the poor unbliven but a day beyond her.) 'Let my dearest boy go with us to our resting-place,' she said, 'and tell him that his mother, when she lay here, blessed him not once, but a thousand times.'"

Another silence followed this, and another gentle beating on my hand.

"It was pretty far in the night," said Pegotty, "when she asked me for some drink; and when she had taken it, gave me such a patient smile, the dear—I so beautiful!"

"Daybreak had come, and the sun was rising, when she said to me, how kind and considerate Mr. Copperfield had always been to her, and how he had borne with her, and told her, when she doubted herself, that a loving heart was better and stronger than wisdom, and that he was a happy man in hers. 'Pegotty, my dear,' she said then, 'put me nearer to you,' for she was very weak. 'Lay your good arm underneath my neck,' she said, 'and turn me to you, for your face is going far off, and I want it to be near.' I put it as she asked; and oh Davy! the time had come when my first parting words to you were true—when she was glad to lay her poor head on her stupid cross old Pegotty's arm—and she died like a child that had gone to sleep!"

Thus ended Pegotty's narration. From the moment of my knowing of the death of my mother, the idea of her as she had been of late had vanished from me. I remembered her, from that instant; only as the young mother of my earliest impressions, who had been used to wind her bright curls round and round her finger, and to dance with me at twilight in the parlor. What Pegotty had told me now, was so far from bringing me back to the latter period, that it rooted the earlier image in my mind. It may be curious, but it is true. In her death she winged her way back to her calm untroubled youth, and cancelled all the rest.

The mother who lay in the grave, was the mother of my infancy; the little creature in her arms, was myself, as I had once been, hushed for ever on her bosom.

CHAPTER X.

I BECOME NEGLECTED, AND AM PROVIDED FOR.

The first act of business Miss Murdstone performed when the day of the solemnity was over, and light was freely admitted into the house, was to give Pegotty a month's warning. Much as Pegotty would have disliked such a service, I believe she would have retained it, for my sake. In preference to the best one upon earth. She told me we must part, and told me why; and we consoled with one another, in all sincerity.

As to me or my future, not a word was said, or a step taken. Happy they would have been, I dare say, if they could have dismissed me at a month's warning too. I mustered courage once, to ask Miss Murdstone when I was going back to school; and she answered drily, she believed I was not going back at all. I was told nothing more. I was very anxious to know what was going to be done with me, and so was Pegotty; but neither she nor I could pick up any information on the subject.

There was one change in my condition, which, while it relieved me of a great deal of present uneasiness, might have made me, if I had been capable of considering it closely, yet more uncomfortable about the future. It was this. The constraint that had been put upon me, was quite abandoned. I was so far from being required to keep my dull post in the parlor, that on several occasions, when I took my seat there, Miss Murdstone turned to me to go away. I was so far from being warned off from Pegotty's society, that, provided I w
not in Mr. Murdstone's, I was never sought out or inquired for. At first I was in daily dread of his taking my education in hand again, or of Miss Murdstone's devoting herself to it; but I soon began to think that such fears were groundless, and that all I had to anticipate was neglect.

I do not conceive that this discovery gave me much pain then. I was still giddy with the shock of my mother's death, and in a kind of stunned state as to all tributary things. I can recollect, indeed, to have speculated, at odd times, on the possibility of my not being taught any more, or cared for any more; and growing up to be a shabby, moody man, lounging an idle life away, about the village; as well as on the feasibility of my getting rid of this picture by going away somewhere, like the hero in a story, to seek my fortune: but these were transient visions, day dreams I sat looking at sometimes, as if they were faintly painted or written on the wall of my room, and which, as they receded away, left the wall blank again.

"Peggotty," I said in a thoughtful whisper, one evening, when I was warming my hands at the kitchen fire, "Mr. Murdstone likes me less than he used to. He never liked me much, Peggotty: but he would rather not even see me now if he can help it."

"Perhaps it's his sorrow," said Peggotty, stroking my hair.

"I am sure, Peggotty, I am sorry too. If I believed it was his sorrow, I should not wish it at all. It's not that; oh, no, it's not that."

"How do you know it's not that?" said Peggotty, after a silence.

"Oh his sorrow is another and quite a different thing. He is sorry at this moment, sitting by the fireside with Miss Murdstone; but if I was to go in, Peggotty, he would be something besides."

"What would he be?" said Peggotty.

"Angry," I answered, with an involuntary imitation of his dark frown. "If he was only sorry, he wouldn't look at me as he does. I am only sorry, and it makes me feel kinder."

Peggotty said nothing for a little while; and I warmed my hands, as silent as she.

"Davy," she said at length.

"Yes, Peggotty!"

"I have tried, my dear, all ways I could think of—all the ways there are, and all the ways there ain't, in short—to get a suitable service here, in Blunderstone; but there's no such a thing, my love."

"And what do you mean to do, Peggotty," says I, wistfully, "Do you mean to go and seek your fortune?"

"I expect I shall be forced to go to Yarmouth," replied Peggotty, "and live there."

"You might have gone farther off," I said, "and been as sad as lost. I shall see you sometimes, my dear old Peggotty, there. You won't be quite at the other end of the world, will you?"

Contrary ways, please God!" cried Peggotty, with great animation. "As long as you are in my pot, I shall come over every week of my life to see you. One day every week of my life!

I felt a great weight taken off my mind by the promise; but even this was not all, for Peggotty went on to say:

"I'm a going, Davy, you see, to my brother first, for another fortnight's visit—just till I had time to look about me, and get to be somebody like myself again. Now I have been thinking, that perhaps, as they don't want me present, you might be let to go along with me."

If anything, short of being in a different situation to every one about me, Peggotty could have given me a sense of pleasure at the time, it would have been this project of all others. The idea of being again surrounded by the honest faces, shining welcome on me; of seeing the peacefulness of the sweet Sunday morning, when the bells were ringing, the stones doing in the water, and the shadowy ships breaking through the mist; of roaming up and down with little Emily, telling her my troubles, and finding charms against them in the shells and pebbles on the beach; made a calm in my heart. It ruffled next moment, to be sure, by a deal of Miss Murdstone giving her consent; but even that was set at rest soon, for she came out to that evening in the store-closet while we were yet in conversation, and Peggotty, with a boldness that amazed me, branched the topic to the spot.

"The boy will be idle there," said Miss Murdstone, looking into a pickle-jar, "and silence is the root of all evil. But, to be sure, he would be idle here—or anywhere, in my opinion."

Peggotty had an angry answer ready, I could see; but she swallowed it for my sake, and remained silent.

"Humph!" said Miss Murdstone, still keeping her eye on the pickle; "it is of more importance than anything else—it is of paramount importance—that my brother should not be disturbed or made uncomfortable. I suppose I had better say yes."

I thanked her without making any demonstration of joy, lest it should induce her to withdraw her assent. Nor could I help thinking this a prudent course, when she looked at me out of the pickle-jar, with as great an access of sorrow as if her black eyes had absorbed its contents. However, the permission was given, and was never retracted; for when the month was out Peggotty and I were ready to depart.

Mr. Barkis came into the house for Peggotty's boxes. I had never known him to pass the garden-gate before, but on this occasion he came into the house. And he gave me a look as he shouldered the largest box and went out, which I thought had meaning in it, if meaning could ever be said to find its way into Mr. Barkis's vision.

Peggotty was naturally in low spirits at leaving what had been her home so many years, and where the two strong attachments of her life...
live in a perfectly new manner, if—in short, if any-
thing turns up.”

By way of going in for anything that might be
on the cards, I call to mind that Mr. Micawber,
about this time, composed a petition to the House
of Commons, praying for an alteration in the law
of imprisonment for debt. I set down this re-
membrance here, because it is an instance to
myself of the manner in which I fitted my old
books to my altered life, and made stories for my-
self, out of the streets, and out of men and
women; and how some main points in the char-
acter I shall unconsciously develop, I suppose, in
writing my life, were gradually forming all this
while.

There was a club in the prison, in which Mr.
Micawber, as a gentleman, was a great authority.
Mr. Micawber had stated his idea of this petition
to the club, and the club had strongly approved
of the same. Wherefore Mr. Micawber (who was
a thoroughly good-natured man, and as active a
creature about everything but his own affairs as
ever existed, and never so happy as when he was
busy about something that never could be of any
profit to him) set to work at the petition, invented
it, engrossed it on an immense sheet of paper,
spread it out on a table, and appointed a time for
all the club, and all within the walls if they chose,
to come up to his room, and sign it.

When I heard of this approaching ceremony, I
was so anxious to see them all come in, one after
another, though I knew the greater part of them
already, and they me, that I got an hour’s leave
of absence from Murdstone and Grinby’s, and
established myself in a corner for that purpose.

As many of the principal members of the club as
could be got into the small room without filling
it supported Mr. Micawber in front of the petition,
while my old friend Captain Hopkins (who had
washed himself to do honor to so solemn an occa-
sion) stationed himself close to it, to read it to
all who were unacquainted with its contents.
The door was then thrown open, and the general
population began to come in, in a long file:
several waiting outside, while one entered, affixed
his signature, and went out. To everybody in
succession, Captain Hopkins said: “Have you
read it?”—“No.” “Would you like to hear it
read?” If he weakly showed the least disposi-
tion to hear it, Captain Hopkins, in a loud sono-
rous voice, gave him every word of it. The Cap-
tain would have read it twenty thousand times, if
twenty thousand people would have heard him,
one by one. I remember a certain luscious roll he
gave to such phrases as “The people’s represent-
atives in Parliament assembled” “Your peti-
tioners therefore humbly approach your honorable
house,” “His gracious Majesty’s unfortunate
subjects,” as if the words were something real in
his mouth, and delicious to taste: Mr. Micawber,
meanwhile, listening with a little of an author’s
vanity, and contemplating (not severely) the
spikes on the opposite wall.

As I walked to and fro daily between South-
“But I wouldn’t so much as give it another thought,” said Peggoty, cheerily, “if my Davy was anyways against it—not if I’d been asked in church thirty times three times over, and was wearing out the ring in my pocket.”

“Look at me, Peggoty,” I replied; “and see if I’m not really glad, and don’t truly wish it!”

As indeed I did, with all my heart.

“Well, my life,” said Peggoty, giving me a squeeze, “I have thought of it night and day, every way I can, and I hope the right way; but I’ll think of it again, and speak to my brother about it, and in the meantime we’ll keep it to ourselves, Davy, you and me. Barkis is a good plain creature,” said Peggoty, “and if I tried to do my duty by him, I think it would be my fault if I wasn’t—if I wasn’t pretty comfortable,” said Peggoty, laughing heartily.

This quotation from Mr. Barkis was so appropriate, and tickled us both so much, that we laughed again and again, and were quite in a pleasant humor when we came within view of Mr. Peggoty’s cottage.

It looked just the same, except that it may, perhaps, have shrunk a little in my eyes; and Mrs. Gummidge was waiting at the door as if she had stood there ever since. All within was the same, down to the seaweed in the blue mug in my bedroom. I went into the out-house to look about me; and the very same lobsters, crabs, and crawfish possessed by the same desire to pinch the world in general, appeared to be in the same state of congestion in the same old corner.

But there was no little Emily to be seen, so I asked Mr. Peggoty where she was.

“She’s at school, sir,” said Mr. Peggoty, wiping the heat consequent on the porterage of Peggoty’s box from his forehead; “she’ll be home,” looking at the Dutch clock, “in from twenty minutes to half-an-hour’s time. We all on us feel the loss of her, bless ye!”

Mrs. Gummidge moaned.

“Cheer up, Ma’thel!” cried Mr. Peggoty.

“I feel it more than anybody else,” said Mrs. Gummidge: “I’m a lone lorn creature, and she used to be almost the only think that didn’t go contrary with me.”

Mrs. Gummidge, whimpering and shaking her head, applied herself to blowing the fire. Mr. Peggoty, looking round upon us while she was so engaged, said in a low voice, which he shaded with his hand: “The old un!” From this I rightly conjectured that no improvement had taken place since my last visit in the state of Mrs. Gummidge’s spirits.

Now, the whole place was, or it should have been, quite as delightful a place as ever; and yet it did not impress me in the same way. I felt rather disappointed with it. Perhaps it was because little Emily was not at home. I knew the way by which she would come, and presently found myself strolling along the path to meet her.

A figure appeared in the distances before long, and I soon knew it to be Emily, who was a still creature still in stature, though she was grown. But when she drew nearer, and I saw her blue eyes looking bluer, and her dimpled face look brighter, and her whole self prettier and gayer, a curious feeling came over me that made me pretend not to know her, and pass by as if I was looking at something a long way off. I have done such a thing since in later life, or I am mistaken.

Little Emily didn’t care a bit. She saw me well enough; but instead of turning round and calling after me, ran away laughing. This obliged me to run after her, and she ran so fast that we were very near the cottage before I caught her.

“Oh, it’s you, is it?” said little Emily.

“Why, you knew who it was, Emily,” said I.

“And didn’t you know who it was? said Emily. I was going to kiss her, but she covered her cherry lips with her hands, and said she wasn’t a baby now, and ran away, laughing more than ever, into the house.

She seemed to delight in teasing me, which was a change in her I wondered at very much. The tea-table was ready, and our little locker was put out in its old place, but instead of coming to sit by me, she went and bestowed her company upon that grumbling Mrs. Gummidge: and so Mr. Peggoty’s inquiring why, ruffled her hair all over her face to hide it, and would do nothing but laugh.

“A little pass it is!” said Mr. Peggoty, putting her with his great hand.

“So sh’ is! so sh’ is!” cried Ham. “Mas’r Davy bor’, so sh’ is!” and he sat and chuckled at her for some time, in a state of mingled admiration and delight, that made his face a turning red.

Little Emily was spoiled by them all, in fact; and by no one more than Mr. Peggoty himself, whom she could have coaxed into anything by only going and laying her cheek against his rough whisker. That was my opinion, at least, when I saw her do it; and I held Mr. Peggoty to be thoroughly right in the right, but she was so affectionate and sweet-natured, and had such a pleasant manner of being both sly and shy at once, that she captivated me more than ever.

She was tender-hearted, too; for when, as we sat round the fire after tea, an allusion was made by Mr. Peggoty over his pipe to the loss I had sustained, the tears stood in her eyes, and she looked at me so kindly across the table, that I felt quite thankful to her.

“Ah!” said Mr. Peggoty, taking up her cards, and running them over his hand like water.

“Here’s another orphan, you see, sir. And her,” said Mr. Peggoty, giving Ham a back-handed knock in the chest, “is another of ’em, though he don’t look much like it.”

“If I had you for my guardian, Mr. Peggoty,” said I, shaking my head, “I don’t think I should feel much like it.”

“Well said, Mas’r Davy, bor!” cried Ham in an ecstasy. “Hoorah! Well said! Nor more
Mr. Barkis's Wooing.

"Not! Hor! Hor!"—Here he returned to his back-hander, and little Emily got up and said Mr. Peggotty.

"How's your friend, sir?" said Mr. Peggotty.

"Oh! she tells me she's at the name!" cried Mr. Peggotty, turning. "I knowed it was something in the name!" said it was Rudderford, observed Ham, "rotorted Mr. Peggotty. "And ye a rudder, don't ye? It ain't fur off, sir?"

"No, very well indeed when I came away, sir."

"I's a friend!" said Mr. Peggotty, stretching his pipe. "There's a friend, if you talk it. Why, Lord love my heart alive, if it ain't to look at him! He looks very handsome, is he not?" said I, my soul with this praise.

"Ahem!" cried Mr. Peggotty. "He to you like—like a—why I don't know I can't stand up to you like. He's so...

"That's just his character," said I, braving as a lion, and you can't think he is, Mr. Peggotty."

"Do suppose, now," said Mr. Peggotty, going through the smoke of his pipe, his way of book-larning he'd take the funniest anything.

"I said I, delighted; "he knows everything astonishingly clever.

"O a friend!" murmured Mr. Peggotty. "I lose of his head.

"As a thing seems to cost him any trouble," he knows a task if he only looks at it, the best cricketer you ever saw. He will almost as many men as you like at and beat you easily.

"Mr. Peggotty gave his head another toss, as I say: "Of course he will," says a speaker. I pursued, "that he nobody ever; and I don't know what I you were to hear him sing, Mr. Peggotty gave his head another toss, as I say: "I have no doubt of it."

"He's such a generous, fine, noble fellow, I quite carried away by my favorite that it's hardly possible to give him as much as he deserves. I am sure I can thank him enough for the generosity with as protected me, so much younger and a schoolman himself."

Running on, very fast indeed, when my eye fell on little Emily's face, which was bent over the table, listening with the deepest breath held, her blue eyes sparkling, and the color mantling in her cheeks, so extraordinarily earnest that I stopped in a sort of wonder; they all observed her at the same time, for as I stopped, they laughed and looked at her.

"Emily is like me," said Peggotty, "and would like to see him.

"Emily was confused by our all observing her, and hung down her head, and her face was covered with blushes. Glancing up presently through her stray curls, and seeing that we were all looking at her still (I am sure I, for one, could have looked at her for hours), she ran away, and kept away till it was nearly bedtime."

"I lay down on the old little bed in the stern of the boat, and the wind came moaning on across the flat as it had done before. But I could not help fancying, now, that it moaned of those who were gone; and instead of thinking that the sea might rise in the night and float the boat away, I thought of the sea that had risen, since I last heard those sounds, and drowned my happy home. I recollect, as the wind and wave began to sound fainter in my ears, putting a short chime into my prayers, petitioning that I might grow up to marry little Emily, and so dropping lovingly asleep."

"The days passed pretty much as they had passed before, except—it was a great exception—that little Emily and I seldom wandered on the beach now. She had tasks to learn, and needlework to do; and was absent during a great part of each day. But I felt that we should not have had these old wanderings, even if it had been otherwise. Wild and full of childish whims as Emily was, she was more of a little woman than I had supposed. She seemed to have got a great distance away from me, in little more than a year. She liked me, but she laughed at me, and tormented me; and when I went to meet her, stole home another way, and was laughing at the door when I came back, disappointed. The best times were when she sat quietly at work in the doorway, and I sat on the wooden steps at her feet, reading to her. It seems to me at this hour, that I have never seen such sunlight as those bright April afternoons; that I have never seen such a sunny little figure as I used to see, sitting in the doorway of the old boat; that I have never beheld such sky, such water, such glorified ships, sailing away into golden air."

"On the very first evening after our arrival, Mr. Barkis appeared in an exceedingly vacant and awkward condition; and with a bundle of oranges tied up in a handkerchief. As he made no allusion of any kind to this property, he was supposed to have left it behind him by accident when he went away; until Ham, running after him to restore it, came back with the information that it was intended for Peggotty. After that occasion he appeared every evening, at exactly the same hour, and always with a little bundle, to which he never alluded, and which he regularly put behind the door, and left there. These offerings of affection were of a most various and eccentric description. Among them I remember a double sea of pigs' trotters, a huge pin-cushion, half a..."
bushel or so of apples, a pair of jet ear-rings, some Spanish onions, a box of dominoes, a canary bird and cage, and a leg of pickled pork.

Mr. Barkis's wooing, as I remember it, was altogether of a very peculiar kind. He very seldom said anything; but would sit by the fire in much the same attitude as he sat in his cart, and stare heavily at Peggotty, who was opposite. One night, being as I suppose, inspired by love, he made a dart at the bit of wax candle she kept for her thread, and put it in his waistcoat-pocket and carried it off. After that, his great delight was to produce it when it was wanted, sticking to the lining of his pocket, in a partially melted state, and pocket it again when it was done with. He seemed to enjoy himself very much, and not to feel at all called upon to talk. Even when he took Peggotty out for a walk on the flats, he had no uneasiness on that head, I believe; contenting himself with now and then asking her if she was pretty comfortable; and I remember that sometimes, after he was gone, Peggotty would throw her apron over her face, and laugh for half-an-hour. Indeed, we were all more or less amused, except that miserable Mrs. Gummidge, whose courtship would appear to have been of an exactly parallel nature, she was so continually reminded by these transactions of the old one.

At length, when the term of my visit was nearly expired, it was given out that Peggotty and Mr. Barkis were going to make a day's holiday together, and that little Emily and I were to accompany them. I had but a broken sleep the night before, in anticipation of the pleasure of a whole day with Emily. We were all astir betimes in the morning; and while we were yet at breakfast, Mr. Barkis appeared in the distance, driving a chaise-cart toward the object of his affections.

Peggotty was dressed as usual, in her neat and quiet mourning; but Mr. Barkis bloomed in a new blue coat, of which the tailor had given him such good measure, that the cuffs would have rendered gloves unnecessary in the coldest weather, while the collar was so high that it pushed his hair up on end on the top of his head. His bright buttons, too, were of the largest size. Rendered complete by crab pantalettes and a buff waistcoat, I thought Mr. Barkis a phenomenon of respectability.

When we were all in a bustle outside the door, I found that Mr. Peggotty was prepared with an old shoe, which was to be thrown after us for luck, and which he offered to Mrs. Gummidge for that purpose.

"No. It had better be done by somebody else, Dan'l," said Mrs. Gummidge. "I'm a lame lorn creature myself, and every think that reminds me of creature that ain't lorn and lorn, goes contrary with me."

"Come, old gal!" cried Mr. Peggotty. "Take and leave it."

"No, Dan'l," returned Mrs. Gummidge, whimpering and shaking her head. "If I felt less, I do more. You don't feel like me, Dan'l; thinks don't go contrary with you, nor yet them; you had better do it yourself."

But here Peggotty, who had been going from one to another in a hurried way, being called away by everybody, called out from the cart, in which we were all by this time (Emily and I on two chairs, side by side), that Mrs. Gummidge do it. So Mrs. Gummidge did it; and, I am sorry to relate, cast a lamp upon the festive ears of one of our departure, by immediately bursting tears, and sinking subdued into the arms of, with the declaration that she knew she's had enough, and had better be carried to the Hospital. Which I really thought was a sensible thing that Ham might have acted on.

Away we went, however, on our holiday excursion; and the first thing we did was to go to a church, where Mr. Barkis tied the horse to a rail, and went in with Peggotty, leaving Emily and me alone in the chaise. I made an occasion to put my arm round Emily's waist, and propose that as I was going away so very soon, we should determine to be very affectionate to one another, and very happy, all day. Emily consenting, and allowing me to kiss her Calendar became desperate; informing her, I recollect I never could love another, and that I was afraid to shed the blood of anybody who aspired to her affections.

How merry little Emily made herself! With what a debarment assumption of being immensely older and wiser than I, the fair woman said I was a "silly boy;" and laughed so charmingly that I forgot the being called by that disparaging name, and the pleasure of looking at her.

Mr. Barkis and Peggotty were a good way from the church, but came out at last, and drove away into the country. As we were along, Mr. Barkis turned to me, and said, wink—by-the-by, I should hardly have told you before, that he could wink:

"What name was it as I wrote up in the " "Clara Peggotty," I answered.

"What name would it be as I should w " "Clara Peggotty, again?" I suggested.

"Clara Peggotty Barkis!" he returned, burst into a roar of laughter that shook the chaise.

In a word, they were married, and he into the church for no other purpose. It was resolved that it should be quietly done, the clerk had given her away, and there he no witnesses of the ceremony. She was confused when Mr. Barkis made this abrupt announcement of their union, and could not enough in token of her unimpaired affection, she soon became herself again, and said a very glad it was over.

We drove to a little inn in a bye road, we were expected, and were to have a very comfortable dinner, and passed the day with satisfaction. If Peggotty had been married.
en years, she could hardly have care about it; it made no sort her: she was just the same as ut for a stroll with little Emily sa, while Mr. Barkis's philosopher's pipe, and enjoyed himself, I contemplation of his happiness. ed his appetite; for I distinctly a, although he had eaten a good greens at dinner, and had finished r two, he was obliged to have for tea, and disposed of a large any emotion.

ought since what an odd, immo kind of wedding it must have into the chaise again soon after cosily back, looking up at the about them. I was their chief pened Mr. Barkis's mind to an I told him all I knew, but he red anything I might have taken to impart to him; for he had a on for my abilities, and informed a, on that very occasion, that Josephus*—by which I think he

1 exhausted the subject of the then I had exhausted the mental arks, little Emily and I made a trapper, and sat under it for the y. Ah, how I loved her! What ought) if we were married, and y anywhere to live among the fields, never growing older, never children ever, rambling land in shine and among flowery mead our heads on moss at night, of purity and peace, and buried en we were dead! Some suca real world in it, bright with the science, and young as the stars my mind all the way. I am glad re two such guileless hearts at age as little Emily's and mine. nk the Loves and Graces took in its homely procession.

e to the old boat again in good d there Mr. and Mrs. Barkis bade drove away snugly to their own n, for the first time, that I had should have gone to bed with a d under any other roof but that little Emily's head. und Ham knew what was in my as I did, and were ready with their hospitable faces to drive imly came and sat beside me on only time in all that visit; and a wonderful close to a wonderful tide; and soon after we went otty and Ham went out to fish. being left alone in the solitary or of Emily and Mrs. Gum

midge, and only wished that a lion or a serpent, or any ill-disposed monster, wouId make an attack upon us, that I might destroy him, and cover myself with glory. But as nothing of the sort happened to be walking about on Yarmouth flats that night, I provided the best substitute I could by dreaming of dragons until morning.

With morning came Peggotty; who called to me, as usual, under my window, as if Mr. Barkis the carrier had been from first to last a dream too. After breakfast she took me to her own home, and a beautiful little home it was. Of all the moveablest in it, I must have been most impressed by a certain old bureau of some dark wood in the parlor (the tile-floored kitchen was the general sitting-room), with a retreating top, which opened, let down, and became a desk, within which was a large quarto edition of Foxe's Book of Martyrs. This precious volume, of which I do not recollect one word, I immediately discovered and immedi-ately applied myself to; and I never visited the house afterwards, but I kneeled on a chair, opened the casket where this gem was enshrined, spread my arms over the desk, and fell to devouring the book a fresh. I was chiefly edified, I am afraid, by the pictures, which were numerous, and represented all kinds of dismal horrors; but the Martyrs and Peggotty's house have been inseparable in my mind ever since, and are now.

I took leave of Mr. Peggotty, and Ham, and Mrs. Gummidge, and little Emily, that day; and passed the night at Peggotty's in a little room in the roof (with the crocodile book on a shelf by the bed's head), which was to be always mine, Peggotty said, and should always be kept for me in exactly the same state.

"Young or old, Davy dear, as long as I am alive and have this house over my head," said Peggotty, "you shall find it as if I expected you here directly every minute. I shall keep it every day, as I used to keep your old little room, my darling: and if you was to go to China, you might think of it as being kept just the same, all the time you were away."

I felt the truth and constancy of my dear old nurse, with all my heart, and thanked her as well as I could. That was not very well, for she spoke to me thus, with her arms round my neck, in the morning, and I was going home in the morning, and I went home in the morning, with herself and Mr. Barkis in the cart. They left me at the gate, not easily or lightly; and it was a strange sight to me to see the cart go on, taking Peggotty away, and leaving me under the old elm-trees looking at the house in which there was no face to look on mine with love or liking any more.

And now I fell into a state of neglect, which I cannot look back upon without compassion. I fell at once into a solitary condition,—apart from all friendly notice, apart from the society of all other boys of my own age, apart from all companionship but my own spiritless thoughts,—which seems to cast its gloom upon this paper as I write.
What would I have given, to have been sent to the hardest school that ever was kept!—to have been taught something, anyhow, anywhere! No such hope dawned upon me. They disliked me; and they sullenly, sternly, steadily, overlooked me. I think Mr. Murdstone’s means were strained at about this time; but it is little to the purpose. He could not bear me; and in putting me from him, he tried, as I believe, to put away the notion that I had any claim upon him—and succeeded.

I was not actively ill-used. I was not beaten or starved; but the wrong that was done to me had no intervals of relenting, and was done in a systematic, passionless manner. Day after day, week after week, month after month, I was coldly neglected. I wonder sometimes, when I think of it, what they would have done if I had been taken with an illness; whether I should have lain down in my lonely room, languished through it in my usual solitary way, or whether anybody would have helped me out.

When Mr. and Miss Murdstone were at home, I took my meals with them; in their absence, I ate and drank by myself. At all times I lounged about the house and neighborhood quite disregarded, except that they were jealous of my making any friends; thinking, perhaps, that if I did, I might complain to some one. For this reason, though Mr. Chillip often asked me to go and see him (he was a widower, having some years before that, lost a little small light-haired wife, whom I can just remember connecting in my own thoughts with a pale tortoise-shell cat), it was by no means that I enjoyed the happiness of passing an afternoon in his closet of a surgery; reading some book that was new to me, with the smell of the whole pharmacopoeia coming up my nose, or pounding something in a mortar under his mild directions.

For the same reason, added no doubt to the old dislike of her, I was seldom allowed to visit Peggoty. Faithful to her promise, she either came to see me, or met me somewhere near, once every week, and never empty-handed; but many and bitter were the disappointments I bad, in being refused permission to visit a patient at her house. Some few times, however, at long intervals, I was allowed to go there; and then I found out that Mr. Barkis was something of a miser, or, as Peggoty dutifully expressed it, was “a little near,” and kept a heap of money in a box under his bed, which he pretended was only for murmurs and tonics. In this coffer, his riches hid themselves with such a tenacious modesty, that the smallest insinuations could only be tempted out by artifice; so that Peggoty had to prepare a long and elaborate scheme, a very Gunpowder Plot, for every Saturday’s expenses.

All this time I was so conscious of the waste of my promises I had given, and of my being utterly neglected, that I should have been perfectly miserable, I have no doubt, but for the old ones. They were my only comfort; and I was as true to them as they were to me, and them over and over I don’t know how times more.

I now approach a period of my life, I can never lose the remembrance of, which member anything; and the recollection of it has often, without my invocation, come back to me like a ghost, and haunted happier times.

I had been out, one day, loitering some in the listless meditative manner that my life engendered, when, turning the corner near our house, I came upon Mr. Murdstone walking with a gentleman. I was confounded to see him; and I heard the gentleman say—

“What! Brooks!”

“No, sir, David Copperfield,” I said.

“Don’t tell me. You are Brooks,” the gentleman. “You are Brooks of Sheffield; your name.”

At these words, I observed the gentleman the more attentively. His laugh coming to a membrane too, I knew him to be Mr. Quin, whom I had gone over to Lowestoft with Murdstone to see, before—it is no matter—not recall when.

“And how do you get on, and where are you being educated, Brooks?” said Mr. Quin.

He had put his hand upon my shoulder, turned me about, to walk with him. I knew what to reply, and glanced dubiously at Mr. Murdstone.

“He is at home at present,” said the Mr. Quin, looking both, I thought. “Fine weather.”

Silence ensued, and I was considering whether I could best disengage my shoulder from him, and go away, when he said:

“I suppose you are a pretty sharp fellow, Eh, Brooks?”

“Ay! He is sharp enough,” said Mr. Quin, impatiently. “You had better let him. He will not thank you for troubling him.”

On this hint, Mr. Quin released me, and I made the best of my way home. Looking as I turned into the front garden, I saw Mr. Murdstone leaning against the wicket of the churchyard, and Mr. Quin talking to him. They both looking at me, and I felt that the speaking of me.

Mr. Quin lay at our house that night, breakfast the next morning, I had put away, and was going out of the room, when Murdstone called me back. He then graciously pulled to another table, where his sister sat at her desk. Mr. Quin, with his hands in his pockets, stood looking out of window; and stood looking at them all.

“David,” said Mr. Murdstone, “to the
for action; not for moping and

or,” added his sister.
stone, leave it to me, if you please.
the young this is a world for
for moping and droning in. It is
a young boy of your disposition,
a great deal of correcting; and to
ster service can be done than to
form to the ways of the working
end it and break it.”
orness won’t do here,” said his
It wants is, to be crushed. And
be. Shall be, too!"

a look, half in remonstrance, half
I went on:

you know, David, that I am not
kt it now. You have
considerable education already.
y; and even if it were not, and
I am of opinion that it would not
geons to you to be kept at school.
you, is a fight with the world;
you begin it, the better.”
ccurred to me that I had already be
nor way; but it occurs to me now,

heard ‘the counting-house’ men-
es,” said Mr. Murdstone.
ng-house, sir?” I repeated.
and Grinby, in the wine trade,”

looked uncertain, for he went on
heard the ‘counting-house’ men-
business, or the cellars, or the
ling about it.”
ve heard the business mentioned,
embering what I vaguely knew
ister’s resources. “But I don’t

matter when,” he returned. “Mr.
es that business.”
the latter deferentially as he stood
window.
nts that it gives employ-
other boys, and that he sees no
ouldn’t, on the same terms, give

,” Mr. Quinion observed in a low
returning round, “no other pro-

e, with an impatient, even an
essed, without noticing what
ns are, that you will earn enough
provide for your eating and drink-
t-money. Your lodging (which I
for) will be paid by me. So will
be kept down to my estimate,”

as will be looked after for you,
urstock: “as you will not be
able, yet awhile, to get them for yourself. So
you are now going to London, David, with Mr.
Quinion, to begin the world on your own ac-
ount.”

“‘In short, you are provided for,” observed his
sister; “and will please to do your duty.”

Though I quite understood that the purpose
of this announcement was to get rid of me, I have no
distinct remembrance whether it pleased or fright-
ened me. My impression is, that I was in a state
of confusion about it, and, oscillating between the
two points, touched neither. Nor had I much
time for the clearing of my thoughts, as Mr. Quin-
on was to go upon the morrow.

Behold me, on the morrow, in a much-worn
little white hat, with a black crape round it for
my mother, a black jacket, and a pair of hard stiff
corduroy trousers—which Miss Murdstone con-
sidered the best armor for the legs in that fight
with the world which was now to come off—be-
held me so attired, and with my little worldly all
before me in a small trunk, sitting, a lone lorn
child (as Mrs. Gummidge might have said), in
the post-chaise that was carrying Mr. Quinion
to the London coach at Yarmouth! See, how our
house and church are lessen in the distance;
how the grave beneath the tree is blotted out by
intervening objects; how the spire points up-
ward from my old playground no more, and the
sky is empty!

CHAPTER XI.

I BEGIN LIFE ON MY OWN ACCOUNT, AND DON’T
LIKE IT.

I know enough of the world now, to have al-
most lost the capacity of being much surprised
by anything; but it is matter of some surprise to me,
even now, that I can have been so easily thrown
away at such an age. A child of excellent abili-
ties, and with strong powers of observation,
quick, eager, delicate, and soon hurt bodily or
mentally, it seems wonderful to me that nobody
should have made any sign in my behalf. But
none was made; and I became, at ten years old, a
little laboring hind in the service of Murdstone
and Grinby.

Murdstone and Grinby’s warehouse was at the
water side. It was down in Blackfriars. Modern
improvements have altered the place; but it was
the last house at the bottom of a narrow street,
curving down hill to the river, with some steps at
the end, where people took boat. It was a cazy
old house with a wharf of its own, abutting on
the water when the tide was in, and on the mud
when the tide was out, and literally overrun with
rats. Its panelled rooms, discolored with the
dirt and smoke of a hundred years, I dare say; its
decaying floors and staircase; the squeaking and
squealing of the old grey rats down in the cellars;
and the dirt and rottenness of the place; are
things, not of many years ago, in my mind, but
of the present instant. They are all before me,
just as they were in the evil hour when I went
whole diabolical catalogue of her unamiable qualities, on such an occasion. She was particularly proud of her turn for business; and she showed it now in reducing everything to pen and ink, and being moved by nothing. All the rest of that day, and from morning to night afterwards, she sat at that desk: scratching compositely with a hard pen, speaking in the same imperceptible whisper to everybody; never relaxing a muscle of her face, or softening a tone of her voice, or appearing with an atom of her dress astray.

Her brother took a book sometimes, but never read it that I saw. He would open it and look at it as if he were reading, but would remain for a while without turning the leaf, and then put it down to walk to and fro in the room. I used to sit with folded hands watching him, and counting his footsteps, hour after hour. He very seldom spoke to her, and never to me. He seemed to be the only restless thing, except the clocks, in the whole motionless house.

In these days before the funeral, I saw but little of Peggotty, except that, in passing up or down stairs, I always found her close to the room where my mother and her baby lay, and except that she came to me every night, and sat by my bed's head while I went to sleep. A day or two before the burial—I think it was a day or two before, but I am conscious of confusion in my mind about that heavy time, with nothing to mark its progress—she took me into the room. I only recollect that underneath some white covering on the bed, with a beautiful cleanliness and freshness all around it, there seemed to me to be wrapped, the solemn stillness that was in the house; and that when she would have turned the cover gently back, I cried: "Oh no! oh no!" and held her hand.

If the funeral had been yesterday, I could not recollect it better. The very air of the best parlor, when I went in at the door, the bright condition of the fire, the shining of the wine in the decanters, the patterns of the glass and plates, the faint sweet smell of cake, the odor of Miss Murdstone's dress, and our black clothes. Mr. Chillip is in the room, and comes to speak to me.

"And how is Master David?" he says kindly.

I cannot tell him very well. I give him my hand, which he holds in his.

"Dear me!" says Mr. Chillip, meekly smiling, with something shining in his eye. "Our little friends grow up around us. They grow out of our knowledge, ma'am?"

This is to Miss Murdstone, who makes no reply.

"There is a great improvement here, ma'am?" says Mr. Chillip.

Miss Murdstone merely answers with a frown and a formal bend; Mr. Chillip, discomfited, goes into a corner, keeping me with him, and opens his mouth no more.

I remark this, because I remark everything that happens, not because I care about myself, or have done since I came home. And now the bell begins to sound, and Mr. Omer and others come to make us ready. As Peggotty was out to tell me long ago, the followers of my father in the same grave were made ready in the same room.

There are Mr. Murdstone, our neighbor Mr. Grayper, Mr. Chillip, and I. When we go out, to the door, the Bearers and their load are in the garden; and they move before us down the path and past the elms, and through the gate, and into the churchyard, where I have so often heard the birds sing on a summer morning.

We stand around the grave. The day seems different to me from every other day, and to sight not of the same color—of a sadder color. Now there is a solemn hush, which we have brought from home with what is resting in the mould; and while we stand bare-headed, I hear the voice of the clergyman, sounding remote in the open air, and yet distinct and plain, saying: "I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord!" Then I hear sobbing; and, standing among the lookers-on, I see that good and faithful servant, whom of all the people upon earth I love the best, and unto whom my childish heart is certain that the Lord will one day say: "Well done."

There are many faces that I know, among the little crowd; faces that I knew in church, whose name was always wandering there; faces that first saw my mother when she came to the village in her youthful bloom. I do not mind them—I mind nothing but my grief—and yet I see and know them all; and even in the background, far away, see Minnie looking on, and her eye glancing on her sweetheart, who is near me.

It is over, and the earth is filled in, and we turn to come away. Before us stands our house, so pretty and unchanged, so linked in my mind with the young idea of what is gone, that all my sorrow has been nothing to the sorrow it carries forth. But they take me on; and Mr. Chillip talks to me; and when we get home, put some water to my lips; and when I ask his leave to go up to my room, dismisses me with the gentleness of a woman.

All this, I say, is yesterday's event. Events of later date have floated from me to the shore where all forgotten things will reappear, but this stands like a high rock in the ocean.

I knew that Peggotty would come to me in my room. The Sabbath stillness of the time (the day was so like Sunday! I have forgotten that) was suited to us both. She sat down by my side upon my little bed; and holding my hand, and sometimes putting it to her lips, and sometimes smoothing it with her, as she might have comforted my little brother, told me in her way, all that she had to tell concerning what had happened.

"She was never well," said Peggotty, "for a long time. She was uncertain in her mind, and
I GO TO LODGE WITH MR. MICAWBER.

hat hour," said Mr. Micawber, "shall
about eight," said Mr. Quinion.
about eight," said Mr. Micawber. "I
shall you good day, Mr. Quinion. I will
otherwise.
put on his hat, and went out with his
arm: very upright, and humming
when he was clear of the counting-

Quinion then formally engaged me to be
as I could in the warehouse of Murdstone
by, at a salary, I think, of six shillings.
I am not clear whether it was six or
am inclined to believe, from my uncer-
the head, that it was six at first and
more. He paid me a week down
own pocket, I believe), and I gave Mealy
out of it to get my trunk carried to
Terrace at night: it being too heavy for
night, small as it was. I paid sixpence
my dinner, which was a meat pie and a
neighboring pump; and passed the hour
allowed for that meal, in walking about

appointed time in the evening, Mr. Mi-
appeared. I washed my hands and face,
greater honor to his gentility, and we
our house, as I suppose I must now call
; Mr. Micawber impressing the names
and the shapes of corner houses upon
went along, that I might find my way
ly, in the morning.
I at his house in Windsor Terrace
noticed was shabby like himself, but
himself, made all the show it could), he
me to Mrs. Micawber, a thin and faded
at all young, who was sitting in the
first floor was altogether unfurnished,
blinds were kept down to delude the
, with a baby at her breast. This baby
we; and I may remark here that I
er, in all my experience of the family,
the twins detached from Mrs. Micawber
me time. One of them was always tak-

were two other children; Master Mi-
gaged about four, and Miss Micawber,
three. These, and a dark-complexing
woman, with a habit of snorting,
servant to the family, and informed me,
for the hour had expired, that she was "a
and came from St. Luke's workhouse,
neighborhood, completed the establish-
room was at the top of the house, at
a close chamber; stencilled all over with
mit which my young imagination repre-
a blue muffin; and very scantly fur-

or thought," said Mrs. Micawber, when
up, twin and all, to show me the apart-
sit down to take breath, "before I was
when I lived with papa and mamma, that
er and it necessary to take a lodge.

But Mr. Micawber being in difficulties, all
considerations of private feelings must give way.
I said: "Yes, ma'am."
"Mr. Micawber's difficulties are almost over-
whelming just at present," said Mrs. Micawber;
"and whether it is possible to bring him through
them, I don't know. When I lived at home with
papa and mamma, I really should have hardly un-
derstood what the word meant, in the sense in
which I now employ it, but experience does it—as
papa used to say."

I cannot satisfy myself whether she told me
that Mr. Micawber had been an officer in the
Marines, or whether I have imagined it. I only
know that I believe to this hour that he was in the
Marines once upon a time, without knowing why.
He was a sort of town traveller for a number of
miscellaneous houses, now; but made little or
nothing of it, I am afraid.

"If Mr. Micawber's creditors will not give him
time," said Mrs. Micawber, "they must take the
consequences; and the sooner they bring it to
an issue the better. Blood cannot be obtained
from a stone, neither can anything on account be
obtained at present (not to mention law expenses)
from Mr. Micawber."

I never can quite understand whether my pro-
cocious self-dependence confused Mrs. Micawber
in reference to my age, or whether she was so full
of the subject that she would have talked about
it to the very twins if there had been nobody else
to communicate with, but this was the strain in
which she began, and she went on accordingly all
the time I knew her.

Poor Mrs. Micawber! She said she had tried
to exert herself; and so, I have no doubt, she had.
The centre of the street-door was perfectly covered
with a great brass-plate, on which was engraved
"Mrs. Micawber's Boarding Establishment for
Young Ladies:"

but I never found that any young
lady had ever been to school there; or that any
young lady ever came, or proposed to come; or
that the least preparation was ever made to receive
any young lady. The only visitors I ever saw or
heard of, were creditors. They used to come at
all hours, and some of them were quite ferocious.
One dirty-faced man, I think he was a boot-maker,
used to edge himself into the passage as early as
seven o'clock in the morning, and call up the
stairs to Mr. Micawber—"Come! You ain't out
yet, you know. Pay us, will you? Don't hide,
you know; that's mean. I wouldn't be mean if
I was you. Pay us, will you? You just pay us,
d'ye hear? Come!" Receiving no answer to
these taunts, he would mount in his wrath to
the words "swindlers" and "robbers," and
these being ineffectual too, would sometimes go
to the extremity of crossing the street, and roar-
ing up at the windows of the second floor, where
he knew Mr. Micawber was. At these times, Mr.
Micawber would be transported with grief and
mortification, even to the length (as I was once
made aware by a scream from his wife) of making
motions at himself with a razor; but within half
an hour afterwards, he would polish up his shoes with extraordinary pains, and go out, humming a tune with a greater air of gentility than ever. Mrs. Micawber was quite as ecstatic. I have known her to be thrown into raptures by the king’s taxes at three o’clock, and to eat lambchops breadcrumed, and drink warm ale (paid for with two teaspoons that had gone to the pawnbroker’s) at four. On one occasion, when an execution had just been put in, coming home through some chance as early as six o’clock, I saw her lying (of course with a twin) under the grate in a swoon, with her hair all torn about her face; but I never knew her more cheerful than she was, that very same night, over a real cutlet before the kitchen fire, telling me stories about her papa, and mamma, and the company they used to keep.

In this house, and with this family, I passed my leisure time. My own exclusive breakfast of a penny loaf and a pennworth of milk, I provided myself, I kept another small loaf, and a medium of cheese, on a particular shelf of a particular cupboard, to make my supper on when I came back at night. This made a hole in the six or seven shillings. I know well; and I was out at the warehouse all day, and had to support myself on that money all the week. From Monday morning until Saturday night, I had no advice, no counsel, no encouragement, no consolation, no assistance, no support, of any kind, from any one, that I can call to mind, as I hope to go to heaven.

I was so young and childish, and so little qualified—how could I be otherwise?—to undertake the whole charge of my own existence, that often, in going to Mudstone and Grinby’s, of a morning, I could not resist the stale pastry put out for sale at half-price at the pastrycook’s door, and spent in that, the money I should have kept for my dinner. Then, I went without my dinner, or bought a roll or a slice of pudding. I remember two pudding-shops, between which I was divided, according to my finances. One was in a court close to St. Martin’s Church—at the back of the church—which is now removed altogether. The pudding at that shop was made of currants, and was rather a special pudding, but dear; two-pennyworth not being larger than a pennyworth of more ordinary pudding. A good shop for the latter was in the Strand—somewhere in that part which has been rebuilt since. It was a stout pale pudding, heavy and flabby, and with great flat raisins in it, stuck in whole at wide distances apart. It came up hot at about my time every day, and many a day did I dine off it. When I dined regularly and handsomely, I had a savoy and a penny-loaf, or a fourpenny plate of red beef from a cook’s shop; or a plate of bread and cheese and a glass of beer, from a miserable old public-house opposite our place of business, called the Lion, or the Lion and something else that I have forgotten. Once, I remember carrying my own bread (which I had brought from home in the morning) under my arm, wrapped in a piece of paper, like a book, and going to a famous fiendish beef-house near Drury Lane, and ordering a “small plate dеликacy to eat with it. What the wetter of such a strange little apparition could alone, I don’t know; but I can see him bringing me at me to sit down a dinner, and bring the other wetter to look. I gave him a halfpenny, and I wish he hadn’t taken it.

We had half-a-hour, I think, for tea. I had money enough, I used to get half-ready-made coffee and a slice of bread and butter. When I had none, I used to look at a ven in Fleet-street; or I have strolled, at such as far as Covent Garden Market, and snap pine-apples. I was fond of wandering a St. Adelphi, because it was a mysterious place, those dark arches. I see myself emerging from some of those arches, on a public-house close to the river, with an op before it, where some cool-heavers were to look at whom I sat down upon a bench and wonder what they thought of me!

I was such a child, and so little, that for I went into the bar of a strange public house for a glass of ale or porter, to moisten what I had for dinner, they were afraid to give it to me. I remember one hot evening a went into a public-house, and said to the landlord:

“'What is your best—your very best glass?' For it was a special occasion, know what. It may have been my birth—

“Twopenny-halfpenny,” says the landlord, the price of the Genuine Stoutest ale."

"Then," says I, producing the money, draw me a glass of the Genuine Stoutest please, with a good head to it."

The landlord looked at me in return, bar, from head to foot, with a strange smile; and instead of drawing the beer, round the screen and said something to him. She came out from behind it, with her wet hand, and joined him in surveying me.... stand, all three, before me now. The last his shirt sleeves, leaning against the bar’s frame; his wife looking over the little he and I, in some confusion, looking up at the outside the partition. They asked me many questions; as, what my name was, where I lived, how I was employed, how I came there. To all of which, that commit nobody, I invented, I am afraid, at answers. They served me with though I suspect it was not the Genuine; and the landlord’s wife, opening a half-door of the bar, and bending down, my money back, and gave me a kiss that admiring, and half compassionate, but all

I know I do not exaggerate, unconsciously unintentionally, the keenness of my nose to the difficulties of my life. I know that I am young.

I know that I was given me by Mr. Quilp, and that spent it in a dinner or a tea. I know that I never mentioned until night, with common boys, a shabby girl. I know that Young
I CHANGE MY LODGING.

I was working at Murdstone and the same common way, and with the same companions, and with the same servile degradation as at first. But I could no doubt, made a single , or spoke to any of the many boys daily in going to the warehouse, in it, and in prowling about the streets. I led the same secretly unhappy  it in the same lonely, self-reliant se only changes I am conscious of what I had grown more shabby, and I was now relieved of much of the care of Mrs. Micawber's cares; for or friends had engaged to help them at a pass, and they lived more comfortably than they had lived for a long f 1. I used to breakfast with them of some arrangement, of which I in the details. I forget, too, at what time were opened in the morning, advay going in; but I know that I was six o'clock, and that my favorite time in the interval was old London sea was wont to sit in one of the rooms watching the people go by, or to balustrades at the sun shining in the glistening the golden frame on the top unten. The Orfing met me here to be told some astonishing actions he hears and the Tower; on which more than that I hope I believed 1 In the evening I used to go back 2, and walk up and down the parade, or, on the occasion, make a visit to Mrs. and her acquaintances of her papa. Whether Mr. Murdstone knew I am unable to say. I never told atone and Grinby's.

Micawber's affairs, although past their very much involved by reason of a cd, of which I used to hear a great deal. I suppose, now, to have been a composition with his creditors, as far as being clear about it am conscious of having confounded it emoninal parchments which are necessary, as the case that Mr. Micawber should apply for under the Insolvent Debtors' Act, I set him free, she expected, in about em," said Mr. Micawber, who was due no doubt. I shall, please Heaven, beforehand with the world, and to live in a perfectly new manner, if—in short, if anything turns up."

By way of going in for anything that might be on the cards, I call to mind that Mr. Micawber, about this time, composed a petition to the House of Commons, praying for an alteration in the law of imprisonment for debt. I set down this recollection here, because it is an instance to myself of the manner in which I fitted my old books to my altered life, and made stories for myself, out of the streets, and out of men and women; and how some main points in the character I shall unconsciously develop, I suppose, in writing my life, were gradually forming all this while.

There was a club in the prison, in which Mr. Micawber, as a gentleman, was a great authority. Mr. Micawber had stated his idea of this petition to the club, and the club had strongly approved of the same. Wherefore Mr. Micawber (who was a thoroughly good-natured man, and as active a creature about everything but his own affairs as ever existed, and never so happy as when he was busy about something that never could be of any profit to him) set to work at the petition, invented it, engrossed it on an immense sheet of paper, spread it out on a table, and appointed a time for all the members, and all within the walls if they chose, to come up to his room, and sign it.

When I heard of this approaching ceremony, I was so anxious to see them all come in, one after another, I knew the greater part of them already, and they me, that I got an hour's leave of absence from Murdstone and Grinby's, and established myself in a corner for that purpose. As many of the principal members of the club as could be got into the small room without filling it supported Mr. Micawber in front of the petition, while my old friend Captain Hopkins (who had washed himself to do honor to so solemn an occasion) stationed himself close to it, to read it to all who were unacquainted with its contents. The door was then thrown open, and the general population began to come in, in a long file: several waiting outside, while one entered, affixed his signature, and went out. To everybody in succession, Captain Hopkins said: "Have you read it?"—"No." "Would you like to hear it read?" If he weakly showed the least disposition to hear it, Captain Hopkins, in a loud sonorous voice, gave him every word of it. The Captain would have read it twenty thousand times, if twenty thousand people would have heard him, one by one. I remember a certain luscious roll he gave to such phrases as "The people's representatives in Parliament assembled," "Your petitioners therefore humbly approach your honorable house," "His gracious Majesty's unfortunate subjects," as if the words were something real in his mouth, and delicious to taste: Mr. Micawber, meanwhile, listening with a little of an author's vanity, and contemplating (not severely) the spikes on the opposite wall.

As I walked to and fro daily between South-
bushel or so of apples, a pair of jet ear-rings, some Spanish onions, a box of dominoes, a canary bird and cage, and a leg of pickled pork.

Mr. Barkis's woolen, as I remember it, was altogether of a very peculiar kind. He very seldom said anything; but would sit by the fire in much the same attitude as he sat in his cart, and stare heavily at Peggotty, who was opposite. One night, being, as I suppose, inspired by love, he made a dart at the bit of wax candle she kept for her thread, and put it in his waistcoat-pocket and carried it off. After that, his great delight was to produce it when it was wanted, sticking to the lining of his pocket, in a partially melted state, and pocket it again when it was done with. He seemed to enjoy himself very much, and not to feel at all called upon to talk. Even when he took Peggotty out for a walk on the flats, he had no uneasiness on that head, I believe; contenting himself with now and then asking her if she was pretty comfortable; and I remember that sometimes, after he was gone, Peggotty would throw her apron over her face, and laugh for half-an-hour. Indeed, we were all more or less amused, except that miserable Mrs. Gummidge, whose countenance would appear to have been of an exactly parallel nature, she was so continually reminded by these transactions of the old one.

At length, when the term of my visit was nearly expired, it was given out that Peggotty and Mr. Barkis were going to make a day's holiday together, and that little Em'ly and I were to accompany them. I had but a broken sleep the night before, in anticipation of the pleasure of a whole day with Em'ly. We were all as active in the morning; and while we were yet at breakfast, Mr. Barkis appeared in the distance, driving a chaise-cart toward the object of his affections. Peggotty was dressed as usual, in her neat and quiet mourning; but Mr. Barkis bloomed in a new blue coat, of which the tailor had given him such good measure, that the cuffs would have rendered gloves unnecessary in the coldest weather, while the collar was so high that it pushed his hair up on end on the top of his head. His bright buttons, too, were of the largest size. Rendered complete by drab pantaloons and a buff waistcoat, I thought Mr. Barkis a phenomenon of respectability.

When we were all in a bustle outside the door, I found that Mr. Peggotty was prepared with an old shoe, which was to be thrown after us for luck, and which he offered to Mrs. Gummidge for that purpose.

"No, it had better be done by somebody else, Dan'l," said Mrs. Gummidge. "I'm a lone lorn creature myself, and everything that reminds me of creatures that ain't lone and lorn, goes contrary with me."

"Come, old gal!" cried Mr. Peggotty. "Take and have it."

"No, Dan'l," returned Mrs. Gummidge, whispering and shaking her head. "If I felt less, I could do more. You don't feel like me, Dan'l; thinks don't go contrary with you, nor you with them; you had better do it yourself."

But here Peggotty, who had been going about from one to another in a hurried way, kissing everybody, called out from the cart, in which we all were by this time (Em'ly and I on two little chairs, side by side), that Mrs. Gummidge must do it. So Mrs. Gummidge did it; and, I am sure to relate, cast a damp upon the festive character of our departure, by immediately bursting into tears, and sinking subdued into the arms of Ham, with the declaration that she knew she was a burden, and had better be carried to the Horse and Jockey once. Which I really thought was a sensible hint, that Ham might have acted on.

Away we went, however, on our holiday excursion; and the first thing we did was to stop at a church, where Mr. Barkis tied the horse to some rails, and went in with Peggotty, leaving little Em'ly and me alone in the chaise. I took that occasion to put my arm round Em'ly's waist, and propose that as I was going away so very soon, we should determine to be very affectionate to one another, and very happy, all day. Little Em'ly consenting, and allowing me to kiss her, I became desperate; informing her, I recollect, that I never could love another, and that I was prepared to shed the blood of anybody who should aspire to her affections.

How merry little Em'ly made herself about it! With what a demure assumption of being immensely older and wiser than I, the fairy little woman said I was a "silly boy," and then laughed so charmingly that I forgot the pain of being called by that disparaging name, in the pleasure of looking at her.

Mr. Barkis and Peggotty were a good while in the church, but came out at last, and then we drove away into the country. As we were going along, Mr. Barkis turned to me, and said, with a wink,—by-the-bye, I should hardly have thought, before, that he could wink:

"What name was it as I wrote up in the cart?"

"Clara Peggotty," I answered.

"What name would it be as I should write up now, if there was a tilt here?"

"Clara Peggotty, again?" I suggested.

"Clara Peggotty Barkis!" he returned, and burst into a roar of laughter that shook the chaise.

In a word, they were married, and had gone into the church for no other purpose. Peggotty was resolved that it should be quietly done; and the clerk had given her away, and there had been no witnesses of the ceremony. She was a little confused when Mr. Barkis made this abrupt announcement of their union, and could not get an enough in token of her unimpaired affection; but she soon became herself again, and said she was very glad it was over.

We drove to a little inn in a by-road, where we were expected, and where we had a very comfortable dinner, and passed the day with great satisfaction. If Peggotty had been married ever
voting himself wholly to his duties—not the least hint of my ever being anything else than the common drudge into which I was fast settling down.

The very next day showed me, while my mind was in the first agitation of what it had conceived, that Mrs. Micawber had not spoken of their going away without warrant. They took a lodging in the house where I lived, for a week; at the expiration of which they were to start for Plymouth. Mr. Micawber himself came down to the counting-house, in the afternoon, to tell Mr. Quilp that he must relinquish me on the day of his departure, and to give me a high character, which I am sure I deserved. And Mr. Quilp, calling in Tipp the carman, who was a married man, and had a room to let, quartered me prospectively on him—by our mutual consent, as he had every reason to think; for I said nothing, though my resolution was now taken.

I passed my evenings with Mr. and Mrs. Micawber, during the remaining term of our residence under the same roof; and I think we became fonder of one another as the time went on. On the last Sunday, they invited me to dinner; and we had a loin of pork and apple-sauce, and a pudding. I had bought a spotted wooden horse over night as a parting gift to little Wilkins Micawber—that was the boy—and a doll for little Emma. I had also bestowed a shilling on the Orfing, who was about to be disbanded.

We had a very pleasant day, though we wore all in a tender state about our approaching separation.

"I shall never, Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "revert to the period when Mr. Micawber was in difficulties, without thinking of you. Your conduct has always been of the most delicate and obliging description. You have never been a lodger. You have been a friend."

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "Copperfield," for so he had been accustomed to call me of late, "has a heart to feel for the distresses of his fellow-creatures when they are behind a cloud, and a head to plan, and a hand to—in short, a general ability to dispose of such available property as could be made away with."

I expressed my sense of this commendation, and said I was very sorry we were going to lose one another.

"My dear young friend," said Mr. Micawber, "I am older than you; a man of some experience in life, and—and of some experience, in short, in difficulties, generally speaking. At present, and until something turns up (which I am, I may say, hourly expecting), I have nothing to bestow but advice. Still my advice is so far worth taking that—in short, that I have never taken it myself, and am the"—here Mr. Micawber, who had been beaming and smiling, all over his head and face, up to the present moment, checked himself and frowned—"the miserable wretch you behold."

"My dear Micawber," urged his wife.

"I say," returned Mr. Micawber, quite forget-
bushel or so of apples, a pair of jet ear-rings, some Spanish onions, a box of dominos, a canary bird and cage, and a leg of pickled pork.

Mr. Barkis's wooing, as I remember it, was altogether of a very peculiar kind. He very seldom said anything; but would sit by the fire in much the same attitude as he sat in his cart, and stare heavily at Peggotty, who was opposite. One night, being, as I suppose, inspired by love, he made a dart at the bit of wax candle she kept for her thread, and put it in his waistcoat-pocket and carried it off. After that, his great delight was to produce it when it was wanted, sticking to the lining of his pocket, in a partially melted state, and pocket it again when it was done with. He seemed to enjoy himself very much, and not to feel at all called upon to talk. Even when he took Peggotty out for a walk on the flats, he had no uneasiness on that head. I believe; contenting himself with now and then asking her if she was pretty comfortable; and I remember that sometimes, after he was gone, Peggotty would throw her apron over her face, and laugh for half-an-hour. Indeed, we were all more or less amused, except that miserable Mrs. Gummidge, whose courtship would appear to have been of an exactly parallel nature, she was so continually reminded by these transactions of the old one.

At length, when the term of my visit was nearly expired, it was given out that Peggotty and Mr. Barkis were going to make a day's holiday together, and that little Emly and I were to accompany them. I had but a broken sleep the night before, in anticipation of the pleasure of a whole day with Emly. We were all astir betimes in the morning; and while we were yet at breakfast, Mr. Barkis appeared in the distance, driving a chaise-cart toward the object of his affections.

Peggotty was dressed as usual, in her neat and quiet mourning; but Mr. Barkis bloomed in a new blue coat, of which the tailor had given him such good measure, that the cuffs would have rendered gloves unnecessary in the coldest weather, while the collar was so high that it pushed his hair up on end on the top of his head. His bright buttons, too, were of the largest size. Rendered complete by drab pantaloons and a buff waistcoat, I thought Mr. Barkis a phenomenon of respectability.

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We drove to a little inn in a bye road, where we were expected, and where we had a very comfortable dinner, and passed the day with great satisfaction. If Peggotty had been married every
Peggotty's Wedding-Day.

... for the last ten years, she could hardly have any more at her case about it; it made no sort of difference in her; she was just the same as ever, and went out for a stroll with little Em'ly at me before tea, while Mr. Barkis philosophically smoked his pipe, and enjoyed himself, I suppose, with the contemplation of his happiness. So, it sharpened his appetite; for I distinctly felt to mind that, although he had eaten a good deal of pork and greens at dinner, and had finished with a fowl or two, he was obliged to have... 

I have often thought since what an odd, innocent, out-of-the-way kind of wedding it must have been! We got into the chaise again soon after dark, and drove cosily back, looking up at the stars, and talking about them. They were their chief opponent, and opened Mr. Barkis's mind to an amazing extent. I told him all I knew, but he would have believed anything I might have taken into my head to impart to him; for he had profound veneration for my abilities, and informed his wife in my hearing, on that very occasion, that... he was a young Roseshin—by which I think he meant prodigy.

When we had exhausted the subject of the stars, or rather when I had exhausted the mental qualities of Mr. Barkis, little Em'ly and I made a break of an old wrapper, and sat under it for the rest of the journey. Ah, how I loved her! What happiness (I thought) if we were married, and were going away anywhere to live among the pines and in the fields, never growing older, never growing wiser, children ever, rambling hand in hand through sunshine and among flowery meadows, laying down our heads on moss at night, in a sweet sleep of purity and peace, and buried by the birds when we were dead! Some sweet picture, with no real world in it, bright with the light of our innocence, and vague as the stars off in my mind all the way. I was glad to think there were two such guileless hearts at Peggotty's marriage as little Em'ly's and mine. I was glad to think the Loves and Graces took such airy forms in its homely procession.

Well, we came to the old boat again in good time at night, and there Mr. and Mrs. Barkis bade us good-bye, and drove away snugly to their own home. I felt then, for the first time, that I had lost Peggotty. I should have gone to bed with a bare heart indeed under any other roof but that which sheltered little Em'ly's head.

Mr. Peggotty and Ham knew what was in my thoughts as well as I did, and were ready with some supper and their hospitable faces to drive it away. Little Em'ly came and sat beside me on the locker for the only time in all that visit; and it was altogether a wonderful close to a wonderful day.

It was a night tide; and soon after we went to bed, Mr. Peggotty and Ham went out to fish. I felt very brave at being left alone in the solitary home, the protector of Em'ly and Mrs. Gum...
among them for the first time, with my trembling hand in Mr. Quinion's.

Murdstone and Grinby's trade was among a good many kinds of people; but an important branch of it was the supply of wines and spirits to certain packet ships. I forget now where they chiefly went, but I think there were some among them that made voyages both to the East and West Indies. I know that a large many empty bottles were one of the consequences of this traffic, and that certain men and boys were employed to examine them against the light, and reject those that were flawed, and to rinse and wash them. When the empty bottles ran short, there were labels to be pasted on full ones, or corks to be fitted to them, or seals to be put upon the corks, or finished bottles to be packed in cases. All this work was my work, and of the boys employed upon it I was one.

There were three or four of us, counting me. My working place was established in a corner of the warehouse, where Mr. Quinion could see me, when he chose to stand up on the bottom rail of his stool in the counting-house, and look at me through a window above the desk. Either, on the first morning of my suspiciously beginning life on my own account, the eldest of the regular boys was summoned to show me my business. His name was Mick Walker, and he wore a ragged apron and a paper cap. He informed me that his father was a bargeman, and walked, in a black velvet head-dress, in the Lord Mayor's Show. He also informed me that our principal associate would be another boy whom he introduced to me—extraordinary name of Mealy Potatoes. I discovered, however, that this youth had not been christened by that name, but that it had been bestowed upon him in the warehouse, on account of his complexion, which was pale or mealy. Mealy's father was a waterman, who had the additional distinction of being a fireman, and was engaged as such at one of the large theatres, where some young relation of Mealy's—I think his little sister—did Imps in the Pantomimes.

No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship; compared these henceforth every-day associates with those of my happier childhood—not to say with Steerforth, Traddles, and the rest of those boys; and felt my hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man crushed in my bosom. The deep remembrance of the sense I had, of being utterly without hope now; of the shame I felt in my position; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe that day by day what I had learned, and thought, and delighted in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up to, would pass away from me, a little by little, never to be brought back any more; cannot be written. As often as Mick Walker went away in the course of that forenoon, I mingled my tears with the water in which I was washing the bottles; and sobbed as if there were a flaw in my own breast, and it were in danger of bursting.

The counting-house clock was at twelve, and there was general preparatory to dinner, when Mr. Quinion tapped on the counting-house window, and beckoned in. I went in, and found there a stout, dle-aged person, in a brown surtout, and tights and shoes, with no more hair upon his face, which he turned full upon me. He was shabby, but he had an imposing shi-

"This," said Mr. Quinion, in allusion to me, "is he.

"This," said the stranger, with a certain descending roll in his voice, and a certain form in his air of doing something genteel, which impressed me very much, "is Master Copperfield! I hope I see you well, sir?"

I said I was very well, and hoped he was sufficiently ill at ease, Heaven know it was not in my nature to complain made up my time of my life, so I said I was very well, I hoped he was,

"I am," said the stranger, "thank you, quite well. I have received a letter from Mrs. Stonemason, in which he mentions that he would like me to receive an apartment in the rooms of the house, which is at present unoccupied—short, to be let as a—In short," said the stranger, "with a smile and a burst of confidence, the young beginner whom I find the pleasure to—" and the stranger went on, and settled his chin in his shirt-col lared.

"This is Mr. Micawber," said Mr. Quinion, "to Mr. Murdstone. He takes orders in commission, when he can get any. He is written to by Mr. Murdstone, on the subject of your lodgings, and he will receive you as a lodger."

"My address," said Mr. Micawber, "is no Terrace, City Road. I—in short," said Mr. Micawber, with the same gentility of air, "in a burst of confidence—" I live there;"

I made him a bow.

"Under the impression," said Mr. Micawber, "that your peregrinations in this metropolis are not yet devoid of exertion, and that you have some difficulty in penetrating the Modern Babylon in the direction of City Road—in short," said Mr. Micawber, in a burst of confidence, "that you might like to come and see me—" I shall be happy to call this evening, and call you in the knowledge of the nearest;

I thanked him with all my heart, and friendly in him to offer to take that way.
very honest little creature, and unwilling the memory I was going to leave at Murdstone and Grinby’s, I com-
sidered I had paid a week’s wages in
ten I came there, not to present
the counting-house at the usual hour,
my slip. For this express reason,
said he, when I turn to be paid, to say to Mr. Quilp
then to draw his money, I shook
by the hand; and, when it
waiting in the warehouse to be paid, the
in my fly to put on the box, after I should
the half-guinea, that I might not
ran away as if he, my box, the cart, and the
donkey, were all equally mad; and I was quite
out of breath with running and calling after him,
when I caught him at the place appointed.

Being much flushed and excited, I tumbled my
half-guinea out of my pocket in pulling the card
out. I put it in my mouth for safety, and though
my hands trembled a good deal, had just tied
the card on very much to my satisfaction, when I
felt myself violently scratched under the chin by
the long legged young man, and saw my half-guin-
eas fly out of my mouth into his hand.

“Wot!” said the young man, seizing me by
my jacket collar, with a frightful grin. “This is
a polls case, is it? You’re a-going to bolt, are
you? Come to the polls, you young warmin,
come to the polls!”

“You give me my money back, if you please,”
said I, “you very much frightened; and leave me
alone.”

“Come to the polls!” said the young man.
“You shall prove it yourself to the polls.”

“Give me my box and money, will you?” I
cried, bursting into tears.

The young man still replied: “Come to the polls!” and was dragging me against the donkey
in a violent manner, as if there were any affinity
between that animal and a magistrate, when he
changed his mind, jumped into the cart, sat upon
my box, and, exclaiming that he would drive to
the polls straight, rattled away harder than ever.

I ran after him as fast as I could, but I had no
breath to call out with, and should not have dared
to call out, now, if I had. I narrowly escaped
being run over, twenty times at least, in half a
mile. Now I lost him, now I saw him again; now
I lost him, now I was cut off with a whip, now
shouted at, now down in the mud, now up again,
now running into somebody’s arms, now running
headlong at a post. At last, confused by fright
and heat, and doubting whether half London
might not by this time be turning out for my
sake, I left the young man to go where
he would with my box and money; and, panting
and crying, but never stopping, faced about for
Greenwich, which I had understood was on the
Dover Road; taking very little more out of the
world, towards the retreat of my aunt, Miss
Betsy, than I had brought into it, on the night
when my arrival gave her so much umbrage.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SEQUEL OF MY RESOLUTION.

For anything I know, I may have had some
wild idea of running all the way to Dover, when
I gave up the pursuit of the young man with the
donkey-cart, and started for Greenwich. My
scattered senses were soon collected as to that
point; for I had, for I came to a stop in the Kent
Road, at a terrace with a piece of water before it,
and a great foolish image in the middle, blowing
a dry shell. Here I sat down on a door-step,
quite spent and exhausted with the effects I had
an hour afterwards, he would polish up his shoes with extraordinary pains, and go out, humming a tune with a greater air of gentility than ever. Mrs. Micawber was quite as elastic; I have known her to be thrown into fainting fits by the king's taxes at three o'clock, and to eat lamb chops baked, and drink warm ale (paid for with two spennings that had gone to the pawnbroker's) at four. On one occasion, when an execution had just been put in, coming home through some chance as early as six o'clock, I saw her lying (of course with a twin) under the grate in a swoon, with her hair all torn about her face; but I never knew her more cheerful than she was, that very same night, over a real cutlet before the kitchen fire, telling me stories about her papa, and mamma, and the company they used to keep.

In this house, and with this family, I passed my leisure time. My own exclusive breakfast of a penny loaf and a pennypiece of milk, I provided myself. I kept another small loaf, and a medium of cheese, on a particular shelf of a particular cupboard, to make my supper on when I came back at night. This made the rent in the six or seven shillings, I know well; and I was out at the warehouse all day, and had to support myself on that money all the week. From Monday morning until Saturday night, I had no advice, no counsel, no encouragement, no consolation, no assistance, no support, of any kind, from any one, that I can call to mind, as I hope to go to heaven!

I was so young and childless, and so little qualified—how could I be otherwise?—to undertake the whole charge of my own existence, that often, in going to Mudstone and Grinby's, of a morning, I could not resist the stale pastry put out for sale at half-price at the pastrymaker's doors, and spent in that the money I should have kept for my dinner. Then, I went without my dinner, or bought a roll or a slice of pudding. I remember two pudding-shops, between which I was divided, according to my finances. One was in a court close by St. Paul's Church; the other in the back of the church, which is now removed altogether. The pudding at that shop was made of currants, and was rather a special pudding, but was dear, twopennyworth not being larger than a pennypiece of more ordinary pudding. A good shop for the latter was in the Strand—somewhere in that part which has been rebuilt since. It was a stout pale pudding, heavy and flabby, and with great flat raisins in it, stuck in whole at wide distances apart. It came up hot at about my time every day, and many a day did I dive off it. When I dined regularly and handsomely, I had a savoy-cabbage, or a fourpenny plate of red beef from a cook's shop; or a plate of bread and cheese and a glass of beer, from a miserable old public-house opposite our place of business, called the Lion, or the Lion and something else that I have forgotten. Once, I remember carrying my own bread (which I had brought from home in the morning) under my arm, wrapped in a piece of paper, like a book, and going to a famous hamloce beef-house near Drury Lane, and ordering a 'small plate' delicacy to eat with it. What the waiter of such a strange little apparition could alone, I don't know; but I left the house, dining with me as I ate my dinner, and bringing another waiter to look. I gave him a halfpenny, and I wish he hadn't taken it.

We had half-an-hour, I think, for tea. I had money enough, I used to get half-ready-made coffee and a slice of bread and butter. When I had none, I used to look at a window in Fleet-street; or I have strolled, at such a rate, as far as Covent Garden, and stumped through the apple-stalls, because it was a mysterious place those dark arches. I see myself emerging from some of these arches, on a public-house close to the river, with an open window before it, where some coal-heavers were sitting, to look at whom I sat down upon a bench wondering what they thought of me!

I was such a child, and so little that for a month when I went into the bar of a strange public-house, for a glass of beer or porter, to make my dinner, they had far for dinner, they were afraid to give it to me; I remember one hot evening I went into the public-house, and said to the landlord:

"What is your best—your very best glass?" For it was a special occasion, I knew what it may have been my birth.

"Twopence-halfpenny," says the landlord; "the price of the Genuine Stinking ale.

"Then," says I, producing the money, "draw me a glass of the Genuine Stinking ale, please, with a good head to it!"

The landlord looked at me in return bar, from head to foot, with a strange enquiring face; and instead of drawing the beer, round the screen and said something to the man who came out from behind it, with her work, and joined him in surveying me. He stood, all three, before me now. The last thing was his shirt along the back of the frame; his wife looking over the little boy and I, in some confusion, looking up at the outside the partition. They asked me many questions; as, what my name was, how I was employed, how I came there. To all of which, that commit nobody, I invented, I am afraid, a good number; they served me with such answers as I suspected it was not the genuine: and the landlord's wife, opening the half-door of the bar, and bending down, took my money back, and gave me a kiss that I admire, and half compassionate, but all laugh, and I am sure.

I know I do not exaggerate, unconsidered unthinkingly, the staunchness of my resolve; the difficulties of my life. I know that the circumstances were given me by Mr. Quilp, and I spent it in a dinner or a tea. I know that I from morning until night, with common boys, a struggling child. I know have
Mrs. Micawber takes me into her confidence.

MRS. MICAWBER TAKES ME INTO HER CONFIDENCE.

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... that, but for the mercy of God, I might have been, for any care that was taken of title robber or a little vagabond.

I held some station at Murdstone and a too. Besides that Mr. Quinion did what a man so occupied, and dealing with a cimonous man, could, to treat me as one different footing from the rest, I never man or boy, how it was that I came to be grown and to have the least reflection of being sorry was there. That I suffered in secret, and suffered exquisitely, no one ever knew but myself, and that, as I have said, utterly beyond power to tell. But I took my own counsel, and I did my work. I knew at first, that if I could not do my work as well as if the rest, I could not hold myself above and contempt. I soon became at least as honest and as skilful as either of the other. Though perfectly familiar with them, my manner and were different enough from each other. They and the narrated spoke of me as "the little gent," young Suffolker." A certain man named ; who was foreman of the packers, and named Tipp, who was the carman, and red jacket, used to address me. It was then that I can tell me sometimes vid, but I think it was mostly when we were confidential, and when I had made some attempt to unmask or to discover my work, with suits of the old readings; which were fast out of my remembrance. Melly Potatoes once, and rebelled against my being so dishonoured; but I think I did. 

I rescued from thie kind of existence I conquit hopeless, and abandoned, as such, her. I am solemnly convinced that I never hour was reconciled to it, or was otherwise miserably unhappy; but I bore it; and Peggotty, partly for the love of her and her shame, never in any letter (though many between us) revealed the truth.

Micawber's difficulties were an addition to tressed state of my mind. In my forlorn became quite attached to the family, and walk about, busy with Mrs. Micawber's trades of ways and means, and heavy with shillings in my pocket, looking into the and thinking what such a sum would buy, nly because I went home early,—Mrs. Mi would make the most heart-rending con to me; also on a Sunday morning, when the portion of tea or coffee I had bought, in a little shaving-pot, and sat late at ufast. It was nothing at all unusual for awber to sob violently at the beginning of nes Saturday night conversations, and sing nack's delight being his lovely Nan, tow end of it. I have known him come home to supper with a flood of tears, and a declaration that nothing was now left but jail; and go to bed making a calculation of the expense of putting bow-windows to the house, "in case anything turned up," which was his favorite expression. And Mrs. Micawber was just the same.

A curious equality of friendship, originating, in our respective circumstances, sprung up between me and these people notwithstanding the ludicrous disparity in our years. But I never allowed myself to be prevailed upon to accept any invitation to eat and drink with them out of their stock (knowing that they got on badly with the butcher and baker, and had often not too much for themselves), until Mrs. Micawber took me into her entire confidence. This she did one evening as follows:

"Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "I make no stranger of you, and therefore do not hesitate to say that Mrs. Micawber's difficulties are coming to a crisis."

It made me very miserable to hear it, and I looked at Mrs. Micawber's red eyes with the utmost sympathy.

"With the exception of the heel of a Dutch cheese—which is not adapted to the wants of a young family"—said Mrs. Micawber, "there is really not a scrap of anything in the larder. I was accustomed to speak of the larder when I lived with papa and mamma, and I used the word almost unconsciously. What I mean to express is, that there is nothing to eat in the house."

"Dear me!" I said, in great concern.

I had two or three shillings of my week's money in my pocket—from which I presume that it must have been on a Wednesday night when we held this conversation—and I hastily produced them, and with heartfelt emotion begged Mrs. Micawber to accept them as a loan. But that lady, kissing me, and making me put them back in my pocket, replied that she couldn't think of it.

"No, my dear Master Copperfield," said she, "far be it from my thoughts! But you have a discretion beyond your years, and can render me another kind of service, if you will; and a service I will thankfully accept of."

I begged Mrs. Micawber to name it.

"I have parted with the plate myself," said Mrs. Micawber. "Six tea, two salt, and a pair of sugars, I have at different times borrowed money on, in secret, with my own hands. But the twine are a great tie; and to me, with my recollections of papa and mamma, these transactions are very painful. There are still a few trifles that we could part with. Mr. Micawber's feelings would never allow him to dispose of them; and Clinkett—this was the girl from the workhouse—being of a vulgar mind, would take painful liberties if so much confidence was reposed in her. Master Copperfield, if I might ask you—"

I understood Mrs. Micawber now, and begged her to make use of me to any extent. I began to dispose of the more portable articles of property.
that very evening; and went out on a similar expedition almost every morning, before I went to Mudstone and Grinby’s.

Mr. Micawber had a few books on a little chiffonier, which he called the library; and those went first. I carried them, one after another, to a bookstall in the City Road—one part of which, near our house, was almost all bookstalls and bird-shops then—and sold them for whatever they would bring. The keeper of this bookstall, who lived in a little house behind it, used to get tipsy every night, and to be violently scolded by his wife every morning. More than once, when I went there early, I had audience of him in a turn-up bedstead, with a cut in his forehead or a black eye, bearing witness to his excesses over night (I am afraid he was quarrelsome in his drink), and he with a shaking hand, endeavoring to find the needful shillings in one or other of the pockets of his clothes, which lay upon the floor, while his wife, with a baby in her arms and her shoes down at heel, never left off rating him. Sometimes he had lost his money, and then he would ask me to call again; but his wife had always got somehow had taken his, I dare say, while he was drunk—and secretly completed the bargain on the stairs, as we went down together.

At the pawnbroker’s shop, too, I began to be very well known. The principal gentleman who officiated behind the counter, took a good deal of notice of me; and often got me, I recollect, to deliver a Latin noun or adjective, or to conjugate a Latin verb, in his ear, while he transacted my business. After all these occasions Mrs. Micawber made a little treat, which was generally a supper; and there was a peculiar relish in these meals which I well remember.

At last Mr. Micawber’s difficulties came to a crisis, and he was arrested early one morning, and carried over to the King’s Bench Prison in the Borough. He told me, as he went out of the house, that the God of day had now gone down upon him—and I really thought his heart was broken and mine too. But I heard, afterwards, that he was seen to play a lively game at skittles, before noon.

On the first Sunday after he was taken there, I was to go and see him, and have dinner with him. I was to ask my way to such a place, and just short of that place I should see such another place, and just short of that I should see a yard, which I was to cross, and keep straight on until I saw a turnkey. All this I did; and when at last I did see a turnkey (poor little fellow that I was), and thought how, when Roderick Random was in a debtors’ prison, there was a man there with nothing on him but an old rug, the turnkey swam before my dimmed eyes and my beating heart.

Mr. Micawber was waiting for me within the gate, and we went up to his room (top story but one), and cried very much. He solemnly conﬁrmed me, I remember, to take warning by his fate; and to observe that if a man had twenty pounds a year for his income, and spent nineteen shillings and sixpence, he was py, but that if he spent twenty pounds would be miserable. After which he shilling of me for porter, gave me a we on Mrs. Micawber for the amount, and his pocket-handkerchief, and cheered it.

We sat before a little ﬁre, with two within the rusted grate, one on each side, and its burning too many coals; and debtor, who shared the room with Mr. came in from the bakewell with the luncheon which was our joint-stock repast, the sent up to “Captain Hopkins” in the head, with Mr. Micawber’s complaint was his young friend, and would Captain lend me a knife and fork.

Captain Hopkins lent me the knife with his compliments to Mr. Micawber was a very dirty lady in his little room of the girls, his daughters, with shock hair. I thought it was better to borrow Cap kins’s knife and fork, than Captain comb. The Captain himself was in the hurry of young, with large while an old, old brown coat with no collar. I saw his bed rolled up in a cloth what plates and dishes and pots he had, and I divined (God knows how that two girls with the shock heads of Captain Hopkins’s children, the lady had married to Captain Hopkins. My hat on his threshold was not occupied by a couple of minutes at most; but I was again with all this in my knowledge, as the knife and fork were in my hand.

There was something gipsy-like about the door, after all. I took back Hopkins’s knife and fork early in the day, and went home to comfort Mrs. Micawber, the children, the Org Reed; and lived in these rooms night to have no idea for how long, though it seemed for a long time. At last Mrs. Micawber to move into the prison, where Mr. Micawber now secured a room to himself. So I key of the house to the landlord, who was glad to get it; and the beds were sent the King’s Bench, except mine, for which room was hired outside the walls in the hood of that Institution, very much to faction, since the Micawbers and I had to68

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I CHANGE MY LODGING.

a quiet back-garret with a sloping roof, and a pleasant prospect of a timber-yard, I took possession of it, with the reflection that my troubles had come to an end. I thought it quite a paradise.

I was working at Murdstone and Grinby's the same way, and with the same companions, and with the same unmerited degradation as at first. But I did not feel so alone, made a single friend, or spoke to any of the many boys we daily saw going to the warehouse, in the street, and in prowling about the streets. I led the same secretly unhappy life, led it in the same lonely, self-reliant manner that I was conscious of, that I had grown more shabby, and that I was now relieved of much of the care for lives or friends that I had engendered to help them, and they lived more comfortably than they had lived for a long time. I used to breakfast with them at my going in; but I know that was six o'clock, and that my favorite place in the interval was old London. Here I was wont to sit in one of the cases, watching the people go by, or to the balustrades at the sun shining in the lighting up the golden flame on the top of it. The Orfing met me here, to be told some astonishing fictions of the wharves and the Tower; of which no more than that I hope I believed it. In the evening I used to go back, and walk up and down the parade.

I was a thoroughly good-natured man, and as active a creature about everything but his own affairs as ever existed, and never so happy as when he was busy about something that never could be of any profit to him) I set to work at the petition, invented it, engrossed it on an immense sheet of paper, spread it out on a table, and appointed a time for all the club, and all within the walls if they chose, to come up to his room, and sign it.

When I heard of this approaching ceremony, I was so anxious to see them all come in, one after another, though I knew the greater part of them already, and they me, that I got an hour's leave of absence from Murdstone and Grinby's, and established myself in a corner for that purpose. As many of the principal members of the club as could be got into the small room without filling it, supported Mr. Micawber in front of the petition, while my old friend Captain Hopkins (who had washed himself to do honor to so solemn an occasion) stationed himself close to it, to read it to all who were unacquainted with its contents. The door was then thrown open, and the general population began to come in, in a long file: several waiting outside, while one entered, affixed his signature, and went out. To everybody in succession, Captain Hopkins said: "Have you read it?"—"No." "Would you like to hear it read?" If he weakly showed the least disposition to hear it, Captain Hopkins, in a loud sonorous voice, gave him every word of it. The Captain would have read it twenty thousand times, if twenty thousand people would have heard him, one by one. I remember a certain luscious roll he gave to such phrases as "The people's representatives in Parliament assembled" "Your petitioners therefore humbly approach your honorable house," "His gracious Majesty's unfortunate subjects," as if the words were something real in his mouth, and delicious to taste: Mr. Micawber, meanwhile, listening with a little of an author's vanity, and contemplating (not severely) the spikes on the opposite wall.

As I walked to and fro daily between Southwark,
"No," I said, "Indeed." But suddenly remembering that in truth I came for no other purpose, I held my peace in confusion, and felt my face burn.

My aunt’s handmaid, as I supposed she was from what she had said, put her rice in a little basket and walked out of the shop; telling me that I could follow her; if I wanted to know where Miss Trotwood lived. I needed no second permission; though I was by this time in such a state of consternation and agitation, that my legs shook under me. I followed the young woman, and we soon came to a very neat little cottage with cheerful bow-windows; in front of it, a small square gravelled court or garden full of flowers, carefully tended, and smelling deliciously.

"This is Miss Trotwood’s," said the young woman. "Now you know; and that’s all I have got to say." With which words she hurried into the house, as if to shake off the responsibility of my appearance; and left me standing at the garden-gate, looking disconsolately over the top of it towards the parlor-window, where a muslin curtain partly undrawn in the middle, a large round green screen or fan fastened on to the window-sill, a small table, and a great chair, suggested to me that my aunt might be at that moment seated in awful state.

My shoes were by this time in a woeful condition. The soles had shed themselves bit by bit, and the upper leathers had broken and burst until the very shape and form of shoes had departed from them. My hat (which had served me for a night-cap, too) was so crushed and bent, that no old battered handleless sancepan on a dunghill need have been ashamed to vie with it. My shirt and trousers, stained with heat, dew, grass, and the Kentish soil on which I had slept—and torn besides—might have frightened the birds from my aunt’s garden, as I stood at the gate. My hair had known no comb or brush since I left London. My face, neck, and hands, from unaccustomed exposure to the air and sun, were burnt to a berry-brown. From head to foot I was powdered almost as white with chalk and dust, as if I had come out of a limekiln. In this plight, and with a strong consciousness of it, I waited to introduce myself to, and make my first impression on, my formidable aunt.

The unbroken stillness of the parlor-window leading me to infer, after a while, that she was not there, I lifted up my eyes to the window above it, where I saw a florid, pleasant-looking gentleman, with a grey head, who shunted up one eye in a grotesque manner, nodded his head at me several times, shook it at me as often, laughed, and went away.

I had been decomposed enough before; but I was so much the more decomposed by this unexpected behavior, that I was on the point of shrinking off, to think how I had best proceed, when there came out of the house a lady with her handkerchief tied over her cap, and a pair of greening gloves on her hands, wearing a gardener’s pocket, like a toll-man’s apron, and a great knife. I knew her immediately to be Miss Betsey, for she came stalking out of the house exactly as my poor mother had so described her stalking up our garden at Blakeney.

"Go away!" said Miss Betsey, shaking her head, and making a distant chop in the air with her knife. "Go along! No boys here!"

I watched her, with my heart at my lips, as she marched to a corner of her garden, stopped to dig up some little root there, then, without a scrap of courage, but with a gust of desperation, I went softly in and stood near her, touching her with my finger.

"If you please, ma’am," I began.

She started and looked up.

"If you please, aunt," I said.

"Er?" exclaimed Miss Betsey, in a tone of amazement I have never heard approached.

"If you please, aunt, I am your nephew.

"Oh, Lord!" said my aunt. And sat down in the garden-path.

"I am David Copperfield, of Blunderstone Rookery—where you came, on the night we were born, and saw my dear mamma. I have never been happy since she died. I have a slighted, and taught nothing, and thrown myself, and put to work not fit for me. It is me run away to you. I was robbed at first, and have walked all the way, and never slept in a bed since I began the journey. Here my self-support gave way all at once, with a movement of my hands, intended to strangle my ragged state, and call in witnesses. I had suffered something, I broke into a pair of crying, which I suppose had been put within me all the week.

My aunt, with every sort of expression wondered from her conformation, the gravel, staring at me, until I began to when she got up in a great hurry, collared and took me into the parlor. Her first inquiry here was to unlock a tall press, bring down several bottles, and pour some of the contents into my mouth. I think they must have been taken out at random, for I am sure I have heard sweet, anchovy sauce, and salad dressing. When she had administered these restorers as I was still quite hysterical, and unable to move my legs, she put me on the sofa, with a handkerchief under my head, and the handkerchief of her own head under my feet, lest I should spill it overs; and then, sitting herself down both green fan or screen I have already mentioned that I could not see her face, ejaculated at intervals, "Mercy on us!" letting those exclamations off like minute guns.

After a time she rang the bell. "In said my aunt, when her servant came in.

"My dear, give my compliments to Mr. Dick, and say I wish to speak to him."

Jenett looked a little surprised to see me stiffly on the sofa (I was afraid to move)
imploring her to look up, and to be calm. The more he asked Mrs. Micawber to look up, the more she fixed her eyes on nothing; and the more he asked her to compose herself, the more wouldn't. Consequently Mr. Micawber was so overcome, that he mingled his tears with mine; until he begged me to do him the honor of taking a chair on the staircase, while he lay into bed. I would have taken my leave the night, but he would not hear of my doing so until the strangers’ bell should ring. So I sat in the staircase window, until he came out with his chair and joined me.

“How is Mrs. Micawber now, sir?” I said.

“Very low,” said Mr. Micawber, shaking his head; “re-action. Ah, this has been a dreadful night. We stand alone now—everything is gone past us!”

Mr. Micawber pressed my hand, and groaned, and shed tears. I was greatly touched, disappointed too, for I had expected that we would be quite happy on this happy and long-looked-for occasion. But Mr. and Mrs. Micawber were made for their old difficulties, I think, that they quite shipwrecked when they came to consider that they were released from them. All elasticity was departed, and I never saw a half so wretched as on this night; insomuch when the bell rang, and Mr. Micawber walked me to the lodge, and parted from me there, upon a blessing, I felt quite afraid to leave him himself, he was so profoundly miserable.

But through all the confusion and lowness of soul in which we had been, so unexpectedly to be involved, I plainly discerned that Mr. and Mrs. Micawber and their family were going away to London, and that a parting between us was at hand. It was in my walk home that night, in the sleepless hours which followed when I was in bed, that the thought first occurred to me—what I don’t know how it came into my head—what afterwards shaped itself into a settled resolution.

I had grown to be accustomed to the Micawbers, and had been so intimate with them in their stresses, and was so utterly friendless without them, that the prospect of being thrown upon a new shift for a lodging, and going once more among unknown people, was like being that most terrible theme turned adrift into my present life, with such knowledge of it ready made, as experience had taught me. All the sensitive feelings it wounded were, all the shame and misery it kept alive in my breast, became more poignant as I thought of this; and I determined that the life was unendurable.

But there was no hope of escape from it, unless escape was my own act, I knew quite well. I turned to Mr. Mardstone, and never heard from Miss Mardstone, and never went to Mr. Mardstone; but two or three paroles of— or mended clothes had come up for me, coupled to Mr. Quinlon, and in each there was a touch of paper to the effect that J. M. trusted or applied himself to business, and devoted himself wholly to his duties—not the least hint of my ever being anything else than the common drudge into which I was fast settling down.

The very next day showed me, while my mind was in the first agitation of what it had conceived, that Mrs. Micawber had not spoken of their going away without warrant. They took a lodging in the house where I lived, for a week; at the expiration of which time they were to start for Plymouth. Mr. Micawber himself came down to the counting-house, in the afternoon, to tell Mr. Quinlon that he must relinquish me on the day of his departure, and to give me a high character, which I am sure I deserved. And Mr. Quinlon, calling in Tipp the carman, who was a married man, and had a room to let, quartered me prospectively on him—by our mutual consent, as he had every reason to think; for I said nothing, though my resolution was now taken.

I passed my evenings with Mr. and Mrs. Micawber, during the remaining term of our residence under the same roof; and I think we became fonder of one another as the time went on. On the last Sunday, they invited me to dinner; and we had a loin of pork and apple-sauce, and a pudding. I had bought a spotted wooden horse over night as a parting gift to little Wilkins Micawber—that was the boy—and a doll for little Emma. I had also bestowed a shilling on the Orfing, who was about to be disbanded.

We had a very pleasant day, though we were all in a tender state about our approaching separation.

"I shall never, Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "revert to the period when Mr. Micawber was in difficulties, without thinking of you. Your conduct has always been of the most delicate and obliging description. You have never been a lodger. You have been a friend."

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "Copperfield," for so he had been accustomed to call me of late, "has a heart to feel for the distresses of his fellow-creatures when they are behind a cloud, and a head to plan, and a hand to—in short, a general ability to dispose of such available property as could be made away with."

I expressed my sense of this commendation, and said I was very sorry we were going to lose one another.

"My dear young friend," said Mr. Micawber, "I am older than you; a man of some experience in life, and—and of some experience, in short, in difficulties, generally speaking. At present, and until something turns up (which I am, I may say, hourly expecting), I have nothing to bestow but advice. Still my advice is so far worth taking that—in short, that I have never taken it myself, and am the"—here Mr. Micawber, who had been beaming and smiling, all over his head and face, up to the present moment, checked himself and frowned—"the miserable wretch you behold."

"My dear Micawber!" urged his wife.

"I say," returned Mr. Micawber, quite forget..."
being a very honest little creature, and unwilling to disgrace the memory I was going to leave behind me at Murstone and Grinby's, I confined myself bound to remain until Saturday; and, as I had been paid a week's wages in advance when I first came here, not to present myself in the counting-house at the usual hour, receiving my stipend. For this express reason, I borrowed the half-guineas, that I might not without a fund for my travelling expenses. Weekly, when the Saturday night came, and were all waiting in the warehouse to be paid, Tipp the carman, who always took precedence, went in first to draw his money, I shook a Walker by the hand; asked him, when it came to his turn to be paid, to say to Mr. Quin on I had gone to move my box to Tipp's; and, taking a last good night to Mealy Potatoes, ran.

My box was at my old lodging over the water, I had written a direction for it on the back of our address cards that we nailed on the door: "Master David, to be left till called for, at Coach Office, Dover." This I had in my last ready to put on the box, after I should get it out of the house; and as I went to my lodging, I looked about me for some one would help me to carry it to the booking-place.

There was a long-legged young man with a little empty donkey-cart, standing near the dock, in the Blackfriars Road, whose eye I met as I was going by, and who, addressing me as "Sixpen'orth of bad ha'pence," hoped should know him again to swear to."—In allusion, I have no doubt, to my staring at him. I hoped to assure him that I had not done so in manners, but uncertain whether he might or not like a job.

"Wot job?" said the long-legged young man.

"To move a box," I answered.

"Wot box?" said the long-legged young man.

I told him mine, which was down that street, and which I wanted him to take to the coach-office for sixpence.

"Done with you for a tanner!" said the long-legged young man, and directly got upon his cart, which was nothing but a large wooden tray on wheels, and rattled away at such a rate, that it was as much as I could do to keep pace with the donkey.

There was a defiant manner about this young man, and particularly about the way in which he gave straw as he spoke to me, that I did not much like; as the bargain was made, however, I led him up-stairs to the room I was leaving, we brought the box down, and put it on his cart.

Now, I was unwilling to put the direction on there, lest any of my landlord's family should know what I was doing, and detain me; so said to the young man that I would be glad it would stop for a minute, when he came to dead-wall of the King's Bench prison. The doors were no sooner out of my mouth, than he rattled away as if he, my box, the cart, and the donkey, were all equally mad; and I was quite out of breath with running and calling after him, when I caught him at the place appointed.

Being much flushed and excited, I tumbled my half-guinea out of my pocket in pulling the card out. I put it in my mouth for safety, and though my hands trembled a good deal, had just tied the card on very much to my satisfaction, when I felt myself violently choked under the chin by the long-legged young man, and saw my half-guinea fly out of my mouth into his hand.

"Wot!" said the young man, seizing me by my jacket collar, with a frightful grin. "This is a pollis case, is it? You're a-going to bolt, are you? Come to the pollis, you young warmin, come to the pollis!"

"You give me my money back, if you please," said I, very much frightened; and leave me alone."

"Come to the pollis!" said the young man.

"You shall prove it yourn to the pollis."

"Give me my box and money, will you?" I cried, bursting into tears.

The young man still replied: "Come to the pollis!" and was dragging me against the donkey in a violent manner, as if there were any affinity between that animal and a magistrate, when he changed his mind, jumped into the cart, sat upon my box, and, exclaming that he would drive to the pollis straight, rattled away harder than ever.

I ran after him as fast as I could, but I had no breath to call out with, and should not have dared to call out, now, if I had. I narrowly escaped being run over, twenty times at least, in half a mile. Now I lost him, now I saw him, now I lost him, now I was cut at with a whip, now shouted at, now down in the mud, now up again, now running into somebody's arms, now running headlong at a post. At length, confused by fright and heat, and doubting whether half London might not by this time be turning out for my apprehension, I left the young man to go where he would with my box and money; and, panting and crying, but never stopping, faced about for Greenwich, which I had understood was on the Dover Road: taking very little more out of the world, towards the retreat of my aunt, Miss Betsey, than I had brought into it, on the night when my arrival gave her so much umbrage.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SEQUEL OF MY RESOLUTION.

For anything I know, I may have had some wild idea of running all the way to Dover, when I gave up the pursuit of the young man with the donkey-cart, and started for Greenwich. My scattered senses were soon collected as to that point, if I had; for I came to a stop in the Kent Road, at a terrace with a piece of water before it, and a great foolish image in the middle, glowing, a dry shell. Here I sat down on a door-step, quite spent and exhausted with the efforts I had
ting himself, and smiling again, "the miserable wretch you behold. My advice is, never do to-morrow what you can do to-day. Procrastination is the thief of time. Collar him!"

"My poor papa's maxim," Mrs. Micawber observed.

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "your papa was very well in his way, and Heaven forbid that I should disgrace him. Take him for all in all, we never shall—in short, make the acquaintance, probably, of anybody else possessing, at his time of life, the same legs for gaiters, and able to read the same description of print, without spectacles. But he applied that maxim to our marriage, my dear; and that was so far prematurely entered into, in consequence, that I never recovered the expense."

Mr. Micawber looked aside at Mrs. Micawber, and added: "Not that I am sorry for it. Quite the contrary, my love." After which he was grave for a minute or so.

"My other piece of advice, Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, "you know. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery. The blossom is blighted, the leaf is withered, the god of day goes down upon the dreary scene, and—in short you are for ever floored. As I am!"

To make his example the more impressive, Mr. Micawber drank a glass of punch with an air of great enjoyment and satisfaction, and whistled the College Hornpipe.

I did not fail to assure him that I would store these precepts in my mind, though indeed I had no need to do so, for, at the time, they affected me visibly. Next morning I met the whole family at the coach office, and saw them, with a desolate heart, take their places outside, at the back.

"Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "God bless you! I never can forget all that you know, and I never would if I could."

"Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, "farewell! Every happiness and prosperity! If, in the progress of revolving years, I could persuade myself that my blighted days had been a warning to you, I should feel that I had not occupied another man's place in existence altogether in vain. In case of anything turning up (of which I am rather confident), I shall be extremely happy if it should be in my power to improve your prospects."

I think, as Mrs. Micawber sat at the back of the coach, with the children, and I stood in the road looking wistfully at them, a mist cleared from her eyes, and she saw what a little creature I really was. I think so, because she beckoned to me to climb up, with quite a new and motherly expression in her face, and put her arm round my neck, and gave me just such a kiss as she might have given to her own boy. I had barely time to get down again before the coach started, and I could hardly see the family for the hand they waved. It was gone in a minute. Flinging and I stood looking vacantly at each other, and then shook hands good-bye; she going back, I suppose, to her own house, in Newgate Street."

"But with no intention of passing the weary days there. No. I had resolved away.—To go, by some means or other, into the country, to the only rotation I know, and tell my story to my aunt, Miss..."

I have already observed that I don't think this desperate idea came into my brain once there, it remained there; and hand, a purpose than which I have never entered more determined purpose in my life, from that I believed there was a hope in it, but my mind was thoroughly up that it must be carried into execution.

Again, and again, and a hundred times since the night when the thought had curred to me and banished sleep, I had gone that old story of my poor mother's birth, which I had been one of my great in the old time to hear her tell, and which by heart. My aunt walked into that a howl out of it, a drear and moral but there was one little trait in her which I liked to dwell on, and which some faint shadow of encouragement, not forget how my mother had thought felt her touch her pretty hair with no hand; and though it might have been a my mother's fancy, and might have had dation whatever in fact, I made a little out of it, of my terrible aunt relenting the girlish beauty that I recollected so loved so much, which softened the who tive. It is very possible that it had been a mind a long time, and had gradually on my determination.

As I did not even know where Miss lived, I wrote a long letter to Peggot, asked her, incidentally, if she remembered telling that I had heard of such a lady in certain place I named at random, and it duty to know if it were the same. In that letter, I told Peggot that I had an occasion for half a guinea; and that could lend me that sum until I could I should be very much obliged to her, as tell her afterwards what I wanted it for.

Peggot's answer soon arrived, and usual, full of affectionate devotion. She half guineas (I was afraid she must to world of trouble to get it out of Mr. box), and told me that Miss Betsy in Dover, but whether at Dover itself, at Sandgate, or Folkstone, she could not a of our men, however, informing me as as him about these places, that they were together. I deemed this enough for me, and resolved to set out at the end of that
Being a very honest little creature, and unwilling to disgrace the memory I was going to leave behind me at Murdstone and Grinby's, I conceived myself bound to remain until Saturday night; and, as I had been paid a week's wages in three days when I first came there, not to present myself in the counting-house at the usual hour, received my stipend. For this express reason, had borrowed the half-guinea, that I might not without a fund for my travelling expenses. Accordingly, when the Saturday night came, and we were all waiting in the warehouse to be paid, Tipp the carman, who always took precedence, went in first to draw his money, I shook hands with the landlord, when it was his turn to be paid, to say to Mr. Quinlon what I had gone to move my box to Tipp's; and, taking a last good night to Mealy Potatoes, ran away.

My box was at my old lodging over the water, and I had written a direction for it on the back of one of our address cards that we mailed on the quay: "Master David, to be left till called for, at Coach Office, Dover." This I had in my pocket ready to put on the box; after I should have got it out of the house; and as I went toward my lodging. I looked about me for some one who would help me to carry it to the booking-hall.

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There was a defiant manner about this young man, and particularly about the way in which he chewed straw as he spoke to me, that I did not much like; as the bargain was made, however, I took him upstairs to the room I was leaving, and we brought the box down, and put it on his cart. Now, I was unwilling to put the direction-card on there, lest any of my landlord's family should think what I was doing, and detain me; and so I said to the young man that I would be glad if he would stop for a minute, when he came to the dead-wall of the King's Bench prison. The words were no sooner out of my mouth, than he rattled away as if he, my box, the cart, and the donkey, were all equally mad; and I was quite out of breath with running and calling after him, when I caught him at the place appointed.

Being much flushed and excited, I tumbled my half-guinea out of my pocket in pulling the card out. I put it in my mouth for safety, and though my hands trembled a good deal, had just tied the card on very much to my satisfaction, when I felt myself violently checked under the chin by the long legged young man, and saw my half-guinea fly out of my mouth into his hand.

"Wot!" said the young man, seizing me by my jacket collar, with a frightful grin. "This is a police case, is it? You're a-going to bolt, are you? Come to the police, you young wretch, come to the police!"

"You give me my money back, if you please," said I, very much frightened; "and leave me alone."

"Come to the police!" said the young man. "You shall prove it yourself to the police."

"Give me my box and money, will you?" I cried, bursting into tears.

The young man still replied: "Come to the police!" and was dragging me against the donkey in a violent manner, as if there were any affinity between that animal and a magistrate, when he changed his mind, jumped into the cart, sat upon my box, and, explaining that he would drive to the police straight, rattled away harder than ever.

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It was by this time dark; I heard the clock strike ten, as I sat resting. But it was a summer night, fortunately, and fine weather. When I had recovered my breath, and had got rid of a stifling sensation in my throat, I rose up and went on. In the midst of my distress, I had no notion of going back. I doubt if I should have had any, though there had been a Swiss snow-drift in the Kent Road.

But my standing possessed of only three halfpence in the world (and I am sure I wonder how they came to be left in my pocket on a Saturday night) troubled me none the less because I went on. I began to picture to myself, as a scrap of newspaper intelligence, my being found dead in a day or two, under some hedge; and I trudged on miserably, though as fast as I could, until I happened to pass a little shop, where it was written up that ladies' and gentlemen's wardrobes were bought, and that the best price was given for rags, bones, and kitchen-stuff. The master of this shop was sitting at the door in his shirt sleeves, smoking; and as there were a great many coats and pairs of trousers dangling from the low ceiling, and only two feeble candles burning inside to show what they were, I fancied that he looked like a man of a revengeful disposition, who had hung all his enemies, and was enjoying himself.

My late experiences with Mr. and Mrs. Micawber suggested to me that here might be a means of keeping off the wolf for a little while. I went up the next bye-street, took off my waistcoat, rolled it neatly under my arm, and came back to the shop-door. "If you please, sir," I said, "I am to sell this for a fair price."

Mr. Dollopy—Dollopy was the name over the shop-door, at least—I took the waistcoat, stood his pipe on its head against the door-post, went into the shop, followed by me, snuffed the two candles with his fingers, spread the waistcoat on the counter, and looked at it there, held it up against the light, and looked at it there, and ultimately said:

"What do you call a price, now, for this here little waistcoat?"

"Oh! you know best, sir," I returned, modestly.

"I can't be buyer and seller too," said Mr. Dollopy. "Put a price on this here little waistcoat."

"Would eighteenpence be?"—I hinted, after some hesitation.

Mr. Dollopy rolled it up again, and gave it me back. "I should rob my family," he said, "if I was to offer ninepence for it."

This was a disagreeable way of putting the business; because it imposed upon me, a perfect stranger, the unpleasantness of asking Mr. Dollopy to rob his family on my account. My circumstances being so very pressing, however, I said I would take ninepence for it, if he pleased. Mr.

Dollopy, not without some grumbling, gave the price. I wished him good night, and walked of the shop, like richer by that sum, a poorer by a waistcoat. But when I buttoned my jacket, that was not much.

Indeed, I foresaw pretty clearly that my way to Dover in a shirt and of trousers, and might deem myself lucky even in that trim. But my mind run so much on this as might be supposed by a general impression of the distance, me, and of the young man with the donkey who had used me cruelly, I think I had an urgent sense of my difficulties when I once set off with my ninepence in my pocket.

A plan had occurred to me for past night, which I was going to carry into effect. This was, to lie behind the wall at the back of old school, in a corner where used hay-stack. I imagined it would be a kind pantry to have to keep, and the bedroom used to tell stories, so near me; other boys would know nothing of my being till the bedroom would yield me no shelter.

I had had a hard day's work, and was well jaded when I came climbing out, upon the level of Blackheath. It cost a little trouble to find out Salmon House; but I it and found a haystack in the corner, and down by it; having first walked round the haystack and looked up at the windows, and seen was dark and silent within. Never shall the lonely sensation of first lying down, a roof above my head!

Sleep came upon me as it came on many insinuations, against whom house-doors were and house-dogs barked, that night—and I of lying on my old school-bed, talking to in my room; and found myself sitting with Steerforth's name upon my lips, wild at the stars that were glistening and shining above me. When I remembered was at that unlimned hour, a feeling stole over me that made me get up, afraid of I don't know and walk about. But the fainter glanced the stars, and the pale light in the sky which day was coming, reassured me; and I being very heavy, I lay down again, and though with a knowledge in my sleep that cold—until the warm beams of the sun, the ring of the getting-up bell at Salmon woke me. If I could have hoped that there was there, I would have lurked about came out among; but I knew he must be long since. Treadles still remained, perhaps it was very doubtful; and I had no confidence in his discretion or good luck. Strong my reliance was on his good-nature I wish to trust him with my situation. So away from the wall as Mr. Creakle's boys, getting up, and struck into the long dust which I had first known to be the Dower when I was one of them, and when I the
sat any eyes would ever see me the way
now, upon it.
a different Sunday morning from the old
morning at Yarmouth! In due time I
heard the church-bells ringing, as I plodded on;
past people who were going to church; and
a church or two where the congregation
met, and the sound of singing came out
in a sweet melody, while the people sat and looked
at the shade of the porch, or stood beneath
the trees, with their hands to their foreheads, gazing
at the beauty of the day. But the peace and rest of
Sunday morning were on everything.

That was the difference. I felt quite
at home in my new surroundings, and enjoyed the
quiet picture I had conjured up, of my
future youth and beauty, weeping by the
side of an old man, and looking out at the world
with a tear in her eye. I hardly think
I had courage to go on until next day.

That Sunday, through the many miles of road,
neatly cut and well kept, the only marks of the
workman's art visible were a few small hills,
which increased until they became
mounds of earth, and then they were
covered with a thick growth of grass.

On the way I passed a small cottage,
where a child was playing. It was
the only house for miles around, and
the little girl seemed happy to see
a stranger pass by. She waved her
hand, and called out some words in
the language of the country. I smiled
and nodded in reply.

The sun was shining brightly in the sky,
and the air was full of the fragrance of flowers.
It was a beautiful day, and I felt
happy and contented.

This modesty of mine directed my attention
to the marine-store shops, and such shops as Mr.
Doloby's, in preference to the regular dealers.

At last I found one that I thought looked promising,
for the owner had a large store of
second-hand clothes, and seemed to be
busy all day. I entered the shop, and
began to look at the garments on display.

The shop was filled with old clothes,
and I was delighted to see so many
varieties to choose from. I walked
about the shop, examining each garment
in turn, and finally settled on a suit
that I liked. I paid for it, and
left the shop, feeling pleased with my
purchase.

I had no idea what to do next, but
decided to go back to the cottage and
see if I could find my way back to
my aunt's house. I asked the child
in the cottage for directions, and
she pointed me in the right direction.

I thanked her, and continued my journey,
with a feeling of happiness and
contentment in my heart.

The countryside was beautiful, and
the air was fresh and invigorating.
I enjoyed the walk, and
felt happy and at peace with the world.
an hour afterwards, he would polish up his shoes with extraordinary pains, and go out, humming a tune with a greater air of gentility than ever. Mrs. Micawber was quite as strict as I have known her to be thrown into flitting fits by the Idg's taxes at three o'clock, and to eat lambchops breaded, and drink warm ale (paid for with two tuppences that had gone to the pawnbroker's) at four. On one occasion, when an execution had just been put in, coming home through some chance as early as five o'clock, I saw her lying (of course with a smile) under the grate in a swoon, with her hair all torn about her face; but I never knew her more cheerful than she was, that very same night, over a real-cutlet before the kitchen fire, telling me stories about her papa, and mamma, and the company they used to keep.

In this house, and with this family, I passed my leisure time. My own exclusive breakfast of a penny loaf and a pennypiece of milk, I provided myself; I kept another small loaf, and a modicum of cheese, on a particular shelf of a particular cupboard, to make my supper when I came back at night. This was a luxury in the six or seven shillings I know well; and I was out at the warehouse all day, and had to support myself on that money all the week. From Monday morning until Saturday night, I had no advice, no counsel, no encouragement, no consolation, no assistance, no support, of any kind, from any one, that I can call to mind, as I hope to go to heaven.

I was so young and childish, and so little qualified—how could I be otherwise?—to undertake the whole charge of my own existence, that often, in going to Hardstone and Grinby's, of a morning, I could not resist the stale pastry put out for sale at half-price at the pastrycook's doors, and spent in that, the money I should have kept for my dinner. Then, I went without my dinner, or bought a roll or a slice of pudding. I remember two pudding-shops, between which I was divided, according to my finances. One was in a court close to St. Martha's Church—at the back of the church—which is now removed altogether. The pudding at that shop was made of currants, and was rather a special pudding, but was dear, twopennyworth not being larger than a pennypiece of more ordinary pudding. A good shop for the latter was in the Strand—somewhere in that part which has been rebuilt since. It was a stout pale pudding, heavy and flabby, and with great flat raspins in it, stuck in whole at wide distances apart. It came up hot at about my time every day, and many a day did I dine off it. When I dined regularly and handsomely, I had a savoy and a penny-loaf, or a fourpenny plate of red beef from a cook's shop; or a plate of bread and cheese and a glass of beer, from a miserable old public-house opposite our place of business, called the Lion, or the Lion and something else that I have forgotten. Once, I remember carrying my own bread (which I had brought from home in the morning) under my arm, wrapped in a piece of paper, like a book, and going to a famous almond beef-house near Drury Lane, and ordering a "small plate" of delicacy to eat with it. What the waiter of such a strange little apparition could alone, I don't know; but I can see his looking at me as I ate my dinner, and bringing another waiter to look. I gave him a shilling, and I wish he hadn't taken it.

We had half-an-hour, I think, for tea. I had money enough. I used to get half-ready-made coffee and a slice of bread and butter when I had none. I used to look at a vendor in Fleet-street; or I have strolled, at such a distance of Covent Garden Market, and such sixpence-apples. I was fond of wandering a little in Adelphi, because it was a mysterious place, those dark arches. I see myself emerging from one of these arches, on public-house close to the river, with an opium before it, where some coal-heavers were going to look at whom I sat down upon a bench, and wonder what they thought of me.

I was such a child, and so little, that for two years when I went into the bar of a strange public-house for a glass of the porter, to modesty let me say, I had no dinner, they were afraid to give it. I remember one hot evening I went into a public-house, and said to the landlord:

"What is your best—your very best glass?" For it was a special occasion, and know what. It may have been my birth-day.

"Two-pence-halfpenny," says the landlord, the price of the Genuine Stilling ale.

"Then," says I, producing the more than one glass of the Genuine Stilling please, with a good head to it."

The landlord looked at me in return, bar, from head to foot, with a strange expression; and instead of drawing the beer, or rounding the screen and saying something to me, he came out from behind it, with his work on hand, and joined him in surveying me. I stood, all three, before me now. The last his shirt sleeves, leaning against the bar, his wife looking over her shoulder, and I, in some confusion, looking up at the outside of the partition. They asked me many questions; as, what my name was, where I lived, how I was employed, how I came there. To all of which, that commit nobody, I invent, I am afraid, some answers. They served me with the beer though I suspect it was not the genuine; and the landlord's wife, opening the half-door of the bar, and bending down, my money back, and gave me a kiss that was admiring, and half compassionate, but all the same, and good, I am sure.

I know I do not exaggerate, unconsciously, unintentionally, the sensitiveness of my youth and the difficulties of my life. I know that being given me by Mr. Quilp at any price, and spent it in a dinner or a tea. I know that I am not, from morning until night, with common boys, a shabby child. I know
etc., insufficiently and unsatisfactorily fed. That, but for the mercy of God, I might have been, for any care that was taken of little robber or a little vagabond. I held some station at Murdstone and s too. Besides that Mr. Quinion did what so man as occupied, and dealing with a so anomalous, could, to treat me as one different footing from the rest, I never man or boy, how it was that I came to be r gave the least indication of being sorry as there. That I suffered in secret, and offered explicitly, no one ever knew but r much I suffered, it is, as I have said al- atterly beyond my power to tell. But I have own counsel, and I did my work. I knew first, that if I could not do my work as well the rest, I could not hold myself above id contempt. I soon became at least as ilous and as skilful as either of the other Though perfectly familiar with them, my and manner were different enough from or place a space between us. They and the aurally spoke of me as "the little gent," young Suffolker." A certain man named , who was foreman of the packers, and named Tipp, who was the camel, and red jacket, need to address me sometimes rid: "but I think it was mostly when we ry confidential, and when I had made some to entertain them, over their work, with suits of the old readings; which were fast out of my remembrance. Mealy Potatoes once, and rebelled against my being so ilshed; but Mick Walker settled him in no rescue from this kind of existence I con- quite hopeless, and abandoned, as such, er. I am solemnly convinced that I never hown was reconciled to it, or was other- an miserably unhappy; but I bore it; and Peggotty, partly for the love of her and shame, never in any letter (though many seen us) revealed the truth.

Micawber's difficulties were an addition to press state of my mind. In my forlorn became quite attached to the family, and walk about, busy with Mrs. Micawber's tons of ways and means, and heavy with of Mr. Micawber's debts. On a Satur- it, which was my grand treat,—partly be- a was a good thing to walk home with six shillings in my pocket, looking into the and thinking what such a sum would buy, aly because I went home early,—Mrs. Mi- would make the most heart-rending con- to me; also on a Sunday morning, when the portion of tea or coffee I had bought sat, in a little shaving-pot, and sat late at dast. It was nothing at all unusual for awber to sob violently at the beginning of e Saturday night conversations, and sing al's delight being his lovely Nan, tow- and end of it. I have known him come home to supper with a flood of tears, and a declaration that nothing was now left but a jail; and go to bed making a calculation of the expense of putting bow-windows to the house, "in case anything turned up," which was his favorite expres- and Mrs. Micawber was just the same.

A curious equality of friendship, originating, I suppose, in our respective circumstances, sprung up between me and these people notwithstanding the ludicrous disparity in our years. But I never allowed myself to be prevailed upon to accept any invitation to eat and drink with them out of their stock (knowing that they got on badly with the butcher and baker, and had often not too much for themselves), until Mrs. Micawber took me into her entire confidence. This she did one evening as follows:

"Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "I make no stranger of you, and therefore do not hesitate to say that Mr. Micawber's difficulties are coming to a crisis."

It made me very miserable to hear it, and I looked at Mrs. Micawber's red eyes with the utmost sympathy.

"With the exception of the heel of a Dutch cheese—which is not adapted to the wants of a young family"—said Mrs. Micawber, "there is really not a scrap of anything in the larder. I was accustomed to speak of the larder when I lived with papa and mamma, and I used the word almost unconsciously. What I mean to express is, that there is nothing to eat in the house."

"Dear me!" I said, in great concern.

I had two or three shillings of my week's money in my pocket—from which I presume that it must have been on a Wednesday night when we held this conversation—and I hastily produced them, and with heartfelt emotion begged Mrs. Micawber to accept of them as a loan. But that lady, kissing me, and making me put them back in my pocket, replied that she couldn't think of it.

"No, my dear Master Copperfield," said she, "be it from my thoughts! But you have a discretion beyond your years, and can render me another kind of service, if you will; and a service I will thankfully accept of."

I begged Mrs. Micawber to name it.

"I have parted with the plate myself," said Mrs. Micawber. "Six teak, two salt, and a pair of sugars, I have at different times borrowed money on, in secret, with my own hands. But the twins are a great tie; and to me, with my recollections of papa and mamma, these transactions are very painful. There are still a few trifles that we could part with. Mr. Micawber's feelings would never allow him to dispose of them; and Clickett—this was the girl from the workhouse—being of a vulgar mind, would take painful liberties if so much confidence was repose in her. Master Copperfield, if I might ask you—"

I understood Mrs. Micawber now, and begged her to make use of me to any extent. I began to dispose of the more portable articles of property
that very evening; and went out on a similar expedition almost every morning, before I went to Murdstone and Grinby’s.

Mr. Micawber had a few books on a little chiffonier, which he called the library; and these went first. I carried them, one after another, to a bookstall in the City Road—one part of which, near our house, was almost all bookstalls and birdshops then—and sold them for whatever they would bring. The keeper of this bookstall, who lived in a little house behind it, used to get tipsy every night, and to be violently scolded by his wife every morning. More than once, when I went there early, I had audience of him in a turn-up bedstead, with a cat in his forehead or a black eye, bearing witness to his excesses over night (I am afraid he was quarrelsome in his drink), and he with a shaking hand, endeavoring to find the needful skillings in one or other of the pockets of his clothes, which lay upon the floor, while his wife, with a baby in her arms and her shoes down at heel, never left off rating him. Sometimes he had lost his money, and then he would ask me to call again; but his wife had always got some—had taken his, I dare say, while he was drunk—and secretly completed the bargain on the stairs, as we went down together.

At the pawnbroker’s shop, too, I began to be very well known. The principal gentleman who officiated behind the counter, took a good deal of notice of me; and often got me. I recollect, to decline a Latin noun or adjective, or to conjugate a Latin verb, in his ear, while he transacted my business. After all these occasions Mrs. Micawber made a little treat, which was generally a supper; and there was a peculiar relish in these meals which I well remember.

At last Mr. Micawber’s difficulties came to a crisis, and he was arrested early one morning, and carried over to the King’s Bench Prison in the Borough. He told me, as he went out of the house, that the God of day had now gone down upon him—and I really thought his heart was broken and mine too. But I heard, afterwards, that he was soon to play a lively game at skittles, before noon.

On the first Sunday after he was taken there, I was to go and see him, and have dinner with him. I was to ask my way to such a place, and just short of that place I should see such another place, and just short of that I should see a yard, which I was to cross, and keep straight on until I saw a turnkey. All this I did; and when at last I did see a turnkey (poor little fellow that I was), and thought how, when Roderick Random was in a debtors’ prison, there was a man there with nothing on him but an old rug, the turnkey swam before my dimmed eyes and my beating heart.

Mr. Micawber was waiting for me within the gate, and we went up to his room (top story but one), and cried very much. He solemnly conjured me, I remember, to take warning by his fate; and to observe that if a man had twenty pounds a year for his income, and spent nineteen pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence, he would, but that if he spent twenty pounds it would be miserable. After which he turned me for porter, gave me a visit on Mrs. Micawber for the amount, and his pocket-handkerchief, and cheered up.

We sat before a little fire, with two within the rusted grate, one on each side vent its burning too many coals; and debter, who shared the room with Mr. J. I came in from the bakeshop with the loaf of which was our joint stock repeat; I sent up to “Captain Hopkins” in the head, with Mr. Micawber’s compliments was his young friend, and would Captain lend me a knife and fork.

Captain Hopkins lent me the knife with his compliments to Mr. Micawber was a very dirty lady in his little room, wan girls, his daughters, with shock head I thought it was better to borrow Cap’kins’s knife and fork, than Captain’s comb. The Captain himself was in the truncheon of shabbiness, with large white an old, old brown great-coat with no other low it. I saw his bed rolled up in a coat what plates and dishes and pots he had, or and I divided (God knows how) that the two girls with the shock Beedah of hair with Hopkins’s children, the dirty lady married to Captain Hopkins. My time on his threshold was not occupied with couple of minutes at most; but I came again with all this in my knowledge, as the knife and fork were in my hand.

There was something gipsy-like and it in the dinner, after all. I took back Hopkins’s knife and fork early in the a, and went home to comfort Mrs. Micawber: an account of my visit. She fainting, as I saw her return, and made a little jug of afterwards to console us while we talked. I don’t know how the household came to be sold for the family benefit, sold it except that I did not. Sold it however, and carried away in a van; except a few chairs, and the kitchen-table. We possessions we encamped, as it were, in parlors of the emptied house in Windsor. Mrs. Micawber, the children, the Orangewell; and lived in these rooms night as have no idea how long, though it see for a long time. At last Mrs. Micawber to move into the prison, where Mr. Micawber now secured a room to himself. So I key of the house to the landlord, who glad to get it; and the beds were sent the King’s Bench, except mine, for while room was hired outside the walls in the hood of that Institution, very much to faction, since the Micawbers and I had too used to one another, in our troubles. The Orangewell was likewise accommodated inexpensive lodging in the same way.
IN MY AUNT’S HOUSE.

pleasing to my aunt), but went on to the floor, with her hands behind her, down the room, until the gentle-sounding at me from the upper window.

"said my aunt, "don’t be a fool, they can be more discreet than you choose. We all know that. So don’t ever you are."

man was serious, immediately, and I thought, as if he would entreat about the window.

"said my aunt, "you have heard David Copperfield? Now don’t prate a memory, because you and I

Copperfield?" said Mr. Dick, who did me to remember much about it.

field? Oh yes, to be sure. David, said my aunt, "this is his boy, his be as like his father as it’s pos- he was not so like his mother,

" said Mr. Dick. "David’s son?
sued my aunt, "and he has done a business. He has run away. Ah! lace Trotwood, never would have my aunt shook her head forcibly, con- character and behavior of the girl’s born.

I think she wouldn’t have run Mr. Dick, save the man," exclaimed my aunt, y he talks! Don’t I know she he would have lived with her god-m she should have been devoted to one ire, in the name of wonder, should she Trotwood, have run from, or

"said Mr. Dick.

it," returned my aunt, softened by bow can you pretend to a word,
you are as sharp as a sur- now, here you see young David the question I put to you is, with him?"

" said Mr. Dick.

" my aunt, with a grave look, and held up. "Come! I want some vise."

was you," said Mr. Dick, considering vacantly at me, "I should— the notion of me seemed to inspire him idea, and he added, briskly, "—I am!

aid my aunt, turning round with a which I did not then understand, us all right. Heat the bath?"

was deeply interested in this dia-

not help observing my aunt, Mr. Dick, and Janet, while it was in progress, and completing a survey I had already been engaged in making of the room.

My aunt was a tall, hard-featured lady, but by no means ill-looking. There was an inflexi- bility in her face, in her voice, in her gait and carriage, ample sufficient to account for the effect she had made upon a gentle creature like my mother; but her features were rather handsome than otherwise, though unbounding and austere. I particularly noticed that she had a very quick, bright eye. Her hair, which was grey, was arranged in two plain divisions, under which I believe would be called a mob-cap; I mean a cap, much more common then than now, with side-pieces fastening under the chin. Her dress was of a lavender color, and perfectly neat; but scantily made, as if she desired to be as little encumbered as possible. I remember that I thought it, in form, more like a riding-habit with the superfluous skirt cut off, than anything else. She wore at her side a gentleman’s gold watch, if I might judge from its size and make, with an appropriate chain and seals; she had some linen at her throat not unlike a shirt-collar, and things at her wrists like little shirt-wristbands.

Mr. Dick, as I have already said, was gray-headed and florid; I should have said all about him, in saying so, had not his head been curiously bowed—not by age; it reminded me of one of Mr. Crackle’s boys’ heads after a beating—and his grey eyes prominent and large, with a strange kind of watery brightness in them that made me, in conjunction with his vacant manner, his submission to my aunt, and his childish delight when she praised him, suspect him of being a little mad; though, if he were mad, how he came to be there, puzzled me extremely. He was dressed like any other ordinary gentleman, in a loose grey morning coat and waistcoat, and white trousers; and had his watch in his hob, and his money in his pockets; which he rattled as if he were very proud of it.

Janet was a pretty blooming girl, of about nineteen or twenty, and a perfect picture of neat- ness. Though I made no further observation of her at the moment, I may mention here what I did not discover until afterwards, namely, that she was one of a series of protégées whom my aunt had taken into her service expressly to educate in a renunciation of mankind, and who had generally completed their abjuration by marrying the baker.

The room was as neat as Janet or my aunt. As I laid down my pen, a moment since, to think of it, the air from the sea came blowing in again, mixed with the perfume of the flowers; and I saw the old-fashioned furniture brightly rubbed and polished, my aunt’s inviolable chair and table by the round green fan in the bow-window, the drapery-covered carpet, the cat, the kettle-holder, the two canaries, the old chim, the punch-bowl full of dried rose-leaves, the cah press guarding all sorts of bottles and pots, end, wonderfully co
work and Blackfriars, and lounged about at meal-times, in obscure streets, the stones of which may, for anything I know, be worn at this moment by my childish feet. I wonder how many of these people were wanting in the crowd that used to come filing before me in review again, to the echo of Captain Hopkins’s voice! When my thoughts go back now, to that slow agony of my youth, I wonder how much of the histories I invented for such people hung like a mist of fancy over well-remembered facts! When I tread the old ground, I do not wonder that I seem to see and pity, going on before me, an innocent romantic boy, making his imaginative world out of such strange experiences and scordid things.

CHAPTER XII.

LIKE IN LIFE ON MY OWN ACCOUNT, I FORM A GREAT RESOLUTION.

In due time, Mr. Micawber’s petition was ripe for hearing, and that gentleman was ordered to be discharged under the act, to my great joy. His creditors were not implacable; and Mrs. Micawber informed me that even the revengeful boot-maker had declared in open court that he bore him no malice, but that when money was owing to him he liked to be paid. He said he thought it was human nature.

Mr. Micawber returned to the King’s Bench when his case was over, as some fees were to be settled, and some formalities observed, before he could be actually released. The club received him with transport, and held an harmonious meeting that evening in his honor, while Mrs. Micawber and I had a lamb’s fry in private, surrounded by the sleeping family.

"On such an occasion I will give you, Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "in a little more flip, for we had been having some already, the memory of my papa and mamma."

"Are they dead, ma’am?" I inquired, after drinking the toast in a wine-glass.

"My mamma departed this life," said Mrs. Micawber, "before Mr. Micawber’s difficulties commenced, or at least before they became pressing. My papa lived to bail Mr. Micawber several times, and then expired, regretted by a numerous circle."

Mrs. Micawber shook her head, and dropped a pious tear upon the twin who happened to be in hand.

"If I could hardly hope for a more favorable opportunity of putting a question in which I had a near interest, I said to Mrs. Micawber:

"‘May I ask, ma’am, what you and Mr. Micawber intend to do now that Mr. Micawber is out of his difficulties, and at liberty? Have you settled yet?’"

"‘My family,’ said Mrs. Micawber, who always said those two words with an air, though I never could discover who came under the denomination, ‘my family are of opinion that Mr. Micawber should quit London, and exert his talents in the country. Mr. Micawber is a man of great ability.’"

"I said I was sure of that."

"‘Of great talent,’ repeated Mrs. Micawber, ‘my family are of opinion, that, with a little experience, something might be done for a living in the Custom House. The income being local, it is their wish that Mr. Micawber should go down to Plymouth. The indigent condition of that town should be upon this point. I suggest that he may be ready—in ease of anything turning up."

And do you go too, ma’am?"

"The events of the day, in combination twined, if not with the flip, had made Mrs. Micawber hysterical, and she shed tears as she went on."

"I never will desert Mr. Micawber may have concealed his difficulty in the first instance, but his situation may have led him to expect that he would have come on. The pearl necklace which I inherited from mamma, have posed of for less than half their value, as of coral, which was the wedding-gift of her who has been actually thrown away for nothing. I never will desert Mr. Micawber.

Mrs. Micawber, more affected than before, will never will do it! It’s of no use asking a woman who is feeling quite uncomfortable—as if she supposed I had asked her to do anything out of the sort!—and sat looking at her in silent awe."

"Mr. Micawber has his faults. I do not think he is improvident. I do not deny that he kept me in the dark as to his resources, but, she went on, looking at the wall; but I never will desert Mr. Micawber.

Mrs. Micawber having now raised into a perfect scream, I was so frightened as to run off to the club-room, and disturbed Mr. Micawber in the act of presiding at a long table, leading the chorus of:

Gay go, Dublin,
And gay go, Dublin.
Gay go, Dublin, and gay go—o—o—!

—with the tidings that Mrs. Micawber alarmingly state, upon which he immediately broke into tears, and came away with me with coat full of the heads and tails of silver which he had been partaking.

"Emma, my angel!" cried Mr. Micawber, running into the room; "what is the matter?"

"I never will desert you, Micawber," I exclaimed.

"My life!" said Mr. Micawber, taking his arm. "I am perfectly aware of it."

"He is the parent of my children!" father of my twins! He is the husband of the most beautiful woman in England, the most beautiful woman in England!"

Mr. Micawber was so deeply affected by the news of her devotion (as to me, I was so), that he hung over her in a most
imploring her to look up, and to be calm. The more he asked Mrs. Micawber to look up, more she fixed her eyes on nothing; and the more he asked her to compose herself, the more she wouldn’t. Consequently Mr. Micawber was so overcome, that he mingled his tears with mine; until he begged me to do him the honor of taking a chair on the staircase, while he got into bed. I would have taken my leave that night; but he would not hear of my doing that until the strangers’ bell should ring. So I sat at the staircase window, until he came out with a chair and joined me.

"How is Mrs. Micawber now, sir?" I said.

"Very low," said Mr. Micawber, shaking his head; "re-action. Ah, this has been a dreadful day! We stand alone now—everything is gone us!

Mr. Micawber pressed my hand, and groaned, afterwards shed tears. I was greatly touched, and disappointed too, for I had expected that we should be quite gay on this happy and long-looked-for occasion. But Mr. and Mrs. Micawber were to their old difficulties, I think, that they quite shipwrecked when they came to consider that they were released from them. All elasticity was departed, and I never saw a half so wretched as on this night; insomuch when the bell rang, and Mr. Micawber walked down to the lodge, and parted from me there with a blessing, I felt quite afraid to leave him himself, he was so profoundly miserable.

But through all the confusion and lowness of spirits in which we had been, so unexpectedly involved, I plainly discerned that Mr. and Mrs. Micawber and their family were going away to London, and that a parting between us was at hand. It was in my walk home that night, in the sleepless hours which followed when I lay in bed, that the thought first occurred to me—though I don’t know how it came into my head—afterwards shaped itself into a settled resolution.

I had grown to be accustomed to the Micawbers, and had been so intimate with them in theirresses, and was so utterly friendless without them, that the prospect of being thrown upon a new shift for a lodging, and going once more among unknown people, was like being that most turned adrift into my present life, with such knowledge of it ready made, as experience had taught me. All the sensitive feelings it wounded tersely, all the shame and misery it kept alive in my breast, became more poignant as I thought of this; and I determined that the life was unendurable.

There was no hope of escape from it, unless the escape was my own act; I knew quite well. I had heard from Miss Murdstone, and never from Mr. Murdstone; but two or three parcels of torn or mended clothes had come up for me, conveyed to Mr. Quilp, and in each there was a note of paper to the effect that J. M. trusted C. was applying himself to business, and de-
voting himself wholly to his duties—not the least hint of my ever being anything else than the common drudge into which I was fast settling down.

The very next day showed me, while my mind was at the first agitation of what it had conceived, that Mrs. Micawber had not spoken of their going away without warning. They took a lodging in the house where I lived, for a week; at the expiration of which time they were to start for Plymouth. Mr. Micawber himself came down to the counting-house, in the afternoon, to tell Mr. Quilp that he must relinquish me on the day of his departure, and to give me a high character, which I am sure I deserved. And Mr. Quilp, calling in Tipp the carman, who was a married man, and had a room to let, quartered me prospectively on him—by our mutual consent, as he had every reason to think; for I said nothing, though my resolution was now taken.

I passed my evenings with Mr. and Mrs. Micawber, during the remaining term of our residence under the same roof; and I think we became fonder of one another as the time went on. On the last Sunday, they invited me to dinner; and we had a loin of pork and apple-sauce, and a pudding. I had bought a spotted wooden horse over night as a parting gift to little Wilkins Micawber—that was the boy—and a doll for little Emma. I had also bestowed a shilling on the Orfing, who was about to be disbanded.

We had a very pleasant day, though we were all in a tender state about our approaching separation.

"I shall never, Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "revert to the period when Mr. Micawber was in difficulties, without thinking of you. Your conduct has always been of the most delicate and obliging description. You have never been a lodger. You have been a friend."

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber; "Copperfield," for so he had been accustomed to call me of late, "has a heart to feel for the distresses of his fellow-creatures when they are behind a cloud, and a head to plan, and a hand to—in short, a general ability to dispose of such available property as could be made away with."

I expressed my sense of this commendation, and said I was very sorry we were going to lose one another.

"My dear young friend," said Mr. Micawber, "I am older than you; a man of some experience in life, and—and of some experience, in short, in difficulties, generally speaking. At present, and until something turns up (which I am, I may say, hourly expecting), I have nothing to bestow but advice. Still my advice is so far worth taking that—in short, that I have never taken it myself, and am the "—here Mr. Micawber, who had been beaming and smiling, all over his head and face, up to the present moment, checked himself and frowned—"the miserable wretch you behold."

"My dear Micawber!" urged his wife.

"I say," returned Mr. Micawber, quite forget-
thing himself, and smiling again, "the miserable wretch you behold. My advice is, never do tomorrow what you can do today. Procrastination is the thief of time. Collar him!"

"My poor papa's maxin'," Mrs. Micawber observed.

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "your papa was very well in his way, and Heaven forbid that I should disgrace him. Take him for all in all, we never shall—in short, make the acquaintance, probably, of anybody else possessing, at his time of life, the same legs for gaiters, and able to read the same description of print, without spectacles. But he applied that maxin' to our marriage, my dear; and that was so far prematurely entered into, in consequence, that I never recovered the expense."

Mr. Micawber looked aside at Mrs. Micawber, and added: "Not that I am sorry for it. Quite the contrary, my love." After which he was grave for a minute or so.

"My other piece of advice, Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, "you know. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen shillings sixpence, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds eight shillings sixpence, result misery. The blossom is withered, the leaf is withered, the god of day goes down upon the dreary scene, and—and in short you are for ever floored. As I am!"

To make his example the more impressive, Mr. Micawber drank a glass of punch with an air of great enjoyment and satisfaction, and whistled the College Hornpipe.

I did not fail to assure him that I would store these precepts in my mind, though indeed I had no need to do so, for, at the time, they affected me visibly. Next morning I met the whole family at the couch office, and saw them, with a desolate heart, take their places outside, at the back.

"Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "God bless you! I never can forget all that, you know, and I never would if I could."

"Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, "farewell! Every happiness and prosperity! If, in the progress of revolving years, I could persuade myself that my blighted destiny had been a warning to you, I should feel that I had not occupied another man's place in existence altogether in vain. In case of anything turning up (of which I am rather confident), I shall be extremely happy if it should be in my power to improve your prospects."

I think, as Mrs. Micawber sat at the back of the couch, with the children, and I stood in the road looking wistfully at them, a mist cleared from her eyes, and she saw what a little creature I really was. I think so, because she beckoned to me to climb up, with quite a new and motherly expression in her face, and put her arm round my neck, and gave me just such a kiss as she might have given to her own boy. I had barely time to get down again before the coach started, and I could hardly see the family for the hand they waved. It was gone in a minute. I stood looking vacantly at each middle of the road, and then shook hands and said good-bye; she going back. I suppose Lake's workhouse, as I went to begin it, was at Muddlestone, and Grinby's, and was all day for that.

But with no intention of passing any weary days there. No. I had resolved away—to go, by some means or other, into the country, to the only relation I had in the world, and tell my story to my aunt, Miss.

I have already observed that I don't think this desperate idea came into my brain once there, it remained there; and had a purpose than which I have never entered on more determined purpose in my life. I resolved that I would find out what I thought was hopeful in it, but my mind was thoroughly up that it must be carried into execution.

Again, and again, and a hundred times since the night when the thought first came to me, I have been thinking about it; and that old story of my poor mother's—how she had once of her own in the old days at Grinby's, and how, and why, and by heart. My aunt walked into that and walked out of it, a dread and awful place, but there was one little trait in her which I liked to dwell on, and which some faint shadow of encouragement, not forget how my mother had thought of that, she was a very pretty girl, with no hand; and though it might have been a my mother's fancy, and might have had relation whatever in fact, I made a little of it, of my terrible aunt relenting the girlish beauty that I recollected so loved so much, which softened the wRETive. It is very possible that it had been a mind a long time, and had gradually en my determination.

As I did not know where Miss lived, I wrote a long letter to Peggs, asking her, incidentally, if she remembered me. As tending that I had heard of such a lady in a certain place I named at random, and his to know if it were the same. In the of that letter, I told Peggett that I had occasional occasion for half a guinea; and that I could lend me that sum until I could return it. She should be very much obliged to her, as tell her afterwards what I wanted it for.

Peggotty's answer soon arrived, and was usual, full of affectionate devotion. She the half guinea (I was afraid she must in world of trouble to get it out of Mr. ey, and told me that Miss Betsey D. a Sandgate, or Folkestone, she could not of us men, however, informing me on him about these places, that they were together. I deemed this enough for me, and resolved to set out on the same day.
presuming to give my opinion on this delivered my message,
said Mr. Dick, in answer, "my corner, and I—I believe I have made a
sink I have made a start," said Mr. Dick, and among his grey hair, and casting
a confident look at his manuscript, been to school?"
I answered; "for a short time."
recollect the date," said Mr. Dick,
recollectedly at me, and taking up his pen to it, "when King Charles the First had
believed it happened in the year six-
d and forty-nine.
returned Mr. Dick, scratching his ear,
and looking dubiously at me. "So
y; but I don't see how that can be.
It was so long ago, how could the per-
son have made that mistake of putting
trouble out of his head, after it was
to mind?"
y much surprised by the inquiry; but
no information on this point.
y strange," said Mr. Dick, with a de-
ck upon his papers, and with his hand
air again, "that I never can get that
never can make that perfectly clear,
to, no matter!" he said cheerfully,
himself, "there's time enough! My
Miss Trotwood, I am getting on
dead,"
ing away, when he directed my atten-
to you think of that for a kite?" he
ed that it was a beautiful one. I
it must have been as much as seven
it. We'll go and fly it, you and I," he
me that it was covered with manu-
closely and laboriously written; but
that as I looked along the lines, I
aw some allusion to King Charles the
again, In one or two places.
plenty of vining," said Mr. Dick,
fly high, it takes the facts a long
i my manner of diffusing 'em. I don't
they may come down. It's according
ances, and the wind, and so forth;
y chances of that."
was so very mild and pleasant, and
ing so reverend in it, though it was
ry, that I was not sure but that he
a good-humoured jest with me. So I
he laughed, and we parted the best
child," said my aunt, when I went.
"And what of Mr. Dick, this morn-
ed her that he sent his compliments,
ing on very well indeed.
do you think of him?" said my aunt.

I had some shadowy idea of endeav- ring to
 evade the question by replying that I thought him
a very nice gentleman; but my aunt was not to be
so put off, for she held her work down in her lap,
and said, folding her hands upon it:
"Come! Your sister Betsey Trotwood would
have told me what she thought of any one, di-
rectly. Be as like your sister as you can, and
speak out."
"Is he—is Mr. Dick—I ask, because I don't
know, aunt—is he at all out of his mind, then?"
I stammered; for I felt I was on dangerous
ground.
"Not a morsel," said my aunt.
"Oh, indeed!" I observed faintly.
"If there is anything in the world," said my
aunt, with great decision and force of manner,
"that Mr. Dick is not, it's that."
I had nothing better to offer, than another
im'id "Oh, indeed!"
"He has been called mad," said my aunt. "I
have a selfish pleasure in saying he has been called
mad, or I should not have had the benefit of his
society and advice for these last ten years and up-
wards—in fact, ever since your sister, Betsey
Trotwood, disappointed me."
"So long as that?" I said.
"And nice people they were, who had the un-
dacity to call him mad," pursued my aunt. "Mr.
Dick is a sort of distant connexion of mine; it
doesn't matter how; I needn't enter into that. If
it hadn't been for me, his own brother would have
had him up for life. That's all."
I am afraid it was hypocritical in me, but see-
ing that my aunt felt strongly on the subject, I
tried to look as if I felt strongly too.
"A proud fool!" said my aunt. "Because his
brother was a little eccentric—though he is not
half so eccentric as a good many people—he didn't
like to have him visible about his house, and sent
him away to some private asylum-place; though
he had been left to his particular care by their de-
crased father, who thought him almost a natural.
And a wise man he must have been to think so! Mad
himself, no doubt."
Again, as my aunt looked quite convinced, I
endeavored to look quite convinced also.
"So I stepped in," said my aunt, "and made
him an offer. I said, 'Your brother's sane—a great
deal more sane than you are, or ever will be; it is
to be hoped. Let him have his little income, and
come and live with me. I am not afraid of him,
I am not proud, I am ready to take care of him,
and shall not ill-treat him as some people (besides
the asylum-folks) have done.' After a good deal
of squabbling," said my aunt, "I got him; and
he has been here ever since. He is the most
friendly and amenable creature in existence; and
as for advice!—But nobody knows what that
man's mind is, except myself."
My aunt smoothed her dress and shook her
head, as if she smoothed defiance of the whole
world out of the one, and shook her in the
other.
"He had a favorite sister," said my aunt, "a
good creature, and very kind to him. But she did
what they all do—took a husband. And he did
what they all do—made her wretched. It had
such an effect upon the mind of Mr. Dick (that's
not madness, I hope!) that, combined with his
fear of his brother, and his sense of his unkind-
ness, it threw him into a fever. That was before
he came to me, but the recollection of it is op-
pressive to him even now. Did he say anything
to you about King Charles the First, child?"

"Yes, aunt."

"Ah!" said my aunt, rubbing her nose as if
she were a little vexed. "That's his allegorical
way of expressing it. He connects his illness
with great disturbance and agitation, naturally,
and that's the figure, or the simile, or whatever
it's called, which he chooses to use. And why
shouldn't he, if he thinks proper?"

I said: "Certainly, aunt."

"It's not a business-like way of speaking," said my aunt, "nor a worldly way. I am aware
of that; and that's the reason why I insist upon
it, that there shan't be a word about it in his Mem-
orial."

"Is it a Memorial about his own history that
he is writing, aunt?"

"Yes, child," said my aunt, rubbing her nose
again. "He is memorialising the Lord Chan-
celor, or the Lord Somebody or other—one of those
people, at all events, who are paid to be me-mor-
ialised—about his affairs. I suppose it will go
in one of these days. He hasn't been able to
draw it up yet, without introducing that mode of
expressing himself; but it don't signify; it keeps
him employed."

In fact, I found out afterwards that Mr. Dick
had been for upwards of ten years endeavoring to
keep King Charles the First out of the Memo-
rial; but he had been constantly getting into it, and
was there now.

"I say again," said my aunt, "nobody knows
what that man's mind is except myself; and he's
the most amenable and friendly creature in ex-
listence. If he likes to fly a kite sometimes, what
of that! Franklin used to fly a kite. He was a
Quaker, or something of that sort, if I am not
mistaken. And a Quaker flying a kite is a much
more ridiculous object than anybody else!"

If I could have supposed that my aunt had re-
counted these particulars for my especial behoof,
and as a piece of confidence in me, I should have
felt very much distinguished, and should have
argued favorably from such a mark of her good
opinion. But I could hardly help observing that
she had launched into them, chiefly because the
question was raised in her own mind, and with
very little reference to me, though she had ad-
dressed herself to me In the absence of anybody
else.

At the same time, I must say that the gen-
erosity of her championship of poor harmless Mr.
Dick, not only inspired my young breast with
some selfish hope for myself, but warmed it un-
selfishly towards her. I believe that I beg-
know that there was something about my
notwithstanding her many exactitudes and
humors, to be honored and trusted in. That
she was just as sharp that day, as on the pre-
vious day, and was In and out about the house
as often, and was thrown into a tremendous
indignation, when a young man came in, col-
pelled Janet at a window (which was one of
the gravest misdemeanors that could be com-
mitted against my aunt's dignity), she seemed to
command more of my respect, if not less of
fear.

The anxiety I underwent, in the four days
which necessarily elapsed before a reply con-
cluded my letter to Mr. Murdstone, was
not borne; but I made an endeavor to sup-
press and to be as agreeable as I could, in a quiet
manner to my aunt and Mr. Dick. The latter
would have done anything to fly the kite
that I had still no other clothes than the
thing but ornamental garments with which
I had been decorated on the first day, and which
had been removed to the house, except for an hour
and a half, when my aunt, for my health's sake,
led me up and down on the cliff outside of
the town. At length the reply from Mr. Mur-
stone came, and my aunt informed me, to a
finite terror, that he was coming to speak for
himself on the next day. On the next day
bundled up in my curious habiliments, counting
the time, flushed and heated by the
wound of hope and dying fears within,
and waiting to be startled by the sight of
the gloomy face, whose non-arrival startled me
minute.

My aunt was a little more imperturbable
than usual, but I observed no other tokens of
preparing herself to receive the visitor so
coldly by me. She sat at work in the
were looking at the
all possible and impossible results of Mr. Mur-
stone's visit, until pretty late in the after-
noon. Our dinner had been indefinitely postponed; it was growing so late, that my aunt had got
it to be got ready, when she gave a sudden
scream, and to my consternation and un-
ness I beheld Miss Murdstone, on a side-
ride deliberately over the sacred place of
and stop in front of the house, looking for
her.

"Go along with you!" cried my aunt,
igning her head and her fist at the window, "I
have no business there. How dare you pass? Go along! Oh! you bold-faced thing!
My aunt was so exasperated by the conver-
sation with Miss Murdstone looked about
that I really believe she was motionless, and
able for the moment to dart out according to
n usually; but I seized the opportunity to inform her
it was; and that the gentleman now coming
the offender (for the way up was very steep
he had dropped behind), was Mr. Murdstone.
DONKEY-TRESPASSERS.

You'll excuse my saying, sir," returned my aunt, "that I think it would have been a much better and happier thing if you had left that poor child alone."

"I so far agree with what Miss Trotwood has remarked," observed Miss Murdstone, bridling, "that I consider our lamented Clara to have been, in all essential respects, a mere child."

"It is a comfort to you and me, ma'am," said my aunt, "who are getting on in life, and are not likely to be made unhappy by our personal attractions, that nobody can say the same of us."

"No doubt!" returned Miss Murdstone, though, I thought, not with a very ready or gracious assent. "And it certainly might have been, as you say, a better and happier thing for my brother if he had never entered into such a marriage. I have always been of that opinion."

"I have no doubt you have," said my aunt.

"Janet," ringing the bell, "my compliments to Mr. Dick, and beg him to come down."

Until he came, my aunt sat perfectly upright and stiff, frowning at the wall. When he came, my aunt performed the ceremony of introduction.

"Mr. Dick. An old intimate friend. On whose judgment," said my aunt, with emphasis, as an admonition to Mr. Dick, who was biding his forefinger and looking rather foolish, "I rely."

Mr. Dick took his finger out of his mouth, on this hint, and stood among the group, with a grave and attentive expression of face. My aunt inclined her head to Mr. Murdstone, who went on:

"Miss Trotwood. On the receipt of your letter, I considered it an act of great justice to myself, and perhaps of more respect to you—"

"Thank you," said my aunt, still eyeing him keenly, "You needn't mind me."

"To answer it in person, however inconvenient the journey," pursued Mr. Murdstone, "rather than by letter. This unhappy boy who has run away from his friends and his occupation—"

"And whose appearance," interposed his sister, directing general attention to me in my indefinable costume, "is perfectly scandalous and disgraceful."

"Jane Murdstone," said her brother, "have the goodness not to interrupt me. This unhappy boy, Miss Trotwood, has been the occasion of much domestic trouble and uneasiness: both during the lifetime of my late dear wife, and since. He has a sullen, rebellious spirit; a violent temper; and an untoward, intractable disposition. Both my sister and myself have endeavored to correct his vices, but ineffectually. And I have felt—we both have felt, I may say; my sister being fully in my confidence—that it is right you should receive this grave and dispassionate assurance from our lips."
"It can hardly be necessary for me to confirm anything stated by my brother," said Miss Murdstone; "but I beg to observe, that, of all the boys in the world, I believe this is the worst boy."

"Strong!" said my aunt, shortly.

"But not at all too strong for the facts," returned Miss Murdstone.

"Ha!" said my aunt. "Well, sir?"

"I have my own opinion," resumed Mr. Murdstone, whose face darkened more and more, the more he and my aunt observed each other, which they did very narrowly, "as to the best mode of bringing him up; they are founded, in part, on my knowledge of him, and in part on my knowledge of my own means and resources. I am responsible for them myself, I act upon them, and I say no more about them. I am enough that I place this boy under the eye of a friend of my own, in a respectable business; that it does not please him; that he runs away from it; makes himself a common vagabond about the country; and comes here, in tears, to appeal to you, Miss Trotwood. I wish to set before you, honourably, the exact consequences—so far as they are within my knowledge—of your abetting him in this appeal."

"But about the respectable business first," said my aunt. "If he had been your own boy, you would have put him to it, just the same, I suppose?"

"If he had been my brother's own boy," returned Miss Murdstone, striking in, "his character, I trust, would have been altogether different."

"Or if the poor child, his mother, had been alive, he would still have gone into the respectable business, would he? said my aunt.

"I believe," said Mr. Murdstone, with an inclination of his head, "that Clara would have disputed nothing, which myself and my sister Jane Murdstone were agreed for the best."

Miss Murdstone confirmed this with an audible murmur.

"Humph!" said my aunt. "Unfortunate baby!"

Mr. Dick, who had been rattling his money all this time, was rattling it so loud now, that my aunt felt it necessary to check him with a look, before saying:

"The poor child's annuity died with her?"

"Died with her," replied Mr. Murdstone.

"And there was no settlement of the little property—the house and garden—the what's-its-name Rookery without any reeks in it—upon her boy?"

"It had been left to her, unconditionally, by her first husband," Mr. Murdstone began, when my aunt caught him up with the greatest irascibility and impatience.

"Good Lord, man, there's no occasion to say that. Left to her unconditionally! I think I see David Copperfield looking forward to any condition of any sort or kind, though it scared him point-blank in the face! Of course, it was left to her unconditionally. But when she married again—when she took that most disastrous step of marrying you, in short," said my aunt, "to be plain—did no one put in a word for the boy at the time?"

"My late wife loved her second husband madly," said Mr. Murdstone, "and trusted implicitly in him.

"Your late wife, sir, was a most unhappy, most unhappy, most unfortunate baby," retorted my aunt, shaking her head at him. "That's what she was. And now, what have you got to say next?"

"Merely this, Miss Trotwood," he resumed, "I am here to take David back; to take him back unconditionally, to dispose of him as I think proper, and to deal with him as I think fit. I am not here to make any promise, or give any pledge to anybody. You may possibly have some idea, Miss Trotwood, of abetting him in his running away, and in his complaints to you. You know, which I must say does not seem intended to propitiate, and induces me to think it possible. Now I must caution you that if you assist him now, you abet him for good and all; if you step in between him and me, now, you must step in, Miss Trotwood, for ever. I cannot trifling, or be trifled with. I am here, for the first and last time, to take him away. Is he ready to go? If he is not, you tell me he is not; on any pretence; it is in no different to me what—my doors are shut against him henceforth, and yours, I take it for granted are open to him."

To this address, my aunt had listened with the closest attention, sitting perfectly upright, with her hands folded on her knees, and looking grave on the speaker. When he had finished, she threw her arms so as to command Miss Murdstone, without otherwise disturbing her attitude, and said:

"Well, ma'am, have you got nothing to remark?"

"Indeed, Miss Trotwood," said Miss Murdstone, "all that I could say has been so well said by my brother, and all that I know to be the case has been so plain and patent stated by him, that I have nothing to add except my thanks for your politeness. For your very great politeness, I am sure, said Miss Murdstone; with an irony which roared more affected my aunt than it disposed the cannon I had slept by at Chatham."

"And what does the boy say?" said my aunt.

"Are you ready to go, David?"

I answered no, and entreated her not to let me go. I said that neither Mr. nor Miss Murdstone had ever liked me, or had ever been kind to me. That they had made my mamma, who always loved me dearly, unhappy about me, and that she knew it well, and that Peggoty knew it. I said that I had been more miserable than I thought anybody could believe who only knew how young I was. And I begged and prayed my aunt—she did get in what terms now, but I remember that this affected me very much then—to bed, and pretend, for my father's sake—"

"Mr. Dick," said my aunt; "what shall I do with this child?"
THE MURDSTONES DISMISSED.

I know that; I knew it years before you ever saw her—and through the best part of her weakness you gave her the wounds she died of. There is the truth for your comfort, however you like it. And you and your instruments may make the most of it.

"Allow me to inquire, Miss Trotwood," interposed Miss Murdstone, "whom you are pleased to call, in a choice of words in which I am not experienced, by brother's instruments?" "Still stone-deaf to the voice, and utterly unmoved by it, Miss Betsey pursued her discourse.

"It was clear enough, as I have told you, years before you ever saw her—and why in the mysterious dispensations of Providence, you ever did see her, is more than humanity can comprehend—it was clear enough that the poor soft little thing would marry somebody, at some time or other; but I did hope it wouldn't have been as bad as it has turned out. That was the time, Mr. Murdstone, when she gave birth to her boy hero," said my aunt: "to the poor child you sometimes tormented her through afterwards, which is a disagreeable remembrance, and makes the sight of him odious now. Aye, aye! you needn't wince!" said my aunt. "I know it's true without that.

He had stood by the door, all this while, observant of her, with a smile upon his face, though his black eyebrows were heavily contracted. I remarked now, that, though the smile was on his face still, his color had gone in a moment, and he seemed to breathe as if he had been running.

"Good day, sir," said my aunt, "and goodbye! Good day to you, too, ma'am," said my aunt, turning suddenly upon his sister. "Let me see you ride a donkey over my green again, and as sure as you have a head upon your shoulders, I'll knock your bonnet off, and tread upon it!"

It would require a painter, and no common painter too, to depict my aunt's face as she delivered herself of this very unexpected sentiment, and Miss Murdstone's face as she heard it. But the manner of the speech, no less than the matter, was so fiery, that Miss Murdstone, without a word in answer, discreetly put her arm through her brother's, and walked haggishly out of the cottage; my aunt remaining in the window looking after them; prepared, I have no doubt, in case of the donkey's reappearance, to carry her threat into instant execution.

No attempt at defiance being made, however, her face gradually relaxed, and became so pleasant, that I was emboldened to kiss and thank her; which I did with great heartiness, and with both my arms clasped round her neck. I then shook hands with Mr. Dick, who shook hands with me a great many times, and hailed this happy close of the proceedings with repeated bursts of laughter.

"You'll consider yourself guardian, jointly with me, of this child, Mr. Dick," said my aunt.

"I shall be delighted," said Mr. Dick, "to be the guardian of David's son."

"Very good," returned my aunt, "that's see-
I have been thinking, do you know, Mr. Dick, that I might call him Trotwood?"

"Certainly, certainly. Call him Trotwood, certainly," said Mr. Dick. "David's son's Trotwood."

"Trotwood Copperfield, you mean," returned my aunt.

"Yes, to be sure. Yes, Trotwood Copperfield," said Mr. Dick, a little abashed.

My aunt took so kindly to the notion, that some ready-made clothes, which were purchased for me that afternoon, were marked "Trotwood Copperfield," in her own handwriting, and in indelible marking-ink, before I put them on; and it was settled that all the other clothes which were ordered to be made for me (a complete outfit was bespoken that afternoon) should be marked in the same way.

Thus I began my new life, in a new name, and with everything new about me. Now that the state of doubt was over, I felt, for many days, like one in a dream. I never thought that I had a curious couple of guardians, in my aunt and Mr. Dick. I never thought of anything about myself.

The two things clearest in my mind were, that a remoteness had come upon the old Bunterstone life—which seemed to lie in the haze of an insensible distance; and that a curtain had for ever fallen on my life at Murdstone and Grinby's. No one has ever raised that curtain since. I have lifted it for a moment, even in this narrative, with a reluctant hand, and dropped it gladly. The remembrance of that life is fraught with so much pain to me, with so much mental suffering and want of hope, that I have never had the courage even to examine how long I was doomed to lead it. Whether it lasted for a year, or more, or less, I do not know. I only know that it was, and ceased to be; and that I have written, and there I leave it.

CHAPTER XV.
I MAKE ANOTHER BEGINNING.

Mr. Dick and I soon became the best of friends, and very often, when his day's work was done, went out together to fly the great kite. Every day of his life he had a long sitting at the Memorial, which never made the least progress, however hard he labored, for King Charles the First always stayed into it, sooner or later, and then it was thrown aside, and another one begun. The patience and hope with which he bore these perpetual disappointments, the mild perception he had that there was something wrong about King Charles the First, the feeble efforts he made to keep him out, and the certainty with which he came in, and tumbled the Memorial out of all shape, made a deep impression on me. What Mr. Dick supposed would come of the Memorial, if it were completed; where he thought it was to go, or what he thought it was to do; he knew no more than anybody else, I believe. Nor was it at all necessary that he should trouble himself with such questions, for if anything were certain at all, it was certain that the Memorial never be finished.

It was quite an affecting sight, I used to see him with the kite when it was up in the air. What he had told me room, about his belief in its disseminating statements pasted on it, which were no old leaves of abortive Memorials, might have been a fancy with him sometimes; but not was out, looking up at the kite in the a feeling it pull and tug at his hand. It looked so serene as he did then. I used to as I sat by him of an evening, on a green and see him watch the kite high in the the that it lifted his mind out of its confus wild. As he wound the string in, and throw lower and lower down out of the beautiful until it flattered to the ground, and lay it a dead thing, he seemed to wake gradually a dream; and I remember to have seen him up, and look about him in a lost way, as had both come down together, so that I I with all my heart.

While I advanced in friendship and with Mr. Dick, I did not go backward in of his staunch friend, my aunt. She kindled me to, that, in the course of a few hours, she shortened my adopted name of Trot into Trot; and even encouraged me to hope if I went on as I had begun, I might take ranks in her affections with my sister Bet wood.

"Trot," said my aunt one evening, when backgammon-board was placed as usual self and Mr. Dick, "we must not toy education."

This was my only subject of anxiety felt quite delighted by her referring to it. "Should you like to go to school at bury?" said my aunt.

I replied that I should like it very much was so near her.

"Good," said my aunt. "Should you go to-morrow?"

Being already no stranger to the geniality of my aunt's evolutions, I was not surprised by the suddenness of the proposal, and "Yes."

"Good," said my aunt again. "Janet the grey pony and chaise to-morrow morn ten o'clock, and pack up Master Trot clothes to-night."

I was greatly gratified by these orders; heart smote me for my selfishness, who nessed their effect on Mr. Dick, who was spirited at the prospect of our separate played so ill in consequence, that my not giving him several admonitory taps on the knee with his dice-box, shut up the board, elined to play with him any more. But, st from my aunt that I should sometimes over on a Saturday, and that he could, so
and see me on a Wednesday, he read vowed to make another kite for those, of proportions greatly surpassing the one. In the morning he was down again, and would have sustained himself with all the money he had in his possession and silver too, if my aunt had not interposed and limited the gift to five shillings, his earnest petition, were afterwards to ten. We parted at the garden-gate; affectionate manner, and Mr. Dick did to the house until my aunt had driven a sight of it.

at, who was perfectly indifferent to publicity, drove the grey pony through Dover way manner; sitting high and stiff like a chimney, keeping a steady eye upon him as he went, and making a point of not having his own way in any respect. He came into the country road, she permitted to relax a little, however; and looking upon in a valley of cushion by her side, whether I was happy?

I, happy indeed, thank you, aunt," I asked.

as much gratified; and both her hands uplifted, patted me on the head with her a large school, aunt?" I asked.

I, don't know," said my aunt. "We to Mr. Wickfield's first." At keep a school?" I asked.

Trot," said my aunt. "He keeps an

ed for no more information about Mr. I, as she offered none, and we conversed subjects until we came to Canterbury, it was market-day, my aunt had a great airy of insinuating the grey pony among skele, vegetables, and hucksters' goods. breadth turns and twists we made, drew on us a variety of speeches from the standing about, which were not always statutory; but my aunt drove on with perseverance, and I dare say would have taken way with as much coolness through an country.

gh we stopped before a very old house sat over the road; a house with long low indows bulging out still farther, and lith carved heads on the ends bulging out at I fancied the whole house was leaning trying to see who was passing on the avenue below. It was quite spotless unlines. The old-fashioned brass knock low arched door, ornamented with carved of fruit and flowers, twinkled like a two stone steps descending to the door white as if they had been covered with; and all the angles and corners, and mouldings, and quaint little panes at quarter little windows, though as the hills, were as pure as any snow that upon the hills.

When the pony-chaise stopped at the door, and my eyes were intent upon the house, I saw a cadaverous face appear at a small window on the ground floor (in a little round tower that formed one side of the house), and quickly disappear. The low arched door then opened, and the face came out. It was quite as cadaverous as it had looked in the window, though in the grain of it there was that tinge of red which is sometimes to be observed in the skins of red-haired people. It belonged to a red-haired person—a youth of fifteen, as I take it now, but looking much older—whose hair was cropped as close as the closest stubble; who had hardly any eyebrows, and no eyelashes, and eyes of a red-brown, so unsheltered and unblended, that I remember wondering how he went to sleep. He was high-shouldered and bony; dressed in decent black, with a white wisp of a neckcloth; buttoned up to the throat; and had a long, lank, skeleton hand, which particularly attracted my attention, as he stood at the pony's head, rubbing his chin with it, and looking up at us in the chaise.

"Is Mr. Wickfield at home, Uriah Heep?" said my aunt.

"Mr. Wickfield's at home, ma'am," said Uriah Heep, "if you'll please to walk in there;" pointing with his long hand to the room he meant.

We got out; and leaving him to hold the pony, went into a long low parlor looking towards the street, from the window of which I caught a glimpse, as I went in, of Uriah Heep breathing into the pony's nostrils, and immediately covering them with his hand, as if he were putting some spell upon him. Opposite to the tall old chimney-piece, were two portraits: one of a gentleman with grey hair (though not by any means an old man) and black eyebrows, who was looking over some papers tied together with red tape; the other, of a lady, with a very placid and sweet expression of face, which was looking at me.

I believe I was turning about in search of Uriah's picture, when, a door at the farther end of the room opening, a gentleman entered, at sight of whom I turned to the first-mentioned portrait again, to make quite sure that it had not come out of its frame. But it was stationary; and as the gentleman advanced into the light, I saw that he was some years older than when he had had his picture painted.

"Miss Betsey Trotwood," said the gentleman, "pray walk in. I was engaged for a moment, but you'll excuse my being busy. You know my motive. I have but one life." Miss Betsey thanked him, and we went into his room, which was furnished as an office, with books, papers, tin boxes, and so forth. It looked into a garden, and had an iron safe let into the wall; so immediately over the mantelshelf, that I wondered, as I sat down, how the sweeper got round it when they swept the chimney.

"Well, Miss Trotwood," said Mr. Wickfield.
for I soon found that it was he, and that he was a lawyer, and steward of the estates of a rich gentleman of the county: "what wind blows you here? Not an ill wind, I hope?"

"No," replied my aunt, "I have not come for any law."

"That's right, ma'am," said Mr. Wickfield, "you had better come for anything else." His hair was quite white now, though his eyebrows were still black. He had a very agreeable face, and, I thought, was handsome. There was a certain richness in his complexion, which I had been long accustomed, under Pegotty's tuition, to connect with port wine; and I fancied it was in his voice too, and referred his growing corpulency to the same cause. He was very cleanly dressed, in a blue coat, striped waistcoat, and nankeen trousers; and his fine fitted shirt and embrid neckcloth looked unusually soft and white, reminding my strolling fancy (I call to mind) of the plumage on the breast of a swan.

"This is my nephew," said my aunt.

"Wasn't aware you had one, Miss Trotwood," said Mr. Wickfield.

"My grand-nephew, that is to say," observed my aunt.

"Wasn't aware you had a grand-nephew, I give you my word," said Mr. Wickfield.

"I have adopted him," said my aunt, with a wave of her hand, importing that his knowledge and his ignorance were all one to her," and I have brought him here, to put him to a school where he may be thoroughly well taught, and well treated. Now tell me where that school is, and what it is, and all about it."

"Before I can advise you properly," said Mr. Wickfield—"the old question, you know. What's your motive in this?"

"Dence take the man!" exclaimed my aunt.

"Always fishing for motives, when they're on the surface! Why, to make the child happy and useful."

"It must be a mixed motive, I think," said Mr. Wickfield, shaking his head and smiling incredulously.

"A mixed fiddlestick!" returned my aunt.

"You claim to have one plain motive in all you do yourself. You don't suppose, I hope, that you are the only plain dealer in the world?"

"Ay, but I have only one motive in life, Miss Trotwood," he rejoined, smiling. "Other people have dozens, scores, hundreds. I have only one. There's the difference. However, that's beside the question. The best school! Whatever the motive, you want the best!"

My aunt nodded assent.

"At the best we have," said Mr. Wickfield, considering, "your nephew couldn't board just now."

"But he could board somewhere else, I suppose?" suggested my aunt.

Mr. Wickfield thought I could. After a little discussion, he proposed to take my aunt to the school, that she might see it and judge for herself; also, to take her, with the same object, two or three houses where he thought I could be boarded. My aunt embracing the proposal, we were all going up together, when I stopped and said:

"Our little friend here might have someotive, perhaps, for objecting to the arrangement. I think we had better leave him behind?"

My aunt seemed disposed to contest the point, but to facilitate matters I said I would gladly remain behind, if they pleased; and returned to Mr. Wickfield's office, where I sat down again in the chair I had first occupied, to await his return.

It so happened that this chair was opposite a narrow passage, which ended in the little circular room where I had seen Uriah Heep's pale face looking out of window. Uriah, having made the pony to a neighboring stable, was at work at a desk in this room, which had a brass frame, on top to hang papers upon, and on which the writer was making a copy of a letter he was handing. Though his face was towards me, I thought for some time, the writing being between us, that he could not see me; but looking that way more attentively, it made me uncomfortable to observe that, every now and then, his sleepless eyes would come below the writing, like two red suns and stealthily stare at me for a minute at a time, during which his pen was pretended to go, as cleverly as ever. I made several attempts to get out of their way—and to standing on a chair to look at a map on the other side of the room, and poring over the columns of a Kentish newspaper—but they always attracted me back again; and whenever I looked toward those two red suns, I was sure to find them either just rising or just setting.

At length, much to my relief, my aunt and Mr. Wickfield came back, after a pretty long absence. They were not so successful as I could have wished; for though the advantages of the school were undeniable, my aunt had not approved of any of the boarding-houses proposed for me.

"It's very unfortunate," said my aunt, "don't know what to do, Trot."

"It does happen unfortunately," said Mr. Wickfield. "But I'll tell you what you can do, Miss Trotwood."

"What's that?" inquired my aunt.

"Leave your nephew here, for the present. He's a quiet fellow. He won't disturb me at it. It's a capital house for study. As quiet as a monastery, and almost as roomy. Leave him here."

My aunt evidently liked the offer, though she was delicate of accepting it. So did I.

"Come, Miss Trotwood," said Mr. Wickfield. "This is the way out of the difficulty. It's on a temporary arrangement, you know. It don't act well, or don't quite accord with mutual convenience. You can easily go to the right about. There will be time to see the issue left place for him in the meanwhile. You'll..."
determine to leave him here for the pres-
am very much obliged to you," said my
"and so is he, I see; but—"
come! I know what you mean," cried Mr.
"You shall not be oppressed by the
t of favors, Miss Trotwood. You may pay
in, if you like. We won't be hard about
it, but you shall pay if you will."
In that understanding," said my aunt,
ugly it doesn't lessen the real obligation, I
be very glad to leave him."
"Then come and see my little housekeeper,"
Mr. Wickfield.
accordingly went up a wonderful old stair-
with a balustrade so broad that we might
gone up that, almost as easily; and into a
old drawing-room, lighted by some three or
of the quarter windows I had looked up at
street; which had old oak seats in them,
seemed to have come of the same trees as the
oak floor, and the great beams in the ceil-
it was a prettily furnished room, with a
and some lively curtains in red and green,
c flowers. It seemed to be all old nooks
ners; and in every nook and corner there
queer little table, or cupboard, or book-
or seat, or something or other, that made
ther was not such another good corner
room; until I looked at the next one, and
it equal to it, if not better. On everything
was the same air of retirement and cleanli-
that marked the house outside.

Wickfield tapped at a door in a corner of
ossed wall, and a girl of about my own age
quently and kissed him. On her face, I
mediately the placid and sweet expression
ady whose picture had looked at me down-
. It seemed to my imagination as if the
had grown wonderfully, and the original re-
child. Although her face was quite
and happy, there was a tranquillity about
about her—a quiet, good, calm spirit,—
never have forgotten; that I never shall.

was his little housekeeper, his daughter
Mr. Wickfield said. When I heard how
it, and saw how he held her hand, I
what one motive of his life was,
with keys in it; and she looked as sad and
reet a housekeeper as the old house could
she listened to her father as he told her
me, with a pleasant face; and when he had
, proposed to my aunt that we should
stairs and see my room. We all went to-
her before us. A glorious old room it
more oak beams, and diamond panes; he
broad balustrade going all the way up
cannot call to mind where or when, in my
ood, I had seen a stained glass window in a
able. Nor do I recollect its subject. But I
that when I saw her turn round, in the
grave light of the old staircase, and wait for us,
above, I thought of that window; and I associ-
something of its tranquil brightness with Ag-
Wickfield ever afterwards.

My aunt was as happy as I was, in the ar-
angement made for me, and we went down to
the drawing-room again, well pleased and grati-
. As she would not hear of staying to dinner,
est she should by any chance fail to arrive at
home with the grey pony before dark; and as I
prehend Mr. Wickfield knew her too well, to
argue any point with her; some lunch was pro-
vided for her there, and Agnes went back to her
governess, and Mr. Wickfield to his office. So
we were left to take leave of one another with
any restraint.

She told me that everything would be ar-
anged for me by Mr. Wickfield, and that I should want
for nothing, and gave me the kindest words and
the best advice.

"Trot," said my aunt in conclusion, "be a
credit to yourself, to me, and Mr. Dick, and
Heaven be with you!"

I was greatly overcome, and could only thank
her, again and again, and send my love to Mr.
Dick.

"Never," said my aunt, "be mean in any-
things; never be false; never be cruel. Avoid
those three vices, Trot, and I can always be hope-
of you."

I promised, as well as I could, that I would
not abuse her kindness or forget her admonition.

"The pony's at the door," said my aunt, "and
I am off! Stay here."

With these words she embraced me hastily,
and went out of the room, shutting the door after
her. At first I was startled by so abrupt a de-
parture, and almost feared I had displeased her;
but when I looked into the street, and saw bow
exactly she got into the chaise, and drove
away without looking up, I understood her bet-
ter, and did not do her that injustice.

By five o'clock, which was Mr. Wickfield's
dinner-hour, I had mustered up my spirits again,
and was ready for my knife and fork. The cloth
was only laid for us two; but Agnes was waiting
in the drawing-room before dinner, went down
with her father, and sat opposite to him at table. I
 doubted whether he could have dined without
her.

We did not stay there, after dinner, but came
upstairs into the drawing-room again; in one
swung corner of which, Agnes sat; glasses for her
father, and a decanter of port wine. I thought he
would have missed its usual flavor, if it had been
put there for him by any other hands.

There he sat, taking his wine, and taking a
good deal of it, for two hours; while Agnes
played on the piano, worked, and talked to him
and me. He was, for the most part, gay and
cheerful with us; but sometimes his eyes rested
on her, and he fell into a brooding state, and was
silent. She always observed this quickly, I
thought, and always roused him with a question.
me I should certainly be happy under Doctor Strong, who was one of the gentlest of men.

"There may be some, perhaps—I don't know that there are—who abuse his kindness," said Mr. Wickfield. "Never be one of those, Trotwood, in anything. He is the least suspicious of mankind; and whether that's a merit, or whether it's a blunder, it deserves consideration in all dealings with the Doctor, great or small."

He spoke, I thought, as if he were weary, or dissatisfied with something; but I did not pursue the question in my mind, for dinner was just then announced, and we went down and took the same seats as before.

We had scarcely done so, when Uriah Heep put his red head and his bony hand at the door, and said:

"Here's Mr. Maldon begs the favor of a word, sir."

"I am, but this moment quit of Mr. Maldon," said his master.

"Yes, sir," returned Uriah; "but Mr. Maldon has come back, and he begs the favor of a word."

As he held the door open with his hand, Uriah looked at me, and looked at Agnes, and looked at the dishes, and looked at the plates, and looked at every object in the room, I thought—yet seemed to look at nothing; he made such an appearance all the while of keeping his red eyes fixedly on his master.

"I beg your pardon. It's only to say, on reflection," observed a voice behind Uriah, as Uriah's head was pushed away, and the speaker's subsection—"may excuse me for this intrusion—that it seems I have no choice in the matter, the sooner I go abroad the better. My cousin Annie did say, when we talked of it, that she liked to have her friends within reach rather than to have them banished, and the old Doctor—"

"Doctor Strong, was that?" Mr. Wickfield interrupted, gravely.

"Doctor Strong, of course," replied the other: "I told him the old Doctor; it's all the same, you know."

"And so it is," returned Mr. Wickfield.

"Well, Doctor Strong, said the other, "Doctor Strong and of the same mind, I believe. But as it appears from the course you take with me that he has changed his mind, why there's no need to be hard, except that the sooner I am off the sooner. Therefore, I thought I'd come back and say that the sooner I am off, the better. When a pleasure is to be made into the waste, it's of no use dignifying on the back."

"Your wish is as my desire, as possible, as soon as Mr. Maldon, you may expect upon, said Mr. Wickfield.

"Thank you," said the other. "Much obliged. I don't want to look a girl's-horse in the mouth, which is a gentle request on the other's, and I will not, my cousin Annie would surely manage it the next way. My cousin Annie would only have to say to her husband—do I follow you?—" Mr. Wickfield.

"Quite so," returned the other; "I only have to say, that she wanted such a thing to be so and so; and it would be, as a matter of course."

"And why as a matter of course, don't?" asked Mr. Wickfield, suddenly.

"Why, because Annie's a charming girl, and the old Doctor—Doctor Strong—is not quite a charming young boy," Jack Maldon, laughing. "No offense to Mr. Wickfield. I only mean that I think compensation is fair and reasonable in the case of marriage."

"Compensation to the lady, sir?" Mr. Wickfield, gravely.

"To the lady, sir," Mr. Jack Maldon, laughing. But appearing to remark Wickfield went on with his dinner in a sedate, immovable manner, and that was no hopes of making him relax a muscle, as he added:

"However, I have said what I can say, and, with another apology for this, I may take myself off. Of course I shan't do anything in the direction, in consideration, the matter to be arranged, between you and me. I am not to be referred to, up at the Doctor's.

"Have you dined?" asked Mr. Wickfield, motion of his hand towards the table.

"Thank you. I am going to dine," Maldon, "with my cousin Annie. Go on, Mr. Wickfield, without observing the visage of any. Agnes set the glasses and in the same corner, and Mr. Wickfield, to drink, and drank a good deal. Agnes the glass to him, set by him, and we talked, and played some games at dominoes. In good time she made tea; and at one when I brought down my books, locked them, and showed me what she knew (which was as much matter, though so vast, and what was the best way to learn it), I expressed them. I see her, with her natural, pleasant manner, and I hear her calm voice, as I write these words. That was as much as I was to say. Mr. Wickfield, without observing the visage of any, put the light of the window to the wall, and then I was to the bed."

"According, Mr. Wickfield, would only have to say to her husband—do I follow you?—" Mr. Wickfield.
before. But I confess I entertained
impression."

Strong regarded him with a puzzled
look, which almost immediately sub-

a smile that gave me great encourage-

it was full of amiability and sweetness,

was a simplicity in it, and indeed in his

inner, when the studious, pondering frost
as got through, very attractive and hope-

ung scholar like me. Repeating "no,"

the least," and other short assurances

ar purport, Doctor Strong logged on be-

a queer, uneven pace; and we followed:

field looking grave, I observed, and his

head to himself, without knowing

him.

hool-room was a pretty large hall, on the

side of the house, confronted by the

ure of some half-dozen of the great urns,

anding a peep of an old secluded garden;

to the Doctor, where the peaches were

on the sunny south wall. There were

t aloes, in tabs, on the turf outside the

; the broad hard leaves of which plant

if they were made of painted tin) have

, by association, been symbolical to me

and retirement. About five-and-twenty

studiously engaged at their books

in, but they rose to give the Doc-

morning, and remained standing when

Mr. Wickfield and me. w boy, young gentlemen," said the Doc-

owood Copperfield."

Adams, who was the head-boy, then

out of his place and welcomed me. He

as a young clergyman, in his white cravat,

as very affable and good-humored; and

d me my place, and presented me to the

a gentlemanly way that would have

my ease, if anything could.

ed to me so long, however, since I had

such boys, or among any companions

age, except Mick Walker and Mealey

that I felt as strange as ever I have done

life. I was so conscious of having passed

scenes of which they could have no

, and of having acquired experiences

my age, appearance, and condition as

, that I half believed it was an impos-

me there as an ordinary little schoolboy,

ome, in the Mudstone and Grinby time,

short or long it may have been, so un-

be sports and games of boys, that I knew

ward and inexperienced in the common-

s belonging to them. Whatever I had

ad so slipped away from me in the sorriest

my life from day to night, that now, when

mained about what I knew, I knew

and was put into the lowest form of the

But, troubled as I was, by my want of

d of book-learning too, I was made

more uncomfortable by the considera-
t, in what I did know, I was much farther

my companions than in what I did

not. My mind ran upon what they would think,

they knew of my familiar acquaintance with

the King's Bench Prison? Was there anything

about me which would reveal my proceedings in

connection with the Micawber family—all those

pawnings, and sellings, and suppers—in spite of

myself? Suppose some of the boys had seen me

coming through Canterbury, way-worn and

ragged, and should find me out? What would

they say, who made so light of money, if they

could know how I had scraped my halfpence

together, for the purchase of my daily savoy

and beer, or my slices of pudding? How would it

affect them, who were so innocent of London

life and London streets, to discover how knowing I

was (and was ashamed to be) in some of the

meanest phases of both? All this ran in my head

so much, on that first day at Doctor Strong's, that

felt distrustful of my slightest look and gesture;

shrunk within myself whenever I was

approached by one of my new schoolfellows; and

hurried off, the minute school was over, afraid of

committing myself in my response to any friendly

notice or advance.

But there was such an influence in Mr. Wick-

field's old house, that when I knocked at it, with

my new school-books under my arm, I began to

feel my uneasiness softening away. As I went

up to my airy old room, the grave shadow of the

staircase seemed to fall upon my doubts and fears,

and to make the past more indistinct. I sat there,

sturdily conning my books, until dinner-time (we

were out of school for good at three); and went

down, hopefully of becoming a passable sort of boy

yet.

Agnes was in the drawing-room, waiting for

her father, who was detained by some one in his

office. She met me with her pleasant smile, and

asked me how I liked the school. I told her I

should like it very much, I hoped; but I was

a little strange to it at first.

"You have never been to school," I said, "have

you?"

"Oh yes! Every day."

"Ah, but you mean here, at your own home?"

"Papa couldn't spare me to go anywhere else," she answered, smiling and shaking her

head. "His housekeeper must be in his house,

you know."

"He is very fond of you, I am sure," I said.

She nodded "Yes," and went to the door to

listen for his coming, that she might meet him on

the stairs. But, as he was not there, she came

back again.

"Mamma has been dead ever since I was

born," she said, in her quiet way. "I only

know her picture, down-stairs. I saw you looking at it

yesterday. Did you think whose it was?"

I told her yes, because it was so like herself.

"Papa says so, too," said Agnes, pleased.

"Hark! That's papa now!"

Her bright calm face lighted up with pleasure

as she went to meet him, and as they came in,

hand in hand. He greeted me cordially, and told
me I should certainly be happy under Doctor Strong, who was one of the gentlest of men.

There may be some, perhaps—I don't know that there are—who abuse his kindness," said Mr. Wickfield. "Never be one of those, Trotwood, in anything. He is the least suspicious of mankind; and whether that's a merit, or whether it's a blemish, it deserves consideration in all dealings with the Doctor, great or small."

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We had scarcely done so, when Uriah Heep put in his red head and his lamp hand at the door, and said:

"Here's Mr. Maldon begs the favor of a word, sir."

"I am but this moment quit of Mr. Maldon," said his master.

"Yes, sir," returned Uriah; "but Mr. Maldon has some book, and he begs the favor of a word."

As he held the door open with his hand, Uriah looked at me, and looked at Agnes, and looked at the dishes, and looked at the plates, and looked at every object in the room, I thought—but seemed to look at nothing; he made such an appearance all the while of keeping his red eyes dutifully on his master.

"I beg your pardon. It's only to say, on reflection," observed a voice behind Uriah, as Uriah's head was pushed away, and the speaker's substituted—"pray excuse me for this intrusion—that as it seems I have no choice in the matter, the sooner I go abroad the better. My cousin Annie did say, when we talked of it, that she liked to have her friends within reach rather than to have them banished, and the old Doctor—"

"Doctor Strong, was that?" Mr. Wickfield interrupted, gravely.

"Doctor Strong, of course," returned the other; "I called him the Old Doctor; it's all the same, you know."

"I don't know," returned Mr. Wickfield.

"Well, Doctor Strong," said the other. "Doctor Strong was of the same mind, I believe. But as it appears from the course you take with me that he has changed his mind, why there's no more to be said, except that the sooner I am off, the better. Therefore, I thought, I'd come back and say, that the sooner I am off, the better. When a plunge is to be made into the water, it's of no use lingering on the bank."

"There shall be as little lingering as possible, in your case, Mr. Maldon, you may depend upon it," said Mr. Wickfield.

"Thank'ee," said the other. "Much obliged. I don't want to look a gift-horse in the mouth, which is not a gracious thing to do; otherwise, I dare say, my cousin Annie could easily arrange it in her own way. I suppose Annie would only have to say to the old Doctor—"

"Meaning that Mrs. Strong would only have to say to her husband—do I follow you?" Wickfield.

"Quite so," returned the other; "only to say, that she wanted such a thing to be so and so, and it would be so, as a matter of course."

"And why as a matter of course, don't?" asked Mr. Wickfield, sedately.

"Why, because Annie's a charming girl, and the old Doctor—Doctor Strong—is not quite a charming young boy," Jack Maldon, laughing. "No offence to Mr. Wickfield. I only mean that I suppose compensation is fair and reasonable in the case of marriage."

"Compensation to the lady, sir?" asked Wickfield, gravely.

"To the lady, sir," Mr. Jack Maldon laughing. But appearing to remark. Wickfield went on with his dinner in a sedate, immovable manner, and at no time showed the least appearance of looking at him.

"However, I have said what I can say, and, with another apology for this, I may take myself off. Of course I shall say your directions, in considering the matter to be arranged, between you and me and not to be referred to, up at the Doctor's."

"Have you dined?" asked Mr. Wickfield, with a motion of his hand towards the table.

"Thank'ee, I am going to dine," said Jack Maldon: "with my cousin Annie. Good evening."

Mr. Wickfield, without rising, looked thoughtfully as he went out. He was a tall, thin, rather round-faced man, with a handsome face, a quick manner, and a bold air. And this was the first I ever saw of Jack Maldon; whom I had not expected so soon, when I heard the Doctor open that morning.

When we had dined, we went up-stairs, where everything went on exactly as on the previous day. Agnes set the glasses and in the same corner, and Mr. Wickfield sat down; and drank, and played some games at domino. In good time she made tea; and after I had brought down my books, Joe and them, and showed me what she knew (which was no slight matter, though she was), and what was the best way to understand them. I saw her, with her motherly, placid manner, and I heard her calm voice, as I write these words. The for all good, which she came to exercise at a later time, began already to deck my breast. I love little Emily, and I do Agnes—no, not all in that way—but there is goodness, peace, and truth, Agnes is; and that the work light of the window in the church, soon long ago, to
URIAH HEEP'S HUMILITY.

I answered, quickly.

"What work, then?" I asked.

"I am improving my legal knowledge, Master Copperfield," said Uriah. "I am going through Tidd's Practice. Oh, what a writer Mr. Tidd is, Master Copperfield!"

My stool was such a tower of observation, that as I watched him reading on again, after this rapturous exclamations, and following up the lines with his fore-finger, I observed that his nostrils, which were thin and pointed, with sharp dints in them, had a singular and most uncomfortable way of expanding and contracting themselves; that they seemed to twinkle instead of his eyes, which hardly ever twinkled at all.

"I suppose you are quite a great lawyer?" I said, after looking at him for some time.

"Me, Master Copperfield?" said Uriah. "Oh, no! I'm a very humble person.

It was no fancy of mine about his hands, I observed; for he frequently ground the palms against each other as if to squeeze them dry and warm, besides often wiping them, in a stealthy way on his pocket-handkerchief.

"I am well aware that I am the humblest person going," said Uriah Heep, modestly; "let the other be where he may. My mother is likewise a very humble person. We live in a numble abode, Master Copperfield, but have much to be thankful for. My father's former calling was humble. He was a sexton."

"What is he now?" I asked.

"He is a paraker of glory at present, Master Copperfield," said Uriah Heep. "But we have much to be thankful for. How much have I to be thankful for in living with Mr. Wickfield!"
I asked Uriah if he had been with Mr. Wickfield long?

"I have been with him going on four years, Master Copperfield," said Uriah; shutting up his book, after carefully marking the place where he had left off. "Since a year after my father's death. How much have I to be thankful for, in that! How much have I to be thankful for, in Mr. Wickfield's kind intention to give me my articles, which would otherwise not lay within the humble means of mother and self!"

"Then, when your article time is over, you'll be a regular lawyer, I suppose?" said I.

"With the blessing of Providence, Master Copperfield," returned Uriah.

"Perhaps you'll be a partner in Mr. Wickfield's business, one of these days," I said, to make myself agreeable; "and it will be Wickfield and Heep, or Heep and Wickfield.

"Oh no, Master Copperfield," returned Uriah, shaking his head, "I am much too unable for that!"

He certainly did look uncomminonally like the careworn face on the beam outside my window, as he sat, in his humility, eyeing me sideways, with his mouth widened, and the creases in his cheeks.

"Mr. Wickfield is a most excellent man, Master Copperfield," said Uriah. "If you have known him long, you know it. I am sure, much better than I can inform you.

I replied that I was certain he was; but that I had not known him long myself, though he was a friend of my aunt's.

"Oh, indeed, Master Copperfield," said Uriah. "Your aunt is a sweet lady, Master Copperfield!"

He had a way of writhing when he wanted to express enthusiasm, which was very ugly; and which diverted my attention from the compliment he had paid my relation, to the snaky twistings of his throat and body.

"A sweet lady, Master Copperfield!" said Uriah Heep. "She has a great admiration for Miss Agnes, Master Copperfield, I believe?"

"I said, "Yes," boldly; not that I knew anything about it, Heaven forgive me!

"I hope you have, too, Master Copperfield," said Uriah. "But I am sure you must have."

"Everybody must have," I returned.

"Oh, thank you, Master Copperfield," said Uriah Heep, "for that remark! It is so true! Umble as I am, I know it is so true! Oh, thank you, Master Copperfield!"

He writhed himself quite off his stool in the excitement of his feelings, and, being off, began to make arrangements for going home.

"Mother will be expecting me," he said, referring to a pale, inscrutable-faced watch in his pocket, "and getting uneasy; for, though we are very umble, Master Copperfield, we are much attached to one another. If you would come and see us, any afternoon, and take a cup of tea at our lowly dwelling, mother would be as pleased as a Princess if she asked me to."

I said I should be glad to come.

"Thank you, Master Copperfield," Uriah, putting his book away upon his knees, "if you stop here, some day.

I said I was going to bring a book, believed, as long as I remained at school; and, "Oh, indeed!" exclaimed Uriah, "think you would come into the business, Master Copperfield?"

I protested that I had no views of that and that no such scheme was entertained in behalf of Jack; but Uriah insistedreplying to all my assurances, "Oh, I don't think you would, and, "Oh, indeed, Master Copperfield, I think you would, certainly!" over and over.

Being, at last, ready to leave the office at night, he asked me if it would suit and if I was able to have the light put out; and averting 'Yes,' instantly extinguished his shaking hands with me—his hand felt in the dark—he opened the door into a very little, and crept out, and shut it, and to grieve my way back into the house; and some trouble and a fall over his sill was the proximate cause, I suppose, of my being near him.

His old hat, with which danalitical anesin he was me and little Emily to the Spanish Steps drownned.

I got a little the better of my miasms. I went to school next day, and a good better next day, and so shocked it off thanin less than a fortnight I was quite and happy, among my new compe and awkward enough in their games, and enough in their studies; but custom proved me in the first respect, I hoped work in the second. Accordingly, we were very hard, both in play and in earnest, great commendation. And in a very how the Murdstone and Grinby life became to me that I hardly believed in it, well, my life grew so familiar, that I seemed being leading it a long time.

Doctor Strong's was an excellent different from Mr. Crummles as good as is. It was very gravely and decorously on a sound system; with an appeal, in to the honor and good faith of the devoted intention to rely on their those qualities unless they proved them worthy of it, which worked wonders.

That we had a part in the management place, and in sustaining its character at. Hence, we soon became warmly attach am sure I did for one, and I never knew
THE IDOL OF THE SCHOOL.

Any other boy being otherwise—and with a good will, desiring to do it credit.
nobler games out of hours, and plenty of but even then, as I remember, we were oken of in the town, and rarely did any o, by our appearance or manner, to the son of Doctor Strong and Doctor Strong's

3 of the higher scholars boarded in the house, and through them I learned, at hand, some particulars of the Doctor's

As, how he had not yet been married month to the beautiful young lady I had the study, whom he had married for love; had not a sixpence, and had a world of stions (so our fellows said) ready to swarm out of house and home. Also, how

or's cogitating manner was attributable being always engaged in looking out for roots; which, in my innocence and ignorance, supposed to be a botanical flavor on the part, especially as he always looked at me when he walked about, until I underst that they were roots of words, with a view

Dictionaire which he had in contemplations, our head-boy, who had a turn for stics, had made a calculation, I was in the time this Dictionary would take in going, on the Doctor's plan, and at the rate of going. He considered that it e done in one thousand six hundred and sixty years, counting from the Doctor's last, second to the beautiful young lady I had

the Doctor himself was the idol of the school; and it must have been a badly

d school if he had been anything else, for the kindest of men; with a simple faith that might have touched the stone hearts of many upon the wall. As he walked down that part of the court-yard which he side of the house, with the stray rooks daws looking after him with their heads styly, as if they knew how much more; they were in worldly affairs than he, if

of vagabond could only get near enough reeking shoes to attract his attention to tence of a tale of distress, that vagabond lie for the next two days. It was so in the house that the masters and headm pains to cut these marauders off at end to get out of windows, and turn them e court-yard, before they could make the ware of their presence; which was some ppily effected within a few yards of him, his knowing anything of the matter, as d to and fro. Outside of his own domain, icted, he was a very sheep for the . He would have taken his gaiters off to give away. In fact, there was a story among us (I have no idea, and never had, authority, but I have believed it for so are that I feel quite certain it is true), frosty day, one winter-time, he actually

with his gaiters on a beggar-woman, who 6 occasoned some scandal in the neighborhood by exhibiting a fine infant from door to door, wrapped in those garments, which were universally recognised, being as well known in the vicinity as the Cathedral. The legend added that the only person who did not identify them was the Doctor himself, who, when they were shortly afterwards displayed at the door of a little second-hand shop of no very good repute, where such things were taken in exchange for gin, was more than once observed to handle them approvingly, as if admiring some curious novelty in the pattern, and considering them an improvement on his own.

It was very pleasant to see the Doctor with his pretty young wife. He had a fatherly, benignant way of showing his fondness for her, which seemed in itself to express a good man. I often saw them walking in the garden where the peaches were, and I sometimes had a nearer observation of them in the study or the parlor. She appeared to me to take great care of the Doctor, and to like him very much, though I never thought her vitally interested in the Dictionary: some cumbersome fragments of which work the Doctor always carried in his pockets, and in the lining of his hat, and generally seemed to be expounding to her as they walked about.

I saw a good deal of Mrs. Strong, both because she had taken a liking for me on the morning of my introduction to the Doctor, and was always afterwards kind to me, and interested in me: and because she was very fond of Agnes, and was often backwards and forwards at our house. There was a curious constraint between her and Mr. Wickfield, I thought (of whom she seemed to be afraid), that never wore off. When she came there of an evening, she always shrunk from accepting his escort home, and ran away with me instead. And sometimes, as we were running gaily across the Cathedral yard together, expecting to meet nobody, we would meet Mr. Jack Maldon, who was always surprised to see us.

Mrs. Strong's mamma was a lady I took great delight in. Her name was Mrs. Markleham; but our boys used to call her the Old Soldier, on account of her generalship, and the skill with which she marshalled great forces of relations against the Doctor. She was a little, sharp-eyed woman, who used to wear, when she was dressed, one unchangeable cap, ornamented with some artificial flowers, and two artificial butterflies supposed to be hovering about the flowers. There was a superstition among us that this cap had come from France, and could only originate in the workmanship of that ingenious nation; but all I certainly know about it is, that it always made its appearance of an evening, whereupon Mrs. Markleham made her appearance; that it was carried about to friendly meetings in a Hindoo basket; that the butterflies had the gift of trembling constantly; and that they improved the shining hours at Dr. Strong's expense, like busy bees.
I observed the Old Soldier—not to adopt the name disrespectfully—to pretty good advantage, on a night which is made memorable to me by something else I shall relate. It was the night of a little party at the Doctor's, which was given on the occasion of Mr. Jack Maldon's departure for India, whither he was going as a cadet, or something of that kind; Mr. Wickfield having at length arranged the business. It happened to be the Doctor's birthday, too. We had had a holiday, had made presents to him in the morning, had made a speech to him through the head-boy, and had cheered him until we were hoarse, and until he had shed tears. And now, in the evening, Mr. Wickfield, Agnes, and I, went to have tea with him in his private capacity.

Mr. Jack Maldon was there, before us. Mrs. Strong, dressed in white, with cherry-colored ribbons, was playing the piano, when we went in; and he was leaning over her to turn the leaves. The clear red and white of her complexion was not so blooming and flower-like as usual, I thought, when she turned round; but she looked very pretty, wonderfully pretty.

"I have forgotten, Doctor," said Mrs. Strong's mamma, when we were seated, "to pay you the compliments of the day; though they are, as you may suppose, very far from being mere compliments in my case. Allow me to wish you many happy returns."

"I thank you, ma'am," replied the Doctor.

"Many, many, many, happy returns," said the Old Soldier. "Not only for your own sake, but for Annie's and John Maldon's, and many other people's. It seems but yesterday to me, John, that you were a little creature, a head shorter than Master Copperfield, making baby love to Annie behind the gooseberry bushes in the back-garden."

"My dear mamma," said Mrs. Strong, "never mind that now."

"Annie, don't be absurd," returned her mother. "If you are to blush to hear of such things, now you are an old married woman, when are you not to blush to hear of them?"

"Old?" exclaimed Mr. Jack Maldon. "Annie? Come?"

"Yes, John," returned the Soldier. "Virtually, an old married woman. Although not old by years—for when did you ever hear me say, or who has ever heard me say, that a girl of twenty was old by years!—your cousin is the wife of the Doctor, and, as such, what I have described her. It is well for you, John, that your cousin is the wife of the Doctor. You have found in him an influential and kind friend, who will be kinder yet, I venture to predict, if you deserve it. I have no false pride. I never hesitate to admit, frankly, that there are some members of our family who want a friend. You were one yourself, before your cousin's influence raised one for you."

The Doctor, in the goodness of his heart, waved his hand as if to make light of it, and save Mr. Jack Maldon from any further reminder. But Mrs. Markleham changed her chair for one next to the Doctor's, and putting her fan on his knee, said:

"No, really, my dear Doctor, you must excuse me if I appear to dwell on this matter, because I feel so very strongly. I call it quite my own. It is such a subject of mine. You do me a blessing to us. You really are a Boon, you know."

"Nonsense, nonsense," said the Doctor.

"No, no, I beg your pardon," retorted the Old Soldier. "With nobody present, but our dearest and confidential friend Mr. Wickfield, I can consent to be put down. I shall begin to see the privileges of a mother-in-law, if you go on like that, and scold you. I am perfectly honest and outspoken. What I am saying, is, what I said when you first overpowered me with surprise—"you remember how surprised I was?—by proposing for Annie. Not that there was anything very much out of the way, in the mere fact of the proposal—it would be ridiculous to say that; but because, you having known her poor father, having known her from a baby six months old, I hadn't thought of you in such a light at all, or dealt as a marrying man in any way,—simply till you know."


"But I do mind," said the Old Soldier, putting his fan upon his lips. "I mind very much. I call these things that I may be contradicted if I am wrong. Well! Then I spoke to Annie, and told her what had happened. I said, 'My dear here's Doctor Strong has positively been and made the subject of a handsome declaration to our offer. Did I press it in the least? No. I said, 'Now, Annie, tell me the truth this moment; is your heart free?' 'Mamma,' she said crying, 'I am extremely young'—which was perfectly true—and 'I hardly know if I have a heart at all. Then, my dear,' I said, 'you may rely upon it, it's free. At all events, my love,' said I, 'Doctor Strong is in an agitated state of mind, and will be answered. He cannot be kept in his present state of suspense.' 'Mamma,' said Annie, still crying, 'would he be unhappy without me? Why would I honor and respect him so much, that I think I will have him.' So it was settled. And then, and not till then, I said to Annie, 'Annie, Doctor Strong will not only be your husband, but he will represent your late father: he will represent the head of our family, he will represent the wisdom and station, and I may say the means of our family; and will be, in short, a Boon to it. I used the word at the time, and I have used it again; to-day. If I have any merit it is consistency.'"

The daughter had sat quite silent and still during this speech, with her eyes fixed on the ground; her cousin standing near her, and looking on the ground too. She now said very softly, in a trembling voice:

"Mamma, I hope you have finished."
and his genteel air, and the commands in his voice, all complete!
Mr. Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, his hand, "this is indeed a meeting
intended to impress the mind with the instability and uncertainty of all
short, it is a most extraordinary meeting
along the street, reflecting upon something turning up (of which
sent rather suddenly), I find a young
head turn up, who is connected with
century period of my life; I may say,
ing-point of my existence. Copper
fellows, how do you do?"
"I say—I really cannot say—that I was
you," said Mr. Micawber, waving his
old, and settling his chin in his shirt
he is tolerably convalescent. The
quirer derive their sustenance from
in short," said Mr. Micawber, in
of confidence, "they are weaned.
is, at present, my travelling
She will be rejoiced. Copperfield, to
quaintance with one who has proved
c on a worthy minister at the foot
ship would be delighted to see her.
very good," said Mr. Micawber.
then smiled, settled his chin
within about him.
covered my friend Copperfield,"
Micawber gently, and without ad
himself particularly to any one, "not
it a partaking of social meal in com
a widow lady, and one who is ap
fickling— in short," said Mr. Micaw
his bursts of confidence, "her
it an honor to be presented.
no less. Under these circumstances,
Micawber known to Uriah Heep
; which I accordingly did. As
themselves before him, Mr. Micaw
, and waved his hand in his most
end of my friend Copperfield's," said
, "has a personal claim upon my
too humble, sir," said Mrs. Heep, "my
, to be the friends of Master Copper
been so good as to take his tea with
are thankful to him for his company;
sir, for your notes."
"returned Mr. Micawber, with a bow,
oblige: and what are you doing?
Still in the wine trade?"
"excessively anxious to get Mr. Micawber
replied, with my hat in my hand, and a
, I have no doubt, that I was a pupil
's.
"I am extremely happy to hear it.
Although a mind like my friend Copperfield's:"
"to Uriah and Mrs. Heep; "does not require that
cultivation which, without his knowledge of men
and things, it would require, still it is a rich
seething with latent vegetation—in short," said
Mr. Micawber, smiling, in another burst of con
, "it is an intellect capable of getting up the
classes to any extent."

Uriah, with his long hands slowly twirling over
another, made a ghastly writhe from the waist
worn, to express his concurrence in this esti
mation of me.

"Shall we go and see Mrs. Micawber, Sir?" I
said, to get Mr. Micawber away.

"If you will do her that favor, Copperfield,"
replied Mr. Micawber, rising. "I have no scruple
in saying, in the presence of our friends here, that
I am a man who has, for some years, contended
against the pressure of pecuniary difficulties."
I knew he was certain to say something of this
kind; he always would be so boastful about his
difficulties. "Sometimes I have risen superior to
my difficulties. Sometimes my difficulties
have—in short, have flourished me. There have
been times when I have administered a succes
sion of favors to them; there have been times
when they have been too many for me, and I have
given in, and said to Mrs. Micawber, in the
words of Cato, 'Plato, thou reasonest well. It's
all up now. I can show fight no more.' But at
no time of my life," said Mr. Micawber, "have I
enjoyed a higher degree of satisfaction than in
pouring my griefs (if I may describe difficulties,
chiefly arising out of warrants of attorney and
promissory notes at two and four months, by
that word) into the bosom of my friend Copper
field."

Mr. Micawber closed this handsome tribute by
saying, "Mr. Heep! Good evening. Mrs. Heep! Your
servant," and then walking out with me in
his most fashionable manner, making a good deal
of noise on the pavement with his shoes, and
humming a tune as he went.

It was a little inn where Mr. Micawber put up,
and he occupied a little room in it, partitioned off
from the commercial room, and strongly flavored
with tobacco-smoke. I think it was over the
kitchen, because a warm greasy smell appeared
to come up through the chinks in the floor, and
there was a flabby perspiration on the walls. I
know it was near the bar, on account of the smell
of spirits and jingling of glasses. Here, recum
bent on a small sofa, underneath a picture of a
race-horse, with her head close to the fire, and her
feet pushing the mustard off the damsel-waiter at
the other end of the room, was Mrs. Micawber, to
whom Mr. Micawber entered first, saying, "My
dear, allow me to introduce to you a pupil of
Doctor Strong's."

I noticed, by-the-bye, that although Mr. Micaw
ber was just as much confused as ever about my
age and standing, he always remembered, as a
genteel thing, that I was a pupil of Doctor
Strong's.
before you, in your cousin Annie. Imitate her virtues as nearly as you can."

Mrs. Markleham fanned herself, and shook her head.

"Farewell, Mr. Jack," said the Doctor, standing up; on which we all stood up. "A prosperous voyage out, a thriving career abroad, and a happy return home!"

We all drank the toast, and all shook hands with Mr. Jack Maldon; after which he hastily took leave of the ladies who were there, and hurried to the door, where he was received, as he got into the chaise, with a tremendous broadside of cheers discharged by our boys, who had assembled on the lawn for the purpose. Running in among them to swell the ranks, I was very near the chaise when it rolled away; and I had a lively impression made upon me in the midst of the noise and dust, of having seen Mr. Jack Maldon rattie past with an agitated face, and something cherry-colored in his hand.

After another broadside for the Doctor, and another for the Doctor’s wife, the boys dispersed, and I went back into the house, where I found the guests all standing in a group about the Doctor, discussing how Mr. Jack Maldon had gone away, and how he had borne it, and how he had felt it, and all the rest of it. In the midst of these remarks, Mrs. Markleham cried: "Where’s Annie?"

No Annie was there; and when they called to her, no Annie replied. But all pressing out of the room, in a crowd, to see what was the matter, we found her lying on the hall floor. There was great alarm at first, until it was found that she was in a swoon, and that the swoon was yielding to the usual means of recovery; but the Doctor, who had lifted her head upon his knee, put her curls aside with his hand, and said, looking around:

"Poor Annie! She’s so faithful and tender-hearted! It’s the parting from her old playfellow and friend, her favorite cousin, that has done this. Ah! It’s a pity! I am very sorry!"

When she opened her eyes, and saw where she was, and that we were all standing about her, she arose with assistance: turning her head as she did so to lay it on the Doctor’s shoulder—or to hide it, I don’t know which. We went into the drawing-room, to leave her with the Doctor and her mother; but she said, it seemed, that she was better than she had been since morning, and that she would rather be brought among us; so they brought her in, looking very white and weak, I thought, and sat her on a sofa.

"Annie, my dear," said her mother, doing something to her dress. "See here! You have lost a bow. Will anybody be so good as find a ribbon: a cherry-colored ribbon?"

It was the one she had worn at her bosom. We all looked for it; I myself looked everywhere, I am certain; but nobody could find it.

"Do you recollect where you had it last, Annie?" said her mother.

I wonder how I could have thought she looked white, or anything but burning red, when she answered that she had had it safe, a little while ago, she thought, but it was not worth looking for.

Nevertheless, it was looked for again, still not found. She treated that there might be no more searching; but it was all sought in a desultory way, until she was quite well, and the company took their departure.

We walked very slowly home, Mr. Wickfield, Agnes, and I; Agnes and I admiring the moonlight, and Mr. Wickfield scarcely raising his eyes from the ground. When we, at last, reached our own door, Agnes discovered that she had left her little reticule behind. Delighted to be of any service to her, I ran back to fetch it.

I went into the upper-room where it had been left, which was deserted and dark. But a clue of communication between that and the Doctor’s study, where there was a light, being open, I passed on there, to say what I wanted, and to get a candle.

The Doctor was sitting in his easy-chair by his fireside, and his young wife was on a stool at his feet. The Doctor, with a complacent smile, was reading aloud some manuscript explanation or statement of a theory out of that Illuminated Dictionary, and she was looking up at him. But, with such a face as I never saw. It was so beautiful in its form, it was so ashy pale, it was so fixed in its abstraction, it was so full of a wild, sleep-walking dreamy horror of I don’t know what. The eyes were wide open, and her brow was haid in two rich clusters on her shoulders, and on her white dress, disorderly on the waist of the lost ribbon. Distinctly as I recollect her face, I cannot say of what it was expressive. I cannot even say of what it is expressive to me any rising again before my older judgment. 

My entrance, and my saying what I wanted, roused her. It disturbed the Doctor too, for when I went back to replace the candle I had taken from the table, he was patting her head, in his fatherly way, and saying he was a merciless drunk to let her tempt him into reading on; and he would have her go to bed.

But she asked him, in a rapid, urgent manner, to let her stay. To let her feel assured I heard her murmur some broken words to this effect that she was in his confidence that night. And as she turned again towards him, after glanced at me as I left the room and went out at the door I saw her cross her hands upon his knee, and look up at him with the same face, something quieted, as he resumed his reading.

It made a great impression on me, and I remembered it a long time afterwards, as I shall have occasion to narrate when the time comes.
I DINE WITH THE MICAWBERS.

On the next forenoon, I found Mr. Micawber in the parlor, who had called to say that the dinner could take place as proposed. When I asked him if the remittance had come, he pressed my hand and departed.

As I was looking out of window that same evening, it surprised me, and made me rather uneasy, to see Mr. Micawber and Uriah Heep walking past, arm in arm: Uriah humbly sensible of the honor that was done him, and Mr. Micawber feeling a bland delight in extending his patronage to Uriah. But I was still more surprised, when I went to the little hotel next day at the appointed two-hour, which was four o'clock, to find, from what Mr. Micawber said, that he had gone home with Uriah, and had drunk brandy-and-water at Mrs. Heep's.

"And I'll tell you what, my dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, "your friend Heep is a young fellow who might be attorney-general. If I had known that young man, at the period when my difficulties came to a crisis, all I can say is, that I believe my creditors would have been a great deal better managed than they were."

I hardly understood how this could have been, seeing that Mr. Micawber had paid them nothing at all as it was; but I did not like to ask. Neither did I like to say, that I hoped he had not been too communicative to Uriah; or to inquire if they had talked much about me. I was afraid of hurt to Mr. Micawber's feelings, or, at all events, Mrs. Micawber's, she being very sensitive; but I was uncomfortable about it, too, and often thought about it afterwards.

We had a beautiful little dinner. Quite an decent dish of fish; the kidney-end of a loin of veal, roasted; fried sausage-meat; a partridge, and a pudding. There was wine, and there was tea, also; and after dinner Mrs. Micawber made a bowl of hot punch with her own hands.

Mr. Micawber was uncommonly convivial. I never saw him such good company. He made his ace shine with the punch, so that it looked as if it had been varnished all over. He got cheerfully sentimental about the town, and proposed success to me; observing that Mrs. Micawber and himself had been made extremely snug and comfortable there, and that he never should forget the agreeable hours they had passed in Canterbury. He proposed me afterwards; and he, and Mrs. Micawber, and I, took a review of our past acquaintance, in the course of which, we sold the property all over again. Then I proposed Mrs. Micawber; or, at least, said, modestly, "If you'll allow me, Mrs. Micawber, I shall now have the pleasure of wishing your health, mam.'" On which Mr. Micawber delivered an oration on Mrs. Micawber's character, and said she had ever been his guide, philosopher, and friend, and that he would recommend me, when I came to a marrying time of life, to marry such another woman, if such another woman could be found.

As the punch disappeared, Mr. Micawber became still more friendly and convivial. Mrs. Micawber's spirits becoming elevated, too, we sang "Auld Lang Syne." When we came to "Here's a hand, my trusty friend," we all joined hands round the table; and when we declared we would "take a right good Willie Waight," and hadn't the least idea what it meant, we were really affected.

In a word, I never saw anybody so thoroughly jovial as Mr. Micawber was, down to the very last moment of the evening, when I took a hearty farewell of myself and his amiable wife. Conse quently, I was not prepared, at seven o'clock next morning, to receive the following commination, dated half-past nine in the evening; a quarter of an hour after I had left him:

"My Dear Young Friend,

"The day is over—all is over. Hiding the ravages of care with a sickly mask of mirth, I have not informed you of this evening, that there is no hope of the remittance! Under these circumstances, alike humiliating to endure, humiliating to contemplate, and humiliating to relate, I have discharged the pecuniary liability, contracted at this establishment, by giving a note of hand, made payable fourteen days after date, at my residence, Pentonville, London. When it becomes due, it will not be taken up. The result is destruction. The belt is impending, and the tree must fall.

"Let the wretched man who now addresses you, my dear Copperfield, he a beacon to you through life. He writes with that intention, and in that hope. If he could think himself of so much use, one gleam of day might, by possibility, penetrate into the cheerless dungeon of his remaining existence—though his longevity is, at present (to say the least of it), extremely problematical.

"This is the last communication, my dear Copperfield, you will ever receive.

"From
"The
"Bezzered Outcast,
"Wilkins Micawber."

I was so shocked by the contents of this heart-rending letter, that I ran off directly towards the little hotel, with the intention of taking it on my way to Dr. Strong's, and trying to soothe Mr. Micawber with a word of comfort. But, halfway there, I met the London coach with Mr. and Mrs. Micawber up behind; Mr. Micawber, the very picture of tranquil enjoyment, smiling at Mrs. Micawber's conversation, eating walnuts out of a paper bag, with a bottle sticking out of his brevus packet. As they did not see me, I thought it best, all things considered, not to see them. So, with a great weight taken off my mind, I turned into a by-street that was the nearest way to school, and felt, upon the whole, relieved that they were gone: though I still liked them very much, nevertheless.
"was—let me see—sixteen hundred and forty-nine was the date of King Charles's execution. I think you said sixteen hundred and forty-nine?"

"Yes, sir."

"I don't know how it can be," said Mr. Dick, sorely puzzled and shaking his head. "I don't think I am as old as that."

"Was it in that year that the man appeared, sir?" I asked.

"Why, really," said Mr. Dick, "I don't see how it can have been in that year, Trotwood. Did you get that date out of history?"

"Yes, sir."

"I suppose history never lies, does it?" said Mr. Dick, with a gleam of hope.

"Oh dear, no, sir!" I replied, most decisively. I was ingenious and young, and I thought so.

"I can't make it out," said Mr. Dick, shaking his head. "There's something wrong, somewhere. However, it was very soon after the mistake was made of putting some of the trouble out of King Charles's head into my head, that the man first came. I was walking out with Miss Trotwood after tea, just at dark, and there he was, close to our house."

"Walking about?" I inquired.

"Walking about?" repeated Mr. Dick. "Let me see. I must recollect a bit. N—no, no: he was not walking about."

I asked, as the shortest way to get at it, what he was doing.

"Well, he wasn't there at all," said Mr. Dick, "until he came up behind her, and whispered. Then she turned round and fainted, and I stood still and looked at him, and he walked away; but that he should have been hiding ever since (in the ground or somewhere), is the most extraordinary thing!"

"Has he been hiding ever since?" I asked.

"To be sure he has," retorted Mr. Dick, nodding his head gravely. "Never came out, till last night! We were walking last night, and he came up behind her again, and I knew him again."

"And did he frighten my aunt again?"

"All of a shiver," said Mr. Dick, counterfeiting that affection and making his teeth chatter. "'Hold by the palings,' cried. But Trotwood, come here," getting me close to him, that he might whisper very softly; "'why did she give him money, boy, in the moonlight?"

"He was a beggar, perhaps."

Mr. Dick shook his head, as utterly renouncing the suggestion; and having replied a great many times, and with great confidence, "No beggar, no beggar, no beggar, sir!" went on to say, that from his window he had afterwards, and late at night, seen my aunt give this person money outside the garden rails in the moonlight, who then shrank away—into the ground again, as he thought probable—and was seen no more: while my aunt came hurriedly and secretly back into the house, and had, even that morning, been quite different from her usual self; which preyed on Mr. Dick's mind.

I had not the least belief, in the start of the story, that the unknown was anything but the illusion of Mr. Dick's, and one of the lines of the ill-fated Prince who occasioned him so much curiosity; but after some reflection I began to entertain the question whether an attempt, or fear of an attempt, might have been twice made to take poor Mr. Dick himself from under my own protection, and whether my aunt, the strength of whose kind feeling towards him I knew from herself, might have been induced to pay a price to his peace and quiet. As I was already attached to Mr. Dick, and very solicitous for his welfare, my fears favored this supposition; and for a long time his Wednesday hardly ever came round, without my entertaining a misgiving that he would not be on the coach-box as usual. He always appeared, however, grey-headed, smiling, and happy; and he never had anything more to tell me of the man who could frighten my aunt.

These Wednesdays were the happiest days of Mr. Dick's life; they were far from being the least happy of mine. He soon became known to every boy in the school; and though he never took a positive part in any game but kite-flying, was as deeply interested in all our sports as any one among us. How often have I seen him, perched on a marble or pegtop, looking up with a face of untutored interest, and breathless at the critical times! How often, at bare and hounds, have I seen him mounted on a little knoll, cheering the whole field on to action, and waving his hat above his grey head, obtruding on King Charles the Martyr's head, and all belonging to it! How many a summer-hour have I known to be but blissful minutes to him in the cricket-field! How many winter days have I seen him, standing blue-nosed, in the snow and cold wind, looking at the boys going down the long slide, and clapping his worsted gloves in suspense.

He was an universal favorite, and his interest in little things was transfixing. He cut oranges into such devices as none of us had an idea of. He could make a boat out of anything, from a skewer upwards. He could two campboxes into chessmen; fashion Roman chatlets from old court cards; make spiked wheels out of cotton reels, and birdcages of old wire. But he was greatest of all, perhaps, in the griddles of string and straw; with which we were all persuaded he could do anything that could be done by hands.

Mr. Dick's renown was not long confined to us. After a few Wednesdays, Doctor Strong himself made some inquiries of me about him, and I told him all my aunt had told me; which interested the Doctor so much that he requested me on the occasion of his next visit, to be present to him. This ceremony I performed; and the Doctor begging Mr. Dick, whenever he should not find me at the coach-office, to come on there, and rest himself until my morning's work was out,
oon passed into a custom for Mr. Dick to come as a matter of course, and, if we were a little 3, as often happened on a Wednesday, to walk out the courtyard, waiting for me. Here he did the acquaintance of the Doctor’s beautiful young wife (paler than formerly, all this time; we rarely seen by me or any one, I think; and so gay, but not less beautiful), and so became more familiar by degrees, until, at last, would come into the school and wait. He always sat in a particular corner, on a particular seat, which was called “Dick,” after him; here he would sit, with his grey head bent forward, attentively listening to whatever might be going on, with a profound veneration for the learning he had never been able to acquire.

This veneration Mr. Dick extended to the Doctor, whom he thought the most sublime and accomplished philosopher of any age. It was long before Mr. Dick ever spoke to him otherwise than addressed; and even when he and the Doctor met, struck up quite a friendship, and would walk together by the hour, on that side of the court which was known among us as The Doctor’s “alk.” Mr. Dick would pull off his hat at intervals to show his respect for wisdom and knowledge. How it ever came about, that the Doctor began to read out scraps of the famous Dictionary, in these walks, I never knew; perhaps he felt all the same, at first, as reading to himself. However, it passed into a custom too; and Mr. Dick, listening with a face shining with pride and pleasure, in his heart of hearts, believed the dictionary to be the most delightful book in the world.

As I think of them going up and down before the school-room windows—the Doctor reading with his complacent smile, an occasional flourish of the manuscript, or grave motion of his head; and Mr. Dick listening, enchanted by interest, with his poor wits calmly wandering God knows where, upon the wings of hard words—I think of it as one of the pleasantest things, in a quiet way, that I have ever seen. I feel as if they might be walking to and fro for ever, and the world right somehow be the better for it. As if a thousand things, it makes a noise about, were not oneself so good for it, or me.

Agnes was one of Mr. Dick’s friends, very con; and in coming to the house, he made acquaintance with Uriah. The friendship between himself and me increased continually, and it was maintained on this odd footing: that, while Mr. Dick came professedly to look after me as my guardian, he always consulted me in any little matter of doubt that arose, and invariably guided himself by my advice; not only having a high respect for my native sagacity, but considering that I inherited a good deal from my aunt.

One Thursday morning, when I was about to walk with Mr. Dick from the hotel to the coach-office before going back to school (for we had an hour’s school before breakfast), I met Uriah in the street, who reminded me of the promise I had made to take tea with himself and his mother; adding, with a writhe, “But I didn’t expect you to keep it, Master Copperfield, we’re so very umble.”

I really had not yet been able to make up my mind whether I liked Uriah or detested him; and I was very Goutful about it still, as I stood looking him in the face in the street. But I felt it quite an affront to be supposed proud, and said I only wanted to be asked.

“Oh, if that’s all, Master Copperfield,” said Uriah, “and it really isn’t our umbleness that prevents you, will you come this evening? But if it is our umbleness, I hope you won’t mind owning to it, Master Copperfield; for we are all well aware of our condition.”

I said I would mention it to Mr. Wickfield, and if he approved, as I had no doubt he would, I would come with pleasure. So, at six o’clock that evening, which was one of the early office evenings, I announced myself as ready, to Uriah.

“Mother will be proud, indeed,” he said, as we walked away together. “Or she would be proud, if it wasn’t sinful, Master Copperfield.”

“Yet you didn’t mind supposing I was proud this morning,” I returned.

“Oh dear, no, Master Copperfield!” returned Uriah. “Oh, believe me, no! Such a thought never came into my head! I shouldn’t have deemed it at all proud if you had thought us too umble for you. Because we are so very umble.”

“Have you been studying much law lately?” I asked, to change the subject.

“Oh, Master Copperfield,” he said, with an air of self-denial, “my reading is hardly to be called study. I have passed an hour or two in the evening, sometimes, with Mr. Tigg.”

“Rather hard, I suppose?” said I.

“He is hard to me sometimes,” returned Uriah. “But I don’t know what he might be, to a gifted person.”

After beating a little tune on his chin as he walked on, with the two forefingers of his skeleton right hand, he added:

“There are expressions, you see, Master Copperfield—Latin words and terms—in Mr. Tigg, that are trying to a reader of my humble attainments.”

“Would you like to be taught Latin?” I said, briskly. “I will teach it you with pleasure, as I learn it.”

“Oh, thank you, Master Copperfield,” he answered, shaking his head. “I am sure it’s very kind of you to make the offer, but I am much too umble to accept it.”

“What nonsense, Uriah!”

“Oh, indeed, you must excuse me, Master Copperfield! I am greatly obliged, and I should like it of all things, I assure you; but I am far too umble. There are people enough to tread upon me in my lowly state, without my going outrage to their feelings by possessing learning. Learning ain’t for me. A person like myself isn’t.
better not aspire. If he is to get on in life, he must get on humbly, Master Copperfield."

I never saw his mouth so wide, or the creases in his cheeks so deep, as when he delivered himself of these sentiments; shaking his head all the time, and writhing modestly.

"I think you are wrong, Uriah," I said. "I dare say there are several things that I could teach you, if you would like to learn them."

"Oh, I don't doubt that, Master Copperfield," he answered, "not in the least. But not beingumble yourself, you don't judge well, perhaps, for them that are. I won't provoke my betters with knowledge, thank you. I'm much too humble. Here is my humble dwelling, Master Copperfield!"

We entered a low, old-fashioned room, walked straight into from the street, and found there Mrs. Heep, who was the dead image of Uriah, only short. She received me with the utmost humility, and apologised to me for giving her son a kiss, observing that, lowly as they were, they had their natural affections, which they hoped would give no offence to any one. It was a perfectly decent room, half parlor and half kitchen, but not at all a snug room. The tea-things were set upon the table, and the kettle was boiling on the hob. There was a chest of drawers with an escritoire top, for Uriah to read or write at of an evening; there was Uriah's blue bag lying down and vomiting papers; there was a company of Uriah's books commanded by Mr. Tidd; there was a corner cupboard; and there were the usual articles of furniture. I don't remember that any individual object had a bare, pinched, spare look; but I do remember that the whole place had.

It was perhaps a part of Mrs. Heep's humility, that she still wore weeds. Notwithstanding the lapse of time that had occurred since Mr. Heep's decease, she still wore weeds. I think there was some compromise in the cap; but otherwise she was as weedy as in the early days of her mourning.

"This is a day to be remembered, my Uriah, I am sure," said Mrs. Heep, making the tea, "when Master Copperfield pays us a visit."

"I said you'd think so, mother," said Uriah.

"If I could have wished father to remain among us for any reason," said Mrs. Heep, "it would have been, that he might have known his company this afternoon."

I felt embarrassed by these compliments; but I was sensible, too, of being entertained as an honoured guest, and I thought Mrs. Heep an agreeable woman.

"My Uriah," said Mrs. Heep, "has looked forward to this, sir, a long while. He had his fears that our unblineness stood in the way, and I joined in them myself. Umble we are, umble we have been, umble we shall ever be," said Mrs. Heep.

"I am sure you have no occasion to be so, ma'am," I said, "unless you like."

"Thank you sir," retorted Mrs. Heep. "We know our station and are thankful in it."

I found that Mrs. Heep gradually got nearer to me, and that Uriah gradually got opposite to me, and that they respectfully placed me with the choicest of the eatables on the table. There was nothing particularly choicest there, to be sure; but I took the will for the deed, and felt that they were very attentive. Presently they began to talk about aunt, and then I told them about mine, and about fathers and mothers, and then I told them about mine; and then Mrs. Heep began to talk about aunt's in-law, and then I began to tell her about mine; but stopped, because my aunt had advised me to observe a silence on that subject. A tender young cork, however, would have had no more chance against a pair of corkscrews, or a tender young tooth against a pair of corkscrews, or a little shuttlecock against two battledores, than I had against Uriah and Mrs. Heep. They did just what they liked with me, and warm things out of me that I had no desire to tell, with certainty I blush to think of: the more especially as, in my juvenile frankness, I took some credit to myself for being so confidential, and felt that I was quite the patron of my two respectful entertainers.

They were very fond of one another; that was certain. I take it, that had its effect upon me; a touch of nature; but the skill with which the one followed up whatever the other said, was a touch of art which I was still less proof against. When there was nothing more to be got out of me about myself (for of the Murdstone and Griswold life, and on my journey, I was dumb), they began about Mr. Wickfield and Agnes. Uriah threw the ball to Mrs. Heep, Mrs. Heep caught it and threw it back to Uriah, Uriah kept it up a little while, then sent it back to Mrs. Heep, and so they went on tossing it about until I had no idea who had got it, and was bewildered. The ball itself was always changing too. Now it was Mr. Wickfield, now Agnes, now the excellence of Mr. Wickfield, now my admiration of Agnes; now the extent of Mr. Wickfield's business and resources, now our domestic life after dinner; now the wine that Mr. Wickfield took, the reasons why he took it, and the play that it was he took so much; now one thing, now another, then everything at once; and all the time, without appearing to speak very often, or to do anything but sometimes encourage them a little, for fear they should be overcome by their humility and the honor of my company, I found myself perpetually letting out something or other that I had no business to let out, and seeing the effect of it in the twinkling of Uriah's dimmed nostrils.

I had begun to be a little uncomfortable, and to wish myself well out of the visit, when a man coming down the street passed the door—it stood open to air the room, which was warm, the weather being close for the time of year—came back again, looked in, and walked in, exclaiming loudly, "Copperfield! Is it possible?"

It was Mr. Murdstone! It was Mr. Murdstone, with his eye-glasses, and his walking-stick, and his
time came for my leaving Doctor Strong's, and been very happy there, I had a great attachment for the Doctor, and I was eminent and distinguished in that little world. For these reasons I was sorry to go; but for other reasons, unsubstantial enough, I was glad. Misty ideas of being a young man at my own disposal, of the importance of attaching to a young man at his disposal, of the wonderful things to be seen and done by that magnificent animal, and the wonder-effects he could not fail to make upon society, and me away. So powerful were these visionary musings in my boyish mind, that I seem, according to my present way of thinking, to have left school without natural regret. The separation has not made the impression on me, that other separations have. I try in vain to recall the feeling, not so much as to the time, place, or circumstances. I suppose the opening prospect confused me, for I knew my juvenile experiences went on, and that life was more than a great fairy story, which I was just about to go in to read, than anything else.

My aunt and I had held many grave deliberations on the coming to which I should be devoted. I was a young woman, and had endeavored to find a satisfactory answer to her often-repeated questions, “What would you like to be?” But I had no particular liking, that I could discover, for anything. If I could have been inspired with a knowledge of the science of navigation, taken the command of a fast-sailing expedition, and gone round the world on a triumphant voyage of discovery, I think I might have considered myself completely suited. But in the absence of any such miraculous provision, my desire was to try myself to some pursuit that would not lie heavily upon her purse; and to do my duty in whatever it might be.

Mr. Dick had regularly assisted at our courses, with a meditative and sage demeanor. He never made a suggestion but once; and on that occasion (I don’t know what put it in his head), he suddenly proposed that I should be “a writer.” My aunt received this proposal so ungraciously, that he never ventured on a second; but ever afterwards confined himself to taking watchfully at her her suggestions, and testing his money.

“Trot, I tell you what, my dear,” said my aunt, one morning in the Christmas season when she left school, “as this knotty point is still unsettled, and as we must not make a mistake in the decision if we can help it, I think we had better take a little breathing-time. In the meantime, you must try to look at it from a new point of view, and not as a schoolboy.”

“I will, aunt.”

“It has occurred to me,” pursued my aunt, “that a little change, and a glimpse of life out of doors, may be useful, in helping you to know your own mind, and form a cooler judgment, should you ever have to take a little journey now.

Suppose you were to go down into the old part of the country again, for instance, and see that— that out-of-the-way woman with the savagest of names,” said my aunt, rubbing her nose, “for she could never thoroughly forgive Peggoty for being so called.

“Of all things in the world, aunt, I should like it best!”

“Well,” said my aunt, “that’s lucky, for I should like it too. But it’s natural and rational that you should like it. And I am very well persuaded that whatever you do, Trot, will always be natural and rational.”

“I hope so, aunt.”

“Your sister, Betsey Trotwood,” said my aunt, “would have been as natural and rational a girl as ever breathed. You’ll be worthy of her, won’t you?”

“I hope I shall be worthy of you, aunt. That will be enough for me.”

“It’s a mercy that poor dear baby of a mother of yours didn’t live,” said my aunt, looking at me approvingly, “or she’d have been so vain of her boy by this time, that her soft little head would have been completely turned, if there was anything of it left to turn.” (My aunt always excused any weakness of her own in my behalf, by transferring it in this way to my poor mother.)

“Bless me, Trotwood, how you do remind me of her!”

“Pleasedly, I hope, aunt?” said I.

“He’s as like her, Dick,” said my aunt, emphatically, “he’s as like her, as she was that afternoon, before she began to fret. Bless my heart, he’s as like her, as he can look at me out of his two eyes!”

“Is he indeed?” said Mr. Dick.

“And he’s like David, too,” said my aunt, decisively.

“He is very like David!” said Mr. Dick.

“But what I want you to be, Trot,” resumed my aunt, “—I don’t mean physically, but morally; you are very well physically—is, a firm fellow. A firm firm fellow, with a will of your own. With resolution,” said my aunt, shaking her cap at me, and clutching her hand. “With determination. With character, Trot. With strength of character that is not to be influenced, except on good reason, by anybody, or by anything. That’s what I want you to be. That’s what your father and mother might both have been, Heaven knows, and been the better for it.”

I intimated that I hoped I should be what she described.

“That you may begin in a small way, to have a reliance upon yourself, and to act for yourself,” said my aunt, “I shall send you upon your trip, alone. I did think, once, of Mr. Dick’s going with you; but, on second thoughts, I shall keep him to take care of me.”

Mr. Dick, for a moment, looked a little disappointed; until the honor and dignity of having to take care of the most wonderful woman in the world, restored the sunshine to his face.
Mrs. Micawber was amazed, but very glad to see me. I was very glad to see her too, and, after an affectionate greeting on both sides, sat down on the small sofa near her.

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "if you will mention to Copperfield what our present position is, which I have no doubt he will like to know, I will go and look at the paper the while, and see whether anything turns up among the advertisements."

"I thought you were at Plymouth, ma'am," I said to Mrs. Micawber, as he went out.

"My dear Master Copperfield," she replied, "we went to Plymouth."

"To be on the spot," I hinted.

"Just so," said Mrs. Micawber. "To be on the spot. But the truth is, talent is not wanted in the Custom House. The local influence of my family was quite unavailing to obtain any employment in that department, for a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities. They would rather have not a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities. He would only show the deficiency of the others. Apart from which," said Mrs. Micawber, "I will not disfigure from you, my dear Master Copperfield, that when that branch of my family which is settled in Plymouth became aware that Mr. Micawber was accompanied by myself, and by little Wilkins and his sister, and by the twins, they did not receive him with that ardor which he might have expected, being so newly released from captivity. In fact," said Mrs. Micawber, lowering her voice,—"this is between ourselves—our reception was cool."

"Dear me!" I said.

"Yes," said Mrs. Micawber. "It is truly painful to contemplate mankind in such an aspect. Master Copperfield, but our reception was, decidedly, cool. There is no doubt about it. In fact, that branch of my family which is settled in Plymouth became quite personal to Mr. Micawber, before he had been there a week."

I said, and thought, that they ought to be ashamed of themselves.

"Still, so it was," continued Mrs. Micawber, "under such circumstances, what could a man of Mr. Micawber's spirit do? But one obvious course was left. To borrow of that branch of my family the money to return to London, and to return at any sacrifice."

"Then you all came back again, ma'am?" I said.

"We all came back again," replied Mrs. Micawber. "Since then, I have consulted other branches of my family on the course which it is most expedient for Mr. Micawber to take—for I maintain that he must take some course, Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, argumentatively, "it is clear that a family of six, not including a domestic, cannot live upon air."

"Certainly, ma'am," said I.

"The opinion of those other branches of my family," pursued Mrs. Micawber, "is, that Mr. Micawber should immediately turn his attention to coal."

"To what, ma'am?"

"To coal," said Mrs. Micawber. "To the coal trade. Mr. Micawber was induced to think on inquiry, that there might be an opening for a man of his talent in the Medway Coal Trade. This Mr. Micawber very properly said, the first step to be taken clearly was, to come and see the Medway. Which we came and saw. I say we, Master Copperfield; for I never will," said Mrs. Micawber with emotion, "I never will desert Mr. Micawber."

I murmured my admiration and appreciation. "We came," repeated Mrs. Micawber, "and saw the Medway. My opinion of the condition on that river, is, that it may require talent, but that it certainly requires capital. That Mr. Micawber has capital, Mr. Micawber has said. We saw, I think, the greater part of the Medway; and that is my individual conclusion. Being so near here, Mr. Micawber was of opinion that it would be rash not to come on, and see the Cathedral. Firstly, on account of its being so well worth seeing, and our never having seen it; secondly, on account of the great probability of something turning up in a cathedral town. We have been here," said Mrs. Micawber, "two days. Nothing has, as yet, turned up; and it may not surprise you, my dear Master Copperfield, so much as it would a stranger, to know that we are at present waiting for a remittance from London, to discharge our pecuniary obligations at this hotel. Until the arrival of that remittance," said Mrs. Micawber with much feeling, "I am cut off from my home (I allude to lodgings in Fentonville), from my boy and girl, and from my twins."

I felt the utmost sympathy for Mr. and Mrs. Micawber in this anxious extremity, and said as much to Mr. Micawber, who now returned adding that I only wished I had money enough to lend them the amount they needed. Mr. Micawber's answer expressed the disturbance of his mind. He said, shaking hands with me, "Copperfield, you are a true friend; but when the worst comes to the worst, no man is without a friend who is possessed of shavin material."

At this dreadful hint Mrs. Micawber threw her arms round Mr. Micawber's neck and entreated him to be calm. He wept; but so far recovered, almost immediately, as to ring the bell for the waiter, and bespeak a hot kidney pudding and a plate of shrimps for breakfast in the morning.

When I took my leave of them, they pressed me so much to come and dine before they went away, that I could not refuse. But, as I knew I could not come next day, when I should have a good deal to prepare in the evening, Micawber arranged that he would call at Strong's in the course of the morning (having sent a message that the remittance would arrive by that post), and propose the day after (it would suit me better). Accordingly, I was early.
I DINE WITH THE MICAWBERS.

ool next forenoon, and found Mr. Micawber in parlor; who had called to say that the dinner
uld take place as proposed. When I asked
1 if the remittance had come, he pressed my
id and departed.

As I was looking out of window that same
ning, it surprised me, and made me rather
easy, to see Mr. Micawber and Urlah Heep
1k past, arm in arm: Uriah humbly sensible of
"the honor that was done him, and Mr. Micawber
cring a bland delight in extending his patronage
Urlah. But I was still more surprised, when I
nt to the little hotel next day at the appointed
ner-hour, which was four o'clock, to find, from
at Mr. Micawber said, that he had gone home
th Urlah, and had drunk brandy-and-water at
a, Heep's.

"And I'll tell you what, my dear Copperfield," he
Mr. Micawber, "your friend Heep is a young
low who might be attorney-general. If I had
own that young man, at the period when my
ne was to come to an end, all I can say is, that
ve my creditors would have been a great
better managed than they were."

I hardly understood how this could have been, and
ing that Mr. Micawber had paid them nothing
all as it was; but I did not like to ask. Neither
d I like to say, that I hoped he had not been too
communicative to Uriah; or to inquire if they
ld talked much about me. I was afraid of hurt-
g Mr. Micawber's feelings, or, at all events,
, Micawber's, she being very sensitive; but I
was uncomfortable about it, too, and often thought
out it afterwards.

We had a beautiful little dinner. Quite an
ent dish of fish; the kidney-end of a loin of
, roasted; fried sausage-meat; a partridge, id
a pudding. There was wine, and there was
tong ale; and after dinner Mrs. Micawber made
a bowl of hot punch with her own hands.

Mr. Micawber was uncommonly convivial. I
ever saw him in such good company. He made his
shine with the punch, so that it looked as if
had been varnished all over. He got cheerfully
imental about the town, and proposed success
it; observing that Mrs. Micawber and herself
ld been made extremely snug and comfortable
ere, and that he never should forget the agree-
bles hours they had passed in Canterbury. He
posed me afterwards; and he, and Mrs. Mi-
wer, and I, took a review of our past acquaint-
ee, in the course of which, we sold the property
over again. Then I proposed Mrs. Micawber;
, at least, said, modestly, "If you'll allow me,
rs. Micawber, I shall now have the pleasure of
taking your health, ma'am." On which Mr.
Micawber delivered an eulogium on Mrs. Micaw-
's character, and said she had ever been his
side, philosopher, and friend, and that he would
recommend me, when I came to a marrying time
Life, to marry such another woman, if such
other woman could be found.

As the punch disappeared, Mr. Micawber be-
more still more friendly and convivial. Mrs. Mi-
cawber's spirits becoming elevated, too, we sang
"Auld Lang Syne." When we came to "Here's
hand, my trusty frore," we all joined hands
round the table; and when we declared we would
"take a right guite Willie Waught," and hadn't
the least idea what it meant, we were really af-
fected.

In a word, I never saw anybody so thoroughly
jovial as Mr. Micawber was, down to the very last
moment of the evening, when I took a hearty
farewell of himself and his amiable wife. Conse-
quently, I was not prepared, at seven o'clock
next morning, to receive the following communi-
cation, dated half-past nine in the evening; a
quarter of an hour after I had left him:

"My Dear Young Friend,

"The die is cast—all is over. Hiding the
ravages of care with a sickly mask of mirth, I
have not informed you, this evening, that there is
no hope of the remittance! Under these circum-
stances, alike humiliating to endure, humiliating
to contemplate, and humiliating to relate, I have
discharged the pecuniary liability, contracted at
this establishment, by giving a note of hand,
made payable fourteen days after date, at my
residence, Pentonville, London. When it be-
comes due, it will not be taken up. The result is
destruction. The bolt is impending, and the tree
must fall.

"Let the wretched man who now addresses
you, my dear Copperfield, be a beacon to you
through life. He writes with that intention, and
in that hope. If he could think himself of so
much use, one gleam of day might, by possibility,
penetrate into the cheerless dungeon of his re-
aining existence—though his longevity is, at
present (to say the least of it), extremely
problematical.

"This is the last communication, my dear
Copperfield, you will ever receive

"From

"The

"Beggared Outcast,

"Wilkins Micawber."

I was so shocked by the contents of this heart-
rending letter, that I ran off directly towards the
little hotel with the intention of taking it on my
way to Dr. Strong's, and trying to soothe Mr.
Micawber with a word of comfort. But, half-way
there, I met the London coach with Mr. and Mrs.
Micawber up behind; Mr. Micawber, the very
picture of tranquil enjoyment, smiling at Mrs.
Micawber's conversation, eating walnuts out of a
paper bag, with a bottle sticking out of his breast
pocket. As they did not see me, I thought it
best, all things considered, not to see them. So,
with a great weight taken off my mind, I turned
into a by-street that was the nearest way to
school, and fell, upon the whole, relieved that
they were gone: though I still liked them very
much, nevertheless.
better not aspire. If he is to get on in life, he
must get on umbly, Master Copperfield.'

I never saw his mouth so wide, or the creases
in his cheeks so deep, as when he delivered him-
self of these sentiments; shaking his head all the
time, and writhing modestly.

"I think you are wrong, Uriah," I said. "I
dare say there are several things that I could
teach you, if you would like to learn them."

"Oh, I don't doubt that, Master Copperfield,"
he answered; "not in the least. But not being
umbly yourself, you don't judge well, perhaps,
for them that are. I won't provoke my betters
with knowledge, thank you. I'm much too um-
ble. Here is my umble dwelling, Master Copper-
field!"

We entered a low, old-fashioned room, walked
straight into from the street, and found there Mrs.
Heep, who was the dead image of Uriah, only
short. She received me with the utmost humility,
and apologised to me for giving her son a kiss,
observing that, lowly as they were, they had their
natural affections, which they hoped would give
no offence to any one. It was a perfectly decent
room, half parlor and half kitchen, but not at all
a snug room. The tea-things were set upon the
table, and the kettle was boiling on the hob.
There was a chest of drawers with an escritoire
top, for Uriah to read or write at of an evening;
there was Uriah's blue bag lying down and vom-
iting papers; there was a company of Uriah's
books commanded by Mr. Tigg; there was a cor-
nor cupboard; and there were the usual articles
of furniture. I don't remember that any indi-
vidual object had a bare, pinched, spare look;
but I do remember that the whole place had.

It was perhaps a part of Mrs. Heep's humility,
that she still wore weeds. Notwithstanding the
lapse of time that had occurred since Mr. Heep's
decease, she still wore weeds. I think there was
some compromise in the cap; but otherwise she
was as weedy as in the early days of her mourning.

"This is a day to be remembered, my Uriah, I
am sure," said Mrs. Heep, making the tea, "when
Master Copperfield pays us a visit."

"I said you'd think so, mother," said Uriah.

"If I could have wished father to remain
among us for any reason," said Mrs. Heep, "it
would have been, that he might have known his
company this afternoon."

I felt embarrassed by these compliments; but
I was sensible, too, of being entertained as an
honored guest, and thought Mrs. Heep an agree-
able woman.

"My Uriah," said Mrs. Heep, "has looked
forward to this, sir; a long while. He had his
fears that our unhappiness stood in the way, and I
joined in them myself. Umbly we are, umbly we
have been, umbly we shall ever be," said Mrs.
Heep.

"I am sure you have no occasion to be so,
ma'am," I said, "unless you like."

"Thank you sir," retorted Mrs. Heep. "We
know our station and are thankful in it."

I found that Mrs. Heep gradually got nearer to
me, and that Uriah gradually got opposite to me,
and that they respectfully piled me with the
choicest of the cabbages on the table. There
was nothing particularly choice there, to be sure;
but I took the will for the deed, and felt that they
were very attentive. Presently they began to talk
about aunts, and then I told them about mine;
and about fathers and mothers, and then I told
them about mine; and then Mrs. Heep began to
talk about fathers-in-law, and then I began to talk
about mine; and stopped, because my aunt
had advised me to observe a silence on that sub-
ject. A tender young cork, however, would have
had no more chance against a pair of corkscrews,
or a tender young tooth against a pair of dentist,
or a little shuttlecock against two billiards,
than I had against Uriah and Mrs. Heep. They
did just what they liked with me; and warned
things out of me that I had no desire to tell, with
a certainty I blush to think of: the more especially
as, in my juvenile frankness, I took some credit
to myself for being so confidential, and felt that I
was quite the patron of two respectful entert
ainers.

They were very fond of one another; that was
certain. I take it, that had its effect upon me, as
a touch of nature; but the skill with which the
one followed up whatever the other said, was a
touch of art which I was still less proof against.
When there was nothing more to be got out of
me about myself (for off the Murdstone and Grubb
life, and on my journey, I was dumb), they began
about Mr. Wickfield and Agnes. Uriah threw the
ball to Mrs. Heep, Mrs. Heep caught it and threw
it back to Uriah, Uriah kept it up a little while,
then sent it back to Mrs. Heep, and so they went
on tossing it about until I had no idea what they
got it, and was quite bewildered. The ball itself
was always changing too. Now it was Mr. Wick-
field, now Agnes, now the excellence of Mr.
Wickfield, now my admiration of Agnes; now
the extent of Mr. Wickfield's business and re-
sources, now our domestic life after dinner; now
the wine that Mr. Wickfield took, the reason why
he took it, and the pity that it was he took so
much; now one thing, now another, then every-
thing at once; and all the time, without appear-
ing to speak very often, or to do anything but
sometimes encourage them a little, for fear they
should be overcome by their humility and the
honor of my company, I found myself perpetually
letting out something or other that I had no busi-
ness to let out, and seeing the effect of it in the
twinkling of Uriah's dilated nostrils.

I had begun to be a little uncomfortable, and
to wish myself well out of the visit, when a figure
coming down the street passed the door—it stood
open to air the room, which was warm, the
weather being close for the time of year—came
back again, looked in, and walked in, exclam-
ing loudly, "Copperfield! Is it possible?"

It was Mr. Micawber! It was Mr. Micawber,
with his eye glass, and his walking-stick, and his
I FIGHT WITH THE BUTCHER.

The eldest Miss Larkins is a tall, dark, black-eyed, fine figure of a woman. The eldest Miss Larkins is not a chicken; for the youngest Miss Larkins is not that, and the eldest must be three or four years older. Perhaps the eldest Miss Larkins may be about thirty. My passion for her is beyond all bounds.

The eldest Miss Larkins knows officers. It is an awful thing to bear. I see them speaking to her in the street. I see them cross the way to meet her, when her bonnet (she has a bright taste in bonnets) is seen coming down the pavement, accompanied by her sister's bonnet. She laughs and talks, and seems to like it. I spend a good deal of my own spare time in walking up and down to meet her. If I can bow to her once in the day (I know her to bow to, knowing Mr. Larkins), I am happier. I deserve a bow now and then. The raging agonies I suffer on the night of the Race Ball, where I know the eldest Miss Larkins will be dancing with the military, ought to have some compensation, if there be even-handed justice in the world.

My passion takes away my appetite, and makes me wear my newest silk neckerchief continually. I have no relief but in putting on my best clothes, and having my boots cleaned over and over again. I seem to be worthier by the eldest Miss Larkins. Everything that belongs to her, or is connected with her, is precious to me. Mr. Larkins (a gruff old gentleman with a double chin, and one of his eyes immovable in his head) is bought with interest to me. When I can't meet his daughter, I go where I am likely to meet him. To say "How do you do, Mr. Larkins? Are the young ladies and all the family quite well?" seems so pointed, that I blush.

I think continually about my age. Say I am seventeen, and say that seventeen is young for the eldest Miss Larkins, what of that? Besides, I shall be one-and-twenty in no time almost. I regularly take walks outside Mr. Larkins's house in the evening, though it cuts me to the heart to see the officers go in, or to hear them up in the drawing-room, where the eldest Miss Larkins plays the harp. I even walk, on two or three occasions, in a sickly, spongy manner, round and round the house after the family are gone to bed, wondering which is the eldest Miss Larkins's chamber (and pitching, I dare say now on Mr. Larkins's side); wishing that a fire would burst out; that the assembled crowd would stand appalled; that I, dashing through them with a ladder, might rear it against her window, save her in my arms, go back for something she had left behind, and perish in the flames. For I am generally disinterested in my love, and think I could be content to make a figure before Miss Larkins, and expire.
Mrs. Micawber was amazed, but very glad to see me. I was very glad to see her too, and, after an affectionate greeting on both sides, sat down on the small sofa near her.

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "if you will mention to Copperfield what our present position is, which I have no doubt he will like to know, I will go and look at the paper the while, and see whether anything turns up among the advertisements."

"I thought you were at Plymouth, ma'am," I said to Mrs. Micawber, as he went out.

"My dear Master Copperfield," she replied, "we went to Plymouth."

"To be on the spot," I hinted.

"Just so," said Mrs. Micawber. "To be on the spot. But, the truth is, talent is not wanted in the Custom House. The local influence of my family was quite unavailing to obtain any employment in that department, for a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities. They would rather not have a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities. He would only show the deficiency of the others. Apart from which," said Mrs. Micawber, "I will not disguise from you, my dear Master Copperfield, that when that branch of my family which is settled in Plymouth became aware that Mr. Micawber was accompanied by myself, and by little Wilkins and his sister, and by the twins, they did not receive him with that ardor which he might have expected, being so newly released from captivity. In fact," said Mrs. Micawber, lowering her voice,—"this is between ourselves—our reception was cool."

"Dear me!" I said.

"Yes," said Mrs. Micawber. "It is truly painful to contemplate mankind in such an aspect, Master Copperfield, but our reception was, deucedly, cool. There is no doubt about it. In fact, that branch of my family which is settled in Plymouth became quite personal to Mr. Micawber, before he had been there a week.

I said, and thought, that they ought to be ashamed of themselves.

"Still, so it was," continued Mrs. Micawber. "Under such circumstances, what could a man of Mr. Micawber's spirit do? But one obvious course was left. To borrow of that branch of my family the money to return to London, and to return at any sacrifice."

"Then you all came back again, ma'am?" I said.

"We all came back again," replied Mrs. Micawber. "Since then, I have consulted other branches of my family on the course which it is most expedient for Mr. Micawber to take—for I maintain that he must take some course, Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, argumentatively, "it is clear that a family of six, not including a domestic, cannot live upon air."

"Certainly, ma'am," said I.

"The opinion of those other branches of my family," pursued Mrs. Micawber, "is, that Mr. Micawber should immediately turn his attention to coals."

"To what, ma'am?"

"To coals," said Mrs. Micawber. "To the coal trade. Mr. Micawber was induced to think, on inquiry, that there might be an opening for a man of his talent in the Medway Coal Trade. That, as Mr. Micawber very properly said, the first step to be taken clearly was, to come and see the Medway. Which we came and saw. I say we, Master Copperfield; for I never will," said Mrs. Micawber with emotion, "I never will desert Mr. Micawber."

I murmured my admiration and approbation.

"We came," repeated Mrs. Micawber, "and saw the Medway. My opinion of the coal trade on that river is, that it may require talent, but it certainly requires capital. Talent, Mr. Micawber has; capital, Mr. Micawber has not. We saw, I think, the greater part of the Medway; and that is my individual conclusion. Being so near here, Mr. Micawber was of opinion that it would be rash not to come on, and see the Cathedral. Firstly, on account of its being so well worth seeing, and our never having seen it; secondly, on account of the great probability of something turning up in a cathedral town. We have been here," said Mrs. Micawber, "five days. Nothing has, as yet, turned up; and it may not surprise you, my dear Master Copperfield, so much as it would a stranger, to know that we are at present waiting for a remittance from London, to discharge our pecuniary obligations at this hotel. Until the arrival of that remittance," said Mrs. Micawber with much feeling, "I am cut off from my home (I mean lodgings in Pentonville), from my boy and girl, and from my twins."

I felt the utmost sympathy for Mr. and Mrs. Micawber in this anxious extremity, and said as much to Mr. Micawber, who now returned: adding that I only wished I had money enough to lend them the amount they needed. Mr. Micawber's answer expressed the disturbance of his mind. He said, shaking hands with me, "Copperfield, you are a true friend; but when the worst comes to the worst, no man is without a friend who is possessed of shaving materials."

At this dreadful hint Mrs. Micawber threw her arms round Mr. Micawber's neck and entreated him to be calm. He wept; but so far recovered, almost immediately, as to ring the bell for the waiter, and bespeak a hot kidney pudding and a plate of shrimps for breakfast in the morning.

When I took my leave of them, they both pressed me so much to come and dine before they went away, that I could not refuse. But, as I knew I could not come next day, when I should have a good deal to prepare in the evening, Mr. Micawber arranged that he would call at Mr. Strong's in the course of the morning (having a presentiment that the remittance would arrive by that post), and propose the day after, if it suited me better. Accordingly I was called, and
I saw him such good company. He made his last shine with the punch, so that it looked as if it had been varnished all over. He got cheerfully sentimental about the town, and proposed success to; observing that Mrs. Micawber and himself had been made extremely snug and comfortable there, and that he never should forget the agreeable hopes they had passed in Canterbury. He proposed me afterwards; and he, and Mrs. Micawber, and I, took a review of our past acquaintance, in the course of which we sold the property all over again. Then I proposed Mrs. Micawber; at, least, said, modestly, "If you'll allow me, Mrs. Micawber, I shall now have the pleasure of\

trusting your health, ma'am," On which Mr. Micawber delivered an eulogy on Mrs. Micawber's character, and said she had ever been his guide, philosopher, and friend, and that he would recommend me, when I came to a marrying time of life, to marry such another woman, if such another woman could be found.

As the punch disappeared, Mr. Micawber became more friendly and convivial. Mrs. Mi-
cawber's spirits becoming elevated, too, we sang
"Auld Lang Syne." When we came to "Here's a hand, my trusty fere," we all joined hands
round the table; and when we declared we would
"take a right good Wylie Waught," and hadn't
the least idea what it meant, we were really a
fected.

In a word, I never saw anybody so thoroughly
jovial as Mr. Micawber was, down to the very last
moment of the evening, when I took a hearty
farewell of himself and his amiable wife. Conse-
sequently, I was not prepared, at seven o'clock
next morning, to receive the following communi-
cation, dated half-past nine in the evening; a
quarter of an hour after I had left him:

"My Dear Young Friend,

'The dice is cast—all is over. Hiding the
ravages of care with a sickly mask of mirth, I
have not informed you, this evening, that there is
no hope of the remittance! Under these circum-
stances, alike humiliating to endure, humiliating
to contemplate, and humiliating to relate, I have
discharged the pecuniary liability, contracted at
this establishment, by giving a note of hand,
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residence, Pentonville, London. When it be-
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"Let the wretched man who now addresses you, my dear Copperfield, be a beacon to you through life. He writes with that intention, and in that hope. If he could think himself of so much use, one gleam of day might, by possibility, penetrate into the cheerless dungeon of his re-
maining existence—though his longevity is, at
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Copperfield, you will ever receive

"From

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"Beggared Outcast,

"Wilkins Micawber."
CHAPTER XVIII.
A RETROSPECT.

My school-days! The silent gliding on of my existence—the unseen, unfelt progress of my life—from childhood up to youth! Let me think, as I look back upon that flowing water, now a dry channel overgrown with leaves, whether there are any marks along its course, by which I can remember how it ran.

A moment, and I occupy my place in the Cathedral, where we all went together, every Sunday morning, assembling first at school for that purpose. The earthy smell, the odorous air, the sensation of the world being shut out, the resounding of the organ through the black and white arched galleries and aisles, are wings that take me back, and hold me hovering above those days, in a half-sleeping and half-waking dream.

I am not the last boy in the school. I have risen, in a few months, over several heads. But the first boy seems to me a mighty creature, dwelling afar off, whose giddy height is unattainable. Agnes says “No,” but I say “Yes,” and tell her that she little thinks what stores of knowledge have been mastered by the wonderful Being, at whose place she thinks I, even I, weak aspirant, may arrive in time. He is not my private friend and public patron, as Steerforth was; but I hold him in a reverential respect. I chiefly wonder what he'll be, when he leaves Dr. Strong's, and what mankind will do to maintain any place against him.

But who is this that breaks upon me? This is Miss Shepherd, whom I love.

Miss Shepherd is a boarder at the Misses Nettingall's establishment. I adore Miss Shepherd. She is a little girl, in a spencer, with a round face and curly flaxen hair. The Misses Nettingall's young ladies come to the Cathedral too. I cannot look upon my book, for I must look upon Miss Shepherd. When the choristers chant, I hear Miss Shepherd. In the service I mentally insert Miss Shepherd's name; I put her in among the Royal Family. At home, in my own room, I am sometimes moved to cry out, "Oh, Miss Shepherd!" In a transport of love.

For some time, I am doubtful of Miss Shepherd's feelings, but, at length, Fate being propitious, we meet at the dancing-school. I have Miss Shepherd for my partner. I touch Miss Shepherd's glove, and feel a thrill go up the right arm of my jacket, and come out at my hair. I say nothing tender to Miss Shepherd, but we understand each other. Miss Shepherd and myself live but to be united.

Why do I secretly give Miss Shepherd twelve Brazil nuts for a present? I wonder? They are not expressive of affection, they are difficult to pack into a parcel of any regular shape, they are hard to crack, even in room doors, and they are only when cracked; yet I feel that they are appropriate to Miss Shepherd. Soft, seedy, biscuits, also, I bestow upon Miss Shepherd; and oranges innumerable. Once, I kiss Miss Shepherd in the cloak room. Ecstasy! What are my agony and indignation next day, when I hear a flying rumour that the Misses Nettingall have stood Miss Shepherd in the stocks for turning in her toes?

Miss Shepherd being the one pervading theme and vision of my life, how do I ever come to bear with her? I can't conceive. And yet a coyness grows between Miss Shepherd and myself. Whispers reach me of Miss Shepherd having said she wished I wouldn't stare so, and having avowed a preference for Master Jones—for Jones! I say of no merit whatever! The gulf between me and Miss Shepherd widens. At last, one day, I see the Misses Nettingall's establishment out walking. Miss Shepherd makes a face as she goes, and laughs to her companion. All is over. The devotion of a life—it seems a life, it is all the same—is at an end; Miss Shepherd comes out of the morning service, and the Royal Family knew her no more.

I am higher in the school, and no one breaks my peace. I am not at all polite, now, to Misses Nettingall's young ladies, and shouldn't dote on any of them, if they were twice as many and twenty times as beautiful. I think the dancing-school a tiresome affair, and wonder why the girls can't dance by themselves and leave us alone. I am growing great in Latin verses, and neglect the laces of my boots. Doctor Strong refers to me in public as a promising young scholar. Mr. Dick is wild with joy, and my aunt runs me a gulnean by the next post.

The shade of a young butcher rises, like the apparition of an armed head in Macbeth. Who is this young butcher? He is the terror of the youth of Canterbury. There is a vague black trow, that the beef snout with which he shouts his hair gives him unnatural strength, and that he is a match for a man. He is a broad-faced, bull-necked young butcher, with rough red cheeks, an ill-conditioned mind, and an injurious tongue. His main use of this tongue, is, to disparage Dr. Strong's young gentlemen. He says, publicly, that if they want anything he'll give it them. He names individuals among them (myself included), whom he could undertake to settle with one hand, and the other tied behind him. He waylays the smaller boys to punch their unprotected heads, and calls challenges after me in the open streets. For these sufficient reasons I resolve to fight the butcher.

It is a summer evening, down in a green hollow, at the corner of a wall. I meet the butcher by appointment. I am attended by a select body of our boys; the butcher, by two other butchers, a young publican, and a sweep. The preliminaries are adjusted, and the butcher and myself stand face to face. In a moment the butcher lights ten thousand candles out of my left eyebrow. In another moment, I don't know where the wall is, or where I am, or where anybody is. I hardly know which is myself and which the butcher, we are always in such a tangle.
I FIGHT WITH THE BUTCHER.

a, knocking about the trodden grass. Some-
times I see the butcher, bloody but confident; at times I see nothing, and sit gasping on my
knee; sometimes I go in at the butcher,
cat my knuckles open against his
without appearing to discompose him at al.
I awake, very queer about the head, as
a giddy sleep, and see the butcher walking
congratulated by the two butchers and
and publican, and putting on his coat
from which I aurg, justly, that the
try is his.
I am taken home in a sad plight, and I have
steaks put to my eyes, and am rubbed with
gooey and brandy, find a great white puff
bursting out on my upper lip, which swells
degradately. For three or four days I remain
some, a very ill-looking subject, with a green
beaten by my eyes; and I should be very dull,
that Agnes is a sister to me, and consoles
me, and reads to me, and makes the time
and happy. Agnes has my confidence com-
ically, always; I tell her all about the butcher,
the wrongs he has heaped upon me; she
she couldn’t have done otherwise than fight
butcher, while she shrinks and trembles at
having fought him.
Time has stolen unobserved, for Adams is
the head-boy in the days that are now come,
has been this many and many a day.
has left the school so long, that when he
back on a visit to Doctor Strong; there are
many there, besides myself, who know him.
has been going to be called to the bar almost
immediately. It is to be an advocate, and to wear a
I am surprised to find him a meek man
who had thought, and less imposing in appear-
ce. He has not staggered the world yet, either;
’t go on (as well as I can make out) pretty
the same as if he had never joined it.
A blank, through which the warriors of poetry
a history march on in stately hosts that seem
have no end—and what comes next? I am the
boy, now! I look down on the line of boys
me, with a condescending interest in such
them as bring to my mind the boy I was my-
self, when I first came there. That little fellow
was to be no part of me; I remember him as
nothing left behind upon the road of life—as
nothing I have passed, rather than have actually
and almost think of him as of some one
me.
And the little girl I saw on that first day at
Wickfield’s, where is she? Gone also. In
stead, the perfect likeness of the picture, a
as likeness no more, moves about the house;
and Agnes, my sweet sister, as I call her in my
thoughts, my counsellor and friend, the better
image of the lives of all who come within her
arms, good, self-denying influence, is quite a
woman.

What other changes have come upon me, be-
known changes in my growth and looks, and in
knowledge I have garnered all this while? I
wear a gold watch and chain, a ring upon my
little finger, and a long-tailed coat; and I use
a great deal of bear’s grease—which, taken in
combination with the ring, looks bad. Am I in
love again? I am. I worship the eldest Miss
Larkins.

The eldest Miss Larkins is not a little girl.
She is a tall, dark, black-eyed, fine figure of a
woman. The eldest Miss Larkins is not a chicken;
for the youngest Miss Larkins is not that, and the
eldest must be three or four years older. Perhaps
the eldest Miss Larkins may be about thirty. My
passion for her is beyond all bounds.

The eldest Miss Larkins knows offices. It is
an awful thing to bear. I see them speaking to
her in the street. I see them cross the way to
meet her, when her bonnet (she has a bright
taste in bonnets) is seen coming down the pavo-
ment, accompanied by her sister’s bonnet. She
laughs and talks, and seems to like it. I spend
a good deal of my own spare time in walking up
and down to meet her. If I can bow to her once
in the day (I know her to bow to, knowing Mr.
Larkins), I am happier. I deserve a bow now
and then. The raging agonies I suffer on the
night of the Race Ball, where I know the eldest
Miss Larkins will be dancing with the military,
ought to have some compensation, if there be
ever-handled justice in the world.

My passion takes away my appetite, and makes
me wear my newest silk neckerchief continually.
I have no relief but in putting on my best clothes,
and having my boots cleaned over and over again.
I seem, then, to be worthier of the eldest Miss
Larkins. Everything that belongs to her, or is
connected with her, is precious to me. Mr.
Larkins (a gruff old gentleman with a double chin,
and one of his eyes immovable in his head) is
frightened with interest to me. When I can’t meet
his daughter, I go where I am likely to meet her.
To say “How do you do, Mr. Larkins? Are
the young ladies and all the family quite well?”
seems so pointed, that I blush.

I think continually about my age. Say I am
seventeen, and say that seventeen is young for the
oldest Miss Larkins, what of that? Besides, I
shall be one-and-twenty in no time almost. I
regularly take walks outside Mr. Larkins’s house in
the evening, though it cuts me to the heart to see
the officers go in, or to hear them up in the draw-
ing-room, where the eldest Miss Larkins plays the
harp. I even walk, on two or three occasions, in
a sickly, spongy manner, round and round the
house after the family are gone to bed, wondering
which is the eldest Miss Larkins’s chamber (and
pitching, I dare say now, on Mr. Larkins’s in-
stead); wishing that a fire would burst out; that
the assembled crowd would stand appalled; that
I, dashing through them with a ladder, might roar
It against her window, save her in my arms, go
back for something she had left behind, and per-
th in the flames. For I am generally disinterest-
ed in my love, and think I could be content to
make a figure before Miss Larkins, and expire.
Generally, but not always. Sometimes brighter visions rise before me. When I dress (the occupation of two hours), for a great ball given at the Larkin’s (the anticipation of three weeks), I indulge my fancy with pleasing images. I picture myself taking courage to make a declaration to Miss Larkin. I picture Miss Larkin sinking her head upon my shoulder, and saying, “Oh, Mr. Copperfield, can I believe my ears?” I picture Mr. Larkin waiting on me next morning, and saying, “My dear Copperfield, my daughter has told me all. Youth is no objection. Here are twenty thousand pounds. Be happy!” I picture my aunt relenting, and blessing us; and Mr. Dick and Doctor Strong being present at the marriage ceremony. I am a sensible fellow, I believe—I believe, on looking back, I mean—and modest I am sure; but all this goes on notwithstanding.

I repair to the enchanted house, where there are lights, chattering, musing, flowers, officers (I am sorry to see), and the eldest Miss Larkin, a blaze of beauty. She is dressed in blue, with blue flowers in her hair—forget-me-nots. As if she had any need to wear forget-me-nots! It is the first really grown-up party that I have ever been invited to, and I am a little uncomfortable; for I appear not to belong to anybody, and nobody appears to have anything to say to me, except Mr. Larkin, who asks me how my school-fellows are, which he needn’t do, as I have not come there to be insulted.

But after I have stood in the doorway for some time, and feasted my eyes upon the goddess of my heart, she approaches me—she, the eldest Miss Larkin—and asks me pleasantly, if I dance?

“I am always with you, with you, Miss Larkin.”

“With no one else?” inquires Miss Larkin.

“I should have no pleasure in dancing with any one else.”

Miss Larkin laughs and blushes (as I think she blushes), and says, “Next time but one, I shall be very glad.”

The time arrives. “It is a waltz, I think,” Miss Larkin doubtfully observes, when I present myself. “Do you waltz? I don’t know, Captain Bailey—”

But I do waltz (pretty well, too, as it happens), and I take Miss Larkin out. I take her sternly from the side of Captain Bailey. He is wretched, I have no doubt; but he is nothing to me. I have been wretched, too. I waltz with the eldest Miss Larkin! I don’t know where, among whom, or how long. I only know that I swim about in space, with a blue angel, in a state of blissful delirium, until I find myself alone with her in a little room, resting on a sofa. She admires a flower (pink camelia japonica, price half-a-crown), in my button-hole. I give it her, and say:

“I ask an insatiable price for it, Miss Larkin.”

“Indeed? What is that?” returns Miss Larkin.

“A flower of yours, that I may treasuriser does gold.”

“You’re a bold boy,” says Miss Larkin.

“There.”

She gives it me, not displeased; and I put it in my lips, and then into my breast. Miss Larkin laughs, draws her hand through my hair, and says, “Now take me back to Captain Bailey.”

I am lost in the recollection of this interview, and the waltz, when she comes again, with a plain elderly gentleman, who has been playing whilst all night, upon her a says:

“Oh! here is my bold friend! Mr. Copperfield wants to know you, Mr. Copperfield.”

I feel at once that he is a friend of the and am much gratified.

“I admire your taste, sir,” says Mr. Copperfield.

“It does you credit. I suppose you do much interest in hopes; but I am a very grower myself; and if you ever like to come to our neighborhood—neighborhood of A—take a run about our place, we shall for you to stop as long as you like.”

I thank Mr. Chestle warmly, and shake hands with him. I think I am in a happy dream. I waltz with the eldest Miss Larkin once again. She waltz so well! I go home in a state of awful bliss, and waltz, in imagination, all the way, with my arm round the blue waltz, dear divinity. For some days afterward, I am lost in rapturous reflections: but I neither go into the street, nor when I call. I am my consoled for this disappointment by the pledge, the perished flower.

“Trotwood,” says Agnes, one day she says, “Who do you think is going to be married row? Some one you admire.”

“Not you, I suppose, Agnes?”

“Not me!” raising her cheerful face in she is copying. “Do you hear this—The eldest Miss Larkin.”

“To—to Captain Bailey?” I have just power to ask.

“No; to no Captain. To Mr. Chestle grower.”

I am terribly dejected for about a week. I take off my ring, I wear my worst clothes, I go bear’s grease, and I frequently lamentate Miss Larkin’s faded flower. Being time, rather tired of this kind of life, and received new provocation from the he throw the flower away, go out with the and gloriously defeat him.

This, and the resumption of my ring, as of the bear’s grease in moderation, are marks I can discern, now, in my book seventeen.

CHAPTER XIX.

I LOOK ABOUT ME, AND MAKE A DISCOVERY.

I am doubtful whether I have any heart. I had rather, when my school-days are over,
time came for my leaving Doctor Strong’s. I had been very happy there, I had a great attachment for the Doctor, and I was eminent and disdained in that little world. For these reasons I was sorry to go; but for other reasons, unsubstantial enough, I was glad. Misty ideas of being a young man at my own disposal, of the importance of attaching to a young man at his own disposal, of the wonderful things to be seen and done by that magnificent animal, and the wonder and affects he could not fail to make upon society, seduced me away. So powerful were these visionary con siderations in my boyish mind, that I seem, seduced to my present way of thinking, to have school without natural regret. The separation has not made the impression on me, that the separations have. I try in vain to recall what I felt about it, and what its circumstances were; but it is not momentous in my recollec tion. I suppose the opening prospect confused me; I know that my juvenile experiences went lightly or nothing then; and that life was more a fairy story, which I was just about to read, than anything else.

My aunt and I had held many grave deliberations on the calling to which I should be devoted. A year or more I had endeavored to find a satisfactory answer to her often-repeated ques tion, “What I would like to be?” But I had no notion, that I could discover, for anything. If I could have been inspired with a glimpse of the science of navigation, taken the brawn of a fast-sailing expedition, and gone around the world on a triumphant voyage of discovery, I think I might have considered myself completely suited. But in the absence of any miraculous provision, my desire was to try myself to some pursuit that would not lie heavily upon her purse; and to do my duty, whatever it might be.

Mr. Dick had regularly assisted at our country, with a meditative and sage demeanor. He never made a suggestion but once; and on that occasion (I don’t know what put it in his head), he suddenly proposed that I should be “a sailor.” My aunt received this proposal so ungraciously, that he never ventured on a hand; but ever afterwards confined himself to watching faithfully at her for suggestions, and filling his money.

“Trot, I tell you what, my dear,” said my aunt one morning in the Christmas season when I was at school; “as this knotty point is still unsettled, and as we must not make a mistake in my decision if we can help it. I think we had better take a little breathing-time. In the meantime, you must try to look at it from a new point of view, and not as a schoolboy.”

“I will, aunt.”

“It has occurred to me,” pursued my aunt, “that a little change, and a glimpse of life out of school, may be useful, in helping you to know your own mind, and form a cooler judgment. Suppose you were to take a little journey now. Suppose you were to go down into the old part of the country again, for instance, and see that—that out-of-the-way woman with the savagest of names,” said my aunt, rubbing her nose, for she could never thoroughly forgive Pegotty for being so called.

“Of all things in the world, aunt, I should like it best!”

“Well,” said my aunt, “that’s lucky, for I should like it too. But it’s natural and rational that you should like it. And I am very well persuaded that whatever you do, Trot, will always be natural and rational.”

“I hope so, aunt.”

“You’re sister, Betsey Trotwood,” said my aunt, “would have been as natural and rational a girl as ever breathed. You’ll be worthy of her, won’t you.”

“I hope I shall be worthy of you, aunt. That will be enough for me.”

“It’s a mercy that poor dear baby of a mother of yours didn’t live,” said my aunt, looking at me approvingly, “or she’d have been so vain of her boy by this time, that her soft little head would have been completely turned, if there was anything of it left to turn.” (My aunt always excused any weakness of her own in my behalf, by transferring it in this way to my poor mother.) “Bless me, Trotwood, how you do remind me of her!”

“Pleasantly, I hope, aunt?” said I.

“He’s as like her, Dick,” said my aunt, emphatically, “he’s as like her, as she was that afternoon, before she began to fret. Bless my heart, he’s as like her, as he can look at me out of his two eyes!”

“Is he indeed?” said Mr. Dick.

“And he’s like David, too,” said my aunt, decisively.

“He is very like David!” said Mr. Dick.

“But what I want you to be, Trot,” resumed my aunt,—“I don’t mean physically, but morally; you are very well physically—is, a firm fellow. A fine well fellow, with a will of your own. With resolution,” said my aunt, shaking her cap at me, and clenching her hand. “With determination. With character, Trot. With strength of character that is not to be influenced, except on good reason, by anybody, or by anything. That’s what I want you to be. That’s what your father and mother might both have been, Heaven knows, and been the better for it.”

I intimated that I hoped I should be what she described.

“That you may begin in a small way, to have a reliance upon yourself, and to act for yourself,” said my aunt. “I shall send you upon your trip, alone. I did think, once, of Mr. Dick’s going with you; but, on second thoughts, I shall keep him to take care of me.”

Mr. Dick, for a moment, looked a little disappointed; until the honor and dignity of having to take care of the most wonderful woman in the world, restored the sunshine to his face.
"Besides," said my aunt, "there's the Memorial."

"Oh, certainly," said Mr. Dick, in a hurry, "I intend, Trotwood, to get that done immediately — it really must be done immediately! And then it will go in, you know — and then —," said Mr. Dick, after checking himself, and pausing a long time, "there'll be a pretty kettle of fish!"

In pursuance of my aunt's kind scheme, I was shortly afterwards fitted out with a handsome purse of money, and a portmanteau, and tenderly dismissed upon my expedition. At parting, my aunt gave me some good advice, and a good many kisses; and said that as her object was that I should look about me, and should think a little, she would recommend me to stay a few days in London, if I liked it, either on my way down into Suffolk, or in coming back. In a word, I was at liberty to do what I would, for three weeks or a month; and no other conditions were imposed upon my freedom than the before-mentioned thining and looking about me, and a pledge to write three times a week and faithfully report myself.

I went to Canterbury first, that I might take leave of Agnes and Mr. Wickfield (my old room in whose house I had not yet relinquished), and also of the good Doctor. Agnes was very glad to see me, and told me that the house had not been like itself since I had left it.

"I am sure I am not like myself when I am away," said I. "I seem to want my right hand, when I miss you. Though that's not saying much; for there's no head in my right hand, and no heart. Every one who knows you, consults with you, and is guided by you, Agnes."

"Every one who knows me, spoils me, I believe," she answered, smiling.

"No. It's because you are like no one else. You are so good, and so sweet-tempered. You have such a gentle nature, and you are always right."

"You talk," said Agnes, breaking into a pleasant laugh, as she sat at work, "as if I were the late Miss Larkins!"

"Come! It's not fair to abuse my confidence," I answered, reddening at the recollection of my blue enslaver. "But I shall confide in you, just the same, Agnes. I can never grow out of that. Whenever I fall into trouble, or fall in love, I shall always tell you, if you'll let me — even when I come to fall in love in earnest."

"Why, you have always been in earnest!" said Agnes, laughing again.

"Oh! that was as a child, or a school-boy," said I, laughing in my turn, not without being a little shame-faced. "Times are altering now, and I suppose I shall be in a terrible state of earnestness one day or another. My wonder is, that you are not in earnest yourself, by this time, Agnes."

Agnes laughed again, and shook her head.

"Oh, I know you are not!" said I, "because if you had been, you would have told me. Or at least," for I saw a faint blush in her face, "would have let me find it out myself. But is there not one that I know of, who deserves you, Agnes? Some one of a nobler character — more worthy altogether than any one I have seen here, must rise up, before I give you up in the time to come, I shall have a wary eye to mine, and speaking in a different key, I said:

"Trotwood, there is something that I ask you, and that I may not have another tenuity of asking for a long time, perhaps. What I would, I think, of so much? Have you observed any gradual alteration of Papa?"

I had observed it, and had often wondered whether she had too. I must have seen much, now, in my face; for her eyes were moist cast down, and I saw tears in the corner.

"Tell me what it is," she said, in a low voice.

"I think — shall I be quite plain, Agnes?"

"Yes," she said.

"I think he does himself no good habit that has increased upon him since he came here. He is often very nervous, or so."

"It is not fancy," said Agnes, shaking her head.

"His hand trembles, his speech is not quite steady, and his eyes look wild. I have remarked this at those times, and when he is least in a fit of it, he is most certain to be wanted in business."

"By Uriah," said Agnes.

"Yes; and the sense of being until this time, of not having understood it, or of having his condition in spite of himself, seems to make him so uneasy, that next day he is worse, and a day worse, and so he becomes faded and lost. Do not be alarmed by what I say, Agnes. This state I saw him, only the other evening, when he was down his head upon his desk, and shed tears as a child."

Her hand passed softly before my lips. I was yet speaking, and in a moment she was by my father at the door of the room, and standing upon his shoulder. The expression of his face was as he both looked towards me. I felt his hand upon my head. There was such deep fondness and gratitude to him for all his love and her beautiful look; and there was such a spell of his affection to me, that I felt tenderly, by him, every inmost thought, and to let no harsh circumstance come against him; she was, as if proud of him and devoted to him, yet so very gentle and sorry, and so relent upon u
too; that nothing she could have said would
express any thing to me, or move me more.

"We were to drink tea at the Doctor's. We
went there at the usual hour; and round the study
side found the Doctor, and his wife, and
mother. The Doctor, who made as much of
his going away as if I were going to China, re-
ested me as his honored guest, and called for a
bottle of wine to be thrown on the fire, that he
1ight see the face of his old pupil reddening in
blaze.

"I shall not see many more new faces in Trot-
cro's stead, Wickfield," said the Doctor, warm-
ing his hands; "I am getting lazy, and want ease.
I shall relinquish all my young people in another
months, and lead a quieter life."

"You have said so, any time these ten years," re-
said Mr. Wickfield answered.

"But now I mean to do it," returned the Doc-
""My master will succeed me—I am in
nest at last—so you'll soon have to arrange our
tracts, and to bind us grimly to them, like a
tape of knaves."

"And to take care," said Mr. Wickfield; "that
we're not imposed on, eh? As you certainly
would be, in any contract you should make for
yourself. Well! I am ready. There are worse
ales than that, in my calling;"

"I shall have nothing to think of, then," said
the Doctor, with a smile; "but my Dictionary;
all other contracts—Annie," as Mr. Wickfield glanced towards her, sitting
the tea-table by Agnes, she seemed to me to
said his look with such unwonted hesitation and
reticence, that his attention became fixed upon
it, as if something were suggested to his
thoughts.

"There is a post come in from India, I ob-
serve," he said, after a short silence.

"By-the-bye! and letters from Mr. Jack Mal-
son!" said the Doctor.

"Indeed!"

"Pooh dear Jack!" said Mrs. Markleham,
shaking her head. "That trying climate! Like
vings, they tell me, on a sand-heap, underneath a
glass! He looked strong, but he wasn't.

"Dear Sir, it was his spirit, not his constitution,
that he ventured on so boldly. Annie, my
ear, I am sure you must perfectly recollect that
his cousin never was strong; not what can be
called robust, you know," said Mrs. Markleham,

"Ah, yes! And looking round upon us gen-
"'tly, in the time when my daughter and
him were children, together, and walking
about, arm-in-arm, the livelong day.

Annie, thus addressed, made no reply.

"Do I gather from what you say, ma'am, that
Mr. Meldon is ill?" asked Mr. Wickfield.

"Ill!" replied the Old Soldier. "My dear sir,
what are all sorts of things?

"Except well?" said Mr. Wickfield.

"Except well, indeed!" said the Old Soldier.

"He has had dreadful strokes of the sun, no
tide, and jungle fevers and agues, and every kind
of thing you can mention. As to his liver,"
said the Old Soldier resignedly; "that, of course,
he gave up altogether, when he first went out!"

"Does he say all this?" asked Mr. Wickfield.

"Say? My dear sir, returned Mrs. Markle-
ham, shaking her head and her fan, "you little
know my poor Jack Meldon when you ask that
question. Say? Not he. You might drag him
at the heels of four wild horses first."

"Mamma!" said Mrs. Strong.

"Annie, my dear," returned her mother, "once
for all, I must really beg you not to interfere
with me, unless it is to confirm what I say.
You know as well as I do, that your cousin Mal-
don would be dragged at the heels of any
number of wild horses—why should I confine myself
to four! I won't confine myself to four—eight, six-
teen, two-and-thirty, rather than say anything
calculated to overturn the Doctor's plans."

"Wickfield's plans," said the Doctor, stroking
his face, and looking pensively at his adviser.
"That is to say, our joint plans for him. I said
myself, abroad or at home."

"And I said," added Mr. Wickfield gravely,
abroad. I was the means of sending him
abroad. It's my responsibility."

"Oh! Responsibility!" said the Old Soldier.
"Everything was done for the best, my dear Mr.
Wickfield; everything was done for the kindest
and best, we know. But if the dear fellow can't
live there, he can't live there. And if he can't
live there, he'll die there, sooner than he'll over-
turn the Doctor's plans. I know him," said
the Old Soldier, annexing herself, in a sort of calm
prophecic balance, and I know he'll die there,
sooner than he'll overturn the Doctor's plans."

"Well, well, ma'am," said the Doctor cheer-
fully, "I am not digested to my plans, and I can
overturn them myself. I can substitute some
other plans. If Mr. Jack Meldon comes home on
account of ill health, he must not be allowed to
go back, and we must endeavor to make some
more suitable and fortunate provision for him in
this country."

Mrs. Markleham was so overcome by this
generous speech (which, I need not say, she had
not at all expected or led up to) that she could only
tell the Doctor it was like himself, and go several
times through that operation of kissing the sticks
of her fan, and then tapping his hand with it.
After which she gently chid her daughter Annie,
for not being more demonstrative when such
kindnesses were showered, for her sake, on her
old playfellow, and entertained us with some
particulars concerning other deserving members
of her family, whom it was desirable to set on
their deserving legs.

All this time, her daughter Annie never once
spoke or lifted up her eyes. All this time, Mr.
Wickfield had his glance upon her as she sat by
his own daughter's side. It appeared to me that
he never thought of being observed by any one,
but was so intent upon her, and upon his
own thoughts in connexion with her, as to be
quite absorbed. He now asked what Mr. Jack Maldon had actually written in reference to himself, and to whom he had written it?

"Why, here," said Mrs. Markleham, taking a letter from the chimney-piece above the Doctor's head, "the dear fellow says to the Doctor himself—where is it? Oh!—I am sorry to inform you that my health is suffering severely, and that I fear I may be reduced to the necessity of returning home for a time, as the only hope of restoration. That's pretty plain, poor fellow! His only hope of restoration! But Annie's letter is plainer still. Annie, show me that letter again."

"Not now, mamma," she pleaded in a low tone.

"My dear, you absolutely are, on some subjects, one of the most ridiculous persons in the world," returned her mother, "and perhaps the most unnatural to the claims of your own family. We never should have heard of the letter at all, if I believe, unless I had asked for it myself. Do you call that confidence, my love, towards Doctor Strong? I am surprised. You ought to know better."

The letter was reluctantly produced; and as I handed it to the old lady, I saw how the unwilling hand from which I took it, trembled.

"Now let us see," said Mrs. Markleham, turning the glass to her eye, "where the passage is. The remembrance of old times, my dearest Annie—and so forth—it's not there. "The amiable old Doctor—who's he? Dear me, Annie, how illegibly your cousin Maldon writes," and how stupid I am! "Doctor," of course. Ah! amiable indeed!" Here she left off, to kiss her fan again, and shake it at the Doctor, who was looking at us in a state of placid satisfaction.

"Now I have found it! 'You may not be surprised to hear, Annie,'—no, to be sure, knowing that he never was really strong; what did I say just now?—'that I have undergone so much in this distant place, as to have decided to leave it at all hazards; on sick leave, if I can; on total resignation, if that is not to be obtained. What I have endured, and do endure here, is insupportable. And but for the promptitude of the best of creatures,'" said Mrs. Markleham, telegraphing the Doctor as before, and re-reading the letter, "it would be insupportable to me to think of."

Mr. Wickfield said not one word, though the old lady looked to him as if for his commentary on this intelligence; but sat severely silent, with his eyes fixed on the ground. Long after the subject was dismissed, and other topics occupied us, he remained so; seldom raising his eyes, unless to rest them for a moment, with a thoughtful frown, upon the Doctor, or his wife, or both.

The Doctor was very fond of music. Agnes sang with great sweetness and expression, and so did Mrs. Strong. They sang together, and played duets together, and we had quite a little concert. But I remarked two things: first, that though Annie soon recovered her composure, and was quite herself, there was a blank between her and Mr. Wickfield which separated them from each other; secondly, that Mr. Wickfield seemed to dislike the intimacy between Agnes, and to watch it with uneasiness. Now, I must confess, the recollection of my having seen that night when Mr. Wickfield first began to return upon mine with anything it had never had, and to trouble the innocent beauty of her face was not so to me as it had been; I mistrusted the grace and charm of her manner; as I looked at Agnes by her side, and the good and true Agnes was, suspicions arose in me that it was an ill-assorted friendship.

She was so happy in it herself, however other was so happy too, that they made fly away as if it were but an hour. In an incident which I well remember were taking leave of each other, and of the seven were going to embrace her and kiss her, Wickfield stepped between them, as if I am, and drew Agnes quickly away. Till as though all the intervening time had been cut short, and I was standing in the same room on the night of the departure, the express train that night in the face of Mrs. Strong, from the old house, which Agnes had filled with influence; and that occupied my mind so much, I should be there again soon, no doubt, and the time when I packed up such of my books as were still remained there to be sent to Doctor Wickfield, to show to Uriah Heep; who was very close to help me, that I uncharitably felt mighty glad that I was going."

I got away from Agnes and Mrs. Wickfield's
an indifferent show of being very
took my seat upon the box of the
ch. I was so softened and forgiving,
gh the town, that I had half a mind to
ld enemy the butcher, and throw him
to drink. But he looked such a very
atcher as he stood scraping the great
shop, and moreover his appearance
improved by the loss of a fore tooth
knocked out, that I thought it best to
ances.
In object on my mind, I remember,
fairly on the road, was to appear as
sible to the coachman, and to speak
guff. The latter point I achieved at
al inconvenience; but I stuck to it,
t it was a grown-up sort of thing.
go through, sir?” said the coach-
William,“ I said, condescendingly (I
; “I am going to London. I shall go
suffolk afterwards.”
ag, sir?” said the coachman.
ly as well as I did that it was just as
hat time of year, I was going down
ng; but I felt complimented, too.
know,” I said, pretending to be unde-
ether I shall take a shot or not.”
is got very shry, I’m told,” said Wil-
derstand,” said I.
lolk your county, sir?” asked William.
I said, with some importance. “Suf-
county.
old the dumplings is uncommon fine
,” said William.
’t aware of it myself, but I felt it neces-
said the institutions of my county, and
miliarity with them; so I shook my
ch as to say, “I believe you! ”
he Punches,” said William. “There’s
 Suffolk Punch, when he’s a good un, is
weight in gold. Did you ever breed
Punches yourself, sir?”
I said, “not exactly.”
’ I said. “As a gen’l’m’n behind me, I’ll pound it,”
m,” as has bred ‘em by wholesale.”
tleman spoken of was a gentleman with
omising squint, and a prominent chin,
t tall white hat on with a narrow flat
those close-fitting drab trousers seemed
ll the way up outside his legs from his
hips. His chin was cocked over the
shoulder, so near to me, that his
licked the back of my head; and as I
nd at him, he leered at the leaders with
th which he didn’t squint, in a very
maner.
ou?” asked William.
what?” said the gentleman behind.
em Suffolk Punches by wholesale?”
said think so,” said the gentleman.
’t no sort of orre that I ain’t bred, and
ong: Ones and dorges is some men’s
fancy. They’re wittles and drink to me—lodging,
wife, and children—reading, writing, and ‘rith-
tic—snuff, tobacker, and sleep.”
“ That ain’t the sort of man to see sitting be-
ind a coach-box, is it though?” said William in
my ear, as he handled the reins.
I construed this remark into an indication of a
wish that he should have my place, so I blushingly
offered to resign it.
“Well, if you don’t mind, sir,” said William,
“I think it would be more correct.”
I have always considered this as the first fall
I had in life. When I booked my place at the
coach-office, I had bad “Box Seat” written
against the entry, and had given the book-keeper
half-a-crown. I was got up in a special great-coat
and shawl, expressely to do honor to that distin-
guished eminence; had glorified myself upon it a
good deal; and had felt that I was a credit to the
coach. And here, in the very first stage, I was
supplanted by a shabby man with a squint, who
had no other merit than smelling like a livery-
stable, and being able to walk across me, more
like a fly than a human being, while the horses
were at a canter!
A distrust of myself, which has often beset me
in life on small occasions, when it would have
been better away, was assuredly not stopped in
its growth by this little incident out side the Can-
terbury coach. It was in vain to take refuge in
gruffness of speech. I spoke from the pit of my
stomach for the rest of the journey, but I felt com-
pletely extinguished and dreadfully young.

It was curious and interesting, nevertheless,
to be sitting up there, behind four horses: well
educated, well dressed, and with plenty of money
in my pocket; and to look out for the places
where I had slept on my weary journey. I had
abundant occupation for my thoughts, in every
conspicuous landmark on the road. When I
looked down at the tramps whom we passed, and
saw that well-remembered smile of face turned up,
I felt as if the tinker’s blackened hand were in
the bosom of my shirt again. When we clattered
through the narrow streets of Chatham, and I
caught a glimpse, in passing, of the lane where
the old monster lived who had bought my jacket,
I stretched my neck eagerly to look for the place
where I had sat, in the sun and in the shade, wait-
for my money. When we came at last within
a stage of London, and passed the veritable
Salem House where Mr. Cratchet had laid about
him with a heavy hand, I would have given all I
had, for lawful permission to get down and thrash
him, and let all the boys out like so many caged
sparrows.

We went to the Golden Cross, at Charing Cross,
then a moidly sort of establishment in a close
neighborhood. A waiter showed me into the
coffee-room; and a chambermaid introduced me
to my small bedchamber, which smelt like a
hackney-coach, and was shut up like a family
vault. I was still painfully conscious of my youn-
for nobody stood in any awe of me at all. The
Mrs. Micawber was amazed, but very glad to see me. I was very glad to see her too, and, after an affectionate greeting on both sides, sat down on the small sofa near her.

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "if you will mention to Copperfield what our present position is, which I have no doubt he will like to know, I will go and look at the paper the while, and see whether anything turns up among the advertisements."

"I thought you were at Plymouth, ma'am," I said to Mrs. Micawber, as he went out.

"My dear Master Copperfield," she replied, "we went to Plymouth."

"To be on the spot," I hinted.

"Just so," said Mrs. Micawber. "To be on the spot. But, the truth is, talent is not wanted in the Customs House. The local influence of my family was quite unavailing to obtain any employment in that department, for a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities. They would rather not have a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities. He would only show the deficiency of the others. Apart from which," said Mrs. Micawber, "I will not disguise from you, my dear Master Copperfield, that when that branch of my family which is settled in Plymouth became aware that Mr. Micawber was accompanied by myself, and by little Wilkins and his sister, and by the twins, they did not receive him with that ardor which he might have expected, being so newly released from captivity. In fact," said Mrs. Micawber, lowering her voice,—"this is between ourselves—our reception was cool."

"Dear me!" I said.

"Yes," said Mrs. Micawber. "It is truly painful to contemplate mankind in such an aspect, Master Copperfield, but our reception was, decidedly, cool. There is no doubt about it. In fact, that branch of my family which is settled in Plymouth became quite personal to Mr. Micawber, before he had been there a week."

I said, and thought, that they ought to be ashamed of themselves.

"Still, so it was," continued Mrs. Micawber, "under such circumstances, what could a man of Mr. Micawber's spirit do? But one obvious course was left. To borrow of that branch of my family the money to return to London, and to return at any sacrifice."

"Then you all came back again, ma'am?" I said.

"We all came back again," replied Mrs. Micawber. "Since then, I have consulted other branches of my family on the course which it is most expedient for Mr. Micawber to take—for I maintain that he must take some course, Master Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, argumentatively, "it is clear that a family of six, not including a domestic, cannot live upon air."

"Certainly, ma'am," said I.

"The opinion of those other branches of my family," pursued Mrs. Micawber, "is, that Mr. Micawber should immediately turn his attention to coals."

"To what, ma'am?" I asked.

"To coals," said Mrs. Micawber. "The coal trade. Mr. Micawber was induced to take an inquiry, that there might be an opening for his talent in the Medway Coal Trade. As Mr. Micawber very properly said, the first to be taken clearly was, to come and see the way. Which we came and saw. I say Master Copperfield; for I never will," said Mrs. Micawber with emotion, "I never will hear of Mr. Micawber."

I murmured my admiration and approbation.

"We came," repeated Mrs. Micawber, "we saw the Medway. My opinion of the coal at that river, is, that it may require more capital than Micawber has; capital, Mr. Micawber has not. We saw, I think, the greater part of the Medway, and that is my individual conclusion..." No, no, said I. Micawber was not well enough to go to the Medway, and, secondly, on account of the great probability of something turning up in a cathedral town, we have been here," said Mrs. Micawber, "we have been here. Nothing has, as yet, turned up; but I need not apprehend you, my dear Master Copperfield, so much as it would be stupid to think that we are at present waiting for a remittance from London, to discharge our pecuniary obligations at this hotel. Until the arrival of the remittance," said Mrs. Micawber, "I am cut off from my home (I am lodging in Pentonville), from my boy and from my twins."

I felt the utmost sympathy for Mr. and Mrs. Micawber in this anxious extremity, as much as to Mr. Micawber, who now retreating, I only wished I had money enough to lend him the amount he needed. Micawber's answer expressed the temporary relief which his mind. He said, shaking hands with me, Copperfield, you are a true friend; but the worst comes to the worst, no man is so poor a friend as a Micawber. At this dreadful hint, Mrs. Micawber threw her arms round Mr. Micawber's neck and urged him to be calm. He went; but so far as my feeling was concerned, almost immediately, as to ring the bell and raise the waiter, and bespeak a hot kidney pudding and a plate of shrimps for breakfast in the morning. When I took my leave of them, they pressed me so much to come and dine before they went away, that I could not refuse. I knew I could not come next day, so, I have had a good deal to prepare in the event. Micawber arranged that he would call at Strong's in the course of the morning (in no Resolution that the remittance would arrive at that period), and propose the day after. As my own suit me better. Accordingly I was safe.
I DINE WITH THE MICAWBERS.

School next forenoon, and found Mr. Micawber in the parlor; who had called to say that the dinner would take place as proposed. When I asked him if the remittance had come, he pressed my hand and departed.

As I was looking out of window that same evening, it surprised me, and made me rather uneasy, to see Mr. Micawber and Uriah Heep walk past, arm in arm: Uriah humbly sensible of the honor that was done him, and Mr. Micawber taking a bland delight in extending his patronage to Uriah. But I was still more surprised, when I went to the little hotel next day at the appointed dinner-hour, which was four o'clock, to find, from what Mr. Micawber said, that he had gone home with Uriah, and had drunk brandy-and-water at Mr. Hoop's.

"And I'll tell you what, my dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, "your friend Heep is a young man who might be attorney-general. If I had known that young man, at the period when my remittances came to a crisis, all I can say is, that I believe my creditors would have been a great deal better managed than they were."

I hardly understood how this could have been, seeing that Mr. Micawber had paid them nothing at all as it was; but I did not like to ask. Neither did I like to say, that I hoped he had not been too communicative to Uriah; or to inquire if they had talked much about me. I was afraid of hurting Mr. Micawber's feelings, or, at all events, Mr. Micawber's, she being very sensitive; but I was uncomfortable about it, too, and often thought about it afterwards.

We had a beautiful little dinner. Quite an elegant dish of fish; the kidney-end of a loin of roast; fried sausage-meat; a partridge, and a pudding. There was wine, and there was punch; and after dinner Mrs. Micawber made tea, with her own hands. Mr. Micawber was uncommonly convivial. I never saw him such good company. He made his speeches with the punch, so that it looked as if I had been vanquished all over. He got cheerfully sentimental about the town, and proposed success to all; observing that Mrs. Micawber and himself had been extremely snug and comfortable there, and that he never should forget the agreeable hours they had passed in Canterbury. He proposed me afterwards; and he, and Mrs. Micawber, and I, took a review of our past acquaintances, in the course of which, we sold the property of over again. Then I proposed Mrs. Micawber; and, at least, said, modestly, "If you'll allow me, Mrs. Micawber, I shall now have the pleasure of making your health, ma'am." On which Mr. Micawber delivered an encomium on Mrs. Micawber's character, and said she had ever been his guide, philosopher, and friend, and that he would recommend me, when I came to a marrying time of life, to marry such another woman, if such another woman could be found.

As the punch disappeared, Mr. Micawber became still more friendly and convivial. Mrs. Mi
cawber's spirits becoming elevated, too, we sang "Auld Lang Syne." When we came to "Here's a hand, my trusty fore," we all joined hands round the table; and when we declared we would "take a right good Willie Waugh," and hadn't the least idea what it meant, we were really affected.

In a word, I never saw anybody so thoroughly jovial as Mr. Micawber was, down to the very last moment of the evening, when I took a hearty farewell of himself and his amiable wife. Consequently, I was not prepared, at seven o'clock next morning, to receive the following communication, dated half-past nine in the evening; a quarter of an hour after I had left him:

"My dear young friend,

"The die is cast—all is over. Hiding the ravages of care with a sickly mask of mirth, I have not informed you, this evening, that there is no hope of the remittance! Under these circumstances, alkso humiliating to endure, humiliating to contemplate, and humiliating to relate, I have discharged the pecuniary liability, contracted at this establishment, by giving a note of hand, made payable fourteen days after date, at my residence, Pentonville, London. When it becomes due, it will not be taken up. The result is destruction. The bolt is impending, and the tree must fall.

"Let the wretched man who now addresses you, my dear Copperfield, be a beacon to you through life. He writes with that intention, and in that hope. If he could think himself of so much use, one gleam of day might, by possibility, penetrate into the cheerless dungeon of his remaining existence—though his longevity is, at present (to say the least of it), extremely problematical.

"This is the last communication, my dear Copperfield, you will ever receive"

"From"

"The"

"Beggared Outcast,"

"WILKINS MICAWBER."

I was so shocked by the contents of this heart-rending letter, that I ran off directly towards the little hotel with the intention of taking it on my way to Dr. Strong's, and trying to soothe Mr. Micawber with a word of comfort. But half-way there, I met the London coach with Mr. and Mrs. Micawber up behind; Mr. Micawber, the very picture of tranquil enjoyment, smiling at Mrs. Micawber's conversation, eating walnuts out of a paper bag, with a bottle stickling out of his breast pocket. As they did not see me, I thought it best, all things considered, not to see them. So, with a great weight taken off my mind, I turned into a by-street that was the nearest way to school, and felt, upon the whole, relieved that they were gone; though I still liked them very much, nevertheless.
CHAPTER XVIII.
A RETROSPECT.

My school-days! The silent gliding on of my existence—the unseen, unfelt progress of my life—from childhood up to youth! Let me think, as I look back upon that flowing water, now a dry channel overgrown with leaves, whether there are any marks along its course, by which I can remember how it ran.

A moment, and I occupy my place in the Cathedral, where we all went together; every Sunday morning, assembling first at school for that purpose. The earthy smell, the sunless air, the sensation of the world being shut out, the resounding of the organ through the black and white arched galleries and naves, are wings that take me back, and hold me lingering above those days, in a half-sleeping and half-waking dream.

I am not the last boy in the school. I have risen, in a few months, over several heads. But the first boy seems to me a mighty creature, dwelling afar off, whose giddy height is unattainable. Agnes says "No," but I say "Yes," and tell her that she little thinks what stores of knowledge have been mastered by the wonderful boy, at whose place she thinks I, even I, weak aspirant, may arrive in time. He is not my private friend and public patron, as Steerforth was; but he holds me in a reverential respect. I chiefly wonder what he'll be, when he leaves Dr. Strong's, and what mankind will do to maintain any place against him.

But who is this that breaks upon me? This is Miss Shepherd, whom I love.

Miss Shepherd is a boarder at the Misses Nettingall's establishment. I adore Miss Shepherd. She is a little girl, in a Spencer, with a round face and curly flaxen hair. The Misses Nettingall's young ladies come to the Cathedral too. I cannot look upon my book, for I must look upon Miss Shepherd. When the choristers chant, I hear Miss Shepherd. In the service I mentally insert Miss Shepherd's name; I put her in among the Royal Family. At home, in my own room, I am sometimes moved to cry out, "Oh, Miss Shepherd!" in a transport of love.

For some time, I am doubtful of Miss Shepherd's feelings, but, at length, Fate being propitious, we meet at the dancing-school. I have Miss Shepherd for my partner. I touch Miss Shepherd's glove, and feel a thrill go up the right arm of my jacket, and come out at my hair. I say nothing tender to Miss Shepherd, but we understand each other. Miss Shepherd and myself live; but to be united.

Why do I secretly give Miss Shepherd twelve Brazil nuts for a present, I wonder? They are not expressive of affection, they are difficult to pack into a parcel of any regular shape, they are hard to crack, even in room doors, and they are oly when cracked; yet I feel that they are appropriate to Miss Shepherd. Soft, sweet, biscuits, also, I bestow upon Miss Shepherd; and oranges innumerable. Once, I kiss Miss Shepherd in the cloak room. Ecstasy! What are my agonized indignation next day, when I hear a lying nurse that the Misses Nettingall have stood Miss Shepherd in the stocks for turning her toes!

Miss Shepherd being the one pervading dream and vision of my life, how do I ever come to live with her? I can't conceive. And yet a connexity grows between Miss Shepherd and myself. Whispers reach me of Miss Shepherd having—she wished I wouldn't stare so, and having never a preference for Master Jones—for Jones is not of no merit whatever! The gulf between me and Miss Shepherd widens. At last, one day, I see the Misses Nettingall's establishment out walking. Miss Shepherd makes a face as she goes by, and laughs to her companion. All is over. Devotion of a life—it seems a life, it is all the same—is at an end; Miss Shepherd comes out of evening service, and the Royal Family know her no more.

I am higher in the school, and no one has my place. I am not at all polite, now, to the Misses Nettingall's young ladies, and shun a dote on any of them, if they were twice as many and twenty times as beautiful. I think the dancing-school a tiresome affair, and wonder why the girls can't dance by themselves and leave it alone. I am growing great in Latin verses and neglect the laces of my boots. Doctor Strong refers to me in public as a promising young scholar. Mr. Dick is wild with joy, and my aunt permits me a guinea by the next post.

The shade of a young butcher rises, like the apparition of an armed head in Macbeth. Who is this young butcher? He is the terror of the youth of Canterbury. There is a vague bend abroad, that the boor suit with which he anoints his hair gives him unnatural strength, and that he is a match for a man. He is a broad-built, bull-necked young butcher, with rough red cheeks, an ill-conditioned mind, and an injurious tongue. His main use of this tongue is, to disparage Dr. Strong's young gentlemen. He says, publicly, that if they want anything he'll give it 'em. He names individuals among them (myself included), whom he could undertake to settle with one hand, and the other tied behind him. He waylays the smaller boys to punch their unprotected heads, and calls challenges after me in the open streets. For these sufficient reasons I resolve to fight the butcher.

It is a summer evening, down in a green hollow, at the corner of a wall. I meet the butcher by appointment. I am attended by a select band of our boys; the butcher, by two other butchers—a young publican, and a sweep. The preliminaries are adjusted, and the butcher and myself stand face to face. In a moment the butcher lights ten thousand candles out of my left eyebrow. In another moment, I don't know where the wall is, or where I am, or where anybody is. I hardly know which is myself and which the butcher; we are always in such a tangle, we...
on!" said Miss Dartle. "Dear me! is he? Really conscientious, convinced of it," said Mrs. Steerforth. "Very nice!" exclaimed Miss Dartle. "Yes! Really conscientious? Then of course he can't be, if he's really. Well, I shall be quite happy in of him, from this time. You can't elevates him in my opinion, to know at he's really conscientious!"

"Laws of every question, and her everything that was said to which she Miss Dartle intimated in the same sense, I could not conceal from my own power, though in contradiction forth. An instance happened before me. Mrs. Steerforth speaking to me mention of going down into Suffolk, I how glad I should be, if Steerforth y there with me; and explaining to me going to see my old nurse, and's family, I reminded him of the more he had seen at school.

"Bluff fellow!" said Steerforth, with him, hadn't he?"

"That was his nephew," I replied; topted, though, as a son. He has a niece too, whom he adopted as a short, his house (or rather his boat) on dry land (is full of people acts of his generosity and kindness, delighted to see that household.

"And," said Steerforth. "Well, I think just see what can be done. It would turney (not to mention the pleasure with you, Daisy), to see that sort of, and to make one of 'em!"

"This with a new hope of pleasure, a reference to the tone in which he of "that sort of people," that Miss Sparkling eyes had been watchful she in again.

"Do tell me. Are they, said.

"What? And are who what?" said a lot of people. Are they really animals beings of another order? I want much.

"There's a pretty wide separation behind me," said Steerforth, with indifferency not to be expected to be as we are. Their delicacy is not to be hurt very easily. They are wonder,

"I dare say. Some people contend else; and I am sure I don't want to on. But they have not very fine eyes may be thankful that, like their skins, they are not easily wounded."

"Yes. Well, I don't of this, I have been better pleased than It's so consoling! It's such a de-light to know that, when they suffer, they don't feel! Sometimes I have been quite uneasy for that sort of people; but now I shall just divide the idea of them altogether. Live and learn. I had my doubts, I confess, but now they're cleared up. I didn't know, and now I do know, and that shows the advantage of asking—don't it?"

"I believe that Steerforth had said what he had in jest, or to draw Miss Dartle out; and I expected him to say as much when she was gone, and we two were sitting before the fire. But he merely asked me what I thought of her.

"She is very clever, is she not?" I asked.

"Clever! She brings everything to a grindstone," said Steerforth, "and sharpens it, as she has sharpened her own face and figure since she past. She has worn herself away by constant sharpening. She is all edge."

"What a remarkable scar that is upon her lip!" I said.

Steerforth's face fell, and he paused a moment.

"Why, the fact is," he returned, "I did that."

"By an unfortunate accident!"

"No, I was a young boy, and she exasperated me, and I threw a hammer at her. A promising young angel I must have been!"

I was deeply sorry to have touched on such a painful theme, but that was useless now.

"She has borne the mark ever since, as you see," said Steerforth; "and she'll bear it to her grave, if she ever rests in one; though I can hardly believe she will ever rest anywhere. She was the motherless child of a sort of cousin of my father's. He died one day. My mother, who was then a widow, brought her here to be company to her. She has a couple of thousand pounds of her own, and saves the interest of it every year, to add to the principal. There's the history of Miss Rosa Dartle for you."

"And I have no doubt she loves you like a brother?" said I.

"Humph!" retorted Steerforth, looking at the fire. "Some brothers are not loved over much; and some love—but help yourself, Copperfield! We'll drink the daisies of the field, in compliment to you; and the lilies of the valley that toll not, neither do they spin, in compliment to me—the more shame for me!" A moody smile that had overspread his features cleared off as he said this merrily, and he was his own frank, winning self again.

I could not help glancing at the scar with a painful interest when we went in to tea. It was not long before I observed that it was the most susceptible part of her face, and that, when she turned pale, that mark altered first, and became a dull, lead-colored streak, lengthening out to its full extent, like a mark in invisible ink brought to the fire. There was a little altercation between her and Steerforth about a cast of the dice at backgammon, when I thought her, for one moment, in a storm of rage; and then I saw it start forth like the old writing on the wall.

It was no matter of wonder to me to feel Mrs.
Generally, but not always. Sometimes brighter visions rise before me. When I dress (the occupation of two hours), for a ball given at the Larkins's (the anticipation of three weeks), I indulge my fancy with pleasing images. I picture myself taking courage to make a declaration to Miss Larkins. I picture Miss Larkins sinking her head upon my shoulder, and saying, "Oh, Mr. Copperfield, can I believe my ears!" I picture Mr. Larkins walking on me next morning, and saying, "My dear Copperfield, my daughter has told me all. Youth is no objection. Here are twenty thousand pounds. Be happy!" I picture my aunt relenting, and blessing us; and Mr. Dick and Doctor Strong being present at the marriage ceremony. Am a sensible fellow, I believe—I believe, on thinking it over, I mean—and modest I am sure; but all this goes on notwithstanding.

I repair to the enchanted house, where there are lights, chattering, music, flowers, officers (I am sorry to see), and the eldest Miss Larkins, a blaze of beauty. She is dressed in blue, with blue flowers in her hair—forget-me-nots. As if she had any need to wear forget-me-nots! It is the first really grown-up party that I have ever been invited to, and I am a little uncomfortable; for I appear not to belong to anybody, and nobody appears to have anything to say to me, except Mr. Larkins, who asks me how my school-fellows are, which he need not do, as I have not come there to be insulted.

But after I have stood in the doorway for some time, and feasted my eyes upon the goddess of my heart, she approaches me—she, the eldest Miss Larkins—and asks me pleasantly, if I dance?

I stammer, with a bow, "With you, Miss Larkins."

"With no one else?" inquires Miss Larkins.

"I should have no pleasure in dancing with any one else."

Miss Larkins laughs and blushes (or I think she blushes), and says, "Next time but one, I shall be very glad."

The time arrives. "It is a waltz, I think," Miss Larkins doubtfully observes, when I present myself. "Do you waltz? If not, Captain Bailey—"?

But I do waltz (pretty well, too, as it happens), and I take Miss Larkins out, I take her sternly from the side of Captain Bailey. He is wretched, I have no doubt; but he is nothing to me. I have been wretched, too. I waltz with the eldest Miss Larkins! I don't know where, among whom, or how long. I only know that I swim about in space, with a blue angel, in a state of blissful delirium, until I find myself alone with her in a little room, resting on a sofa. She admires a flower (pink camelia japonica, price half-a-crown), in my button-hole. I give it her, and say:

"I ask an inestimable price for it, Miss Larkins."

"Indeed! What is that?" returns Miss Larkins.

"A flower of yours, that I may treasure miser does gold."

"You're a bold boy," says Miss Larkins.

"There."

She gives it me, not dispensed; and in my lips, and then into my breast. Miss Larkins laughing, draws her hand through my arm, says, "Now take me back to Captain Bailey."

I am lost in the recollected of this interview, and the waltz, when she comes again, with a plain elderly gentleman, been playing whilst all night, upon her back says:

"Oh! here is my bold friend! Mr. Copperfield wants you to know you, Mr. Copperfield."

I feel at once that he is a friend of the and am much gratified.

"I admire your taste, sir," says Mr. Copperfield.

"It does you credit. I suppose you do much interest in hopes; but I am a pro-grower myself; and if you ever like to go to our neighborhood—neighborhood of A and take a run about our place, we shall for you to stop as long as you like."

I thank Mr. Chestle warmly, and shall I think I am in a happy dream. I waltz eldest Miss Larkins once again. She waltz so well! I go home in a state of listless, and waltz, in imagination, a long, with my arm round the blue waltz and divinity. For some days afterward I am lost in rapturous reflections; but I neither in the street, nor when I call. I am im-pilogue to this disappointment by the pledge, the perished flower. Tromwood," says Agnes, one day asks:

"Who do you think is going to be married now? Some one you admire."

"Not you, I suppose, Agnes?"

"Not me!" raising her cheerful face, music she is copying. "Do you hear him?—The eldest Miss Larkins."

"To—to Captain Bailey?" I have just power to ask.

"No; to no Captain. To Mr. Chestle grower."

I am terribly dejected for about a week. I take off my ring, I wear my worst cloth, no bear's grease, and I frequently lament late Miss Larkins's faded flower. Being time, rather tired of this kind of life, and received new provocation from the blue throw the flower away, go out with the and gloriously defeat him.

This, and the resumption of my ring as of the bear's grease in moderation, are marks I can discern, now, in my pro-seventeen.

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CHAPTER XIX.

I LOOK ABOUT MR. AND MAKE A DISCOVERY.

I am doubtful whether I was at heart sorry, when my school-days drew to an end.
time came for my leaving Doctor Strong's. I had been very happy there; I had a great attachment for the Doctor, and I was eminent and distin-
guished in that little world. For these reasons it was sorry to go; but for other reasons, unsat-
fisfactory enough, I was glad. Misty ideas of being a young man at my own disposal, of the im-
portance of being attached to a young man at his own dis-
bol, of the wonderful things to be seen and done by that magnificent animal, and the wonder-
ful people he could not fail to meet upon society, all of the above, were powerful, but too 
belated for the boyish mind, that I seem, looking to my present way of thinking, to have
school without natural regret. The separa-
tion has not made the impression on me, that it has on some others. I try in vain to recall
for I felt about it, and what its circumstances were; but it is not momentous in my recollec-
tion. I suppose the opening prospect confused me. I know that my juvenile experiences went to nothing; and that life was more
in my attic story, which I was just about to read, than anything else.
A year or more I had endeavored to find a satisfactory answer to her often-repeated ques-
tion: "What would you like to be?" But I had no special liking, that I could discover, for any-
thing. If I could have been inspired with a glimpse of the science of navigation, taken
alone on a fast-sailing expedition, and gone around the world on a triumphant voyage of dis-
covery, I think I might have considered myself entirely suited. But in the absence of any
miraculous provision, my desire was to
 Macy myself to some pursuit that would not lie
lightly upon her purse; and to do my duty at whatever it might be.
Mr. Dick had regularly assisted at our coun-
sels, with a meditative and sage demeanor. He
never made a suggestion but once; and on that one occasion (I don't know what put it in his head),
I suddenly proposed that I should be "a writer." My aunt received this proposal so
ungraciously, that he never ventured on a
second; but ever afterwards confined himself to
acting watchfully at her for her suggestions, and
saving his money.
"Trot, I tell you what, my dear," said my
aunt, one morning in the Christmas season when
the school; "as this knotty point is still un-
settled, and as we must not make a mistake in
it, if we can help it, I think we had
better take a little breathing-time. In the mean-
time, you must try to look at it from a new point of view, and not as a schoolboy."
"I will, aunt."
"It has occurred to me," pursued my aunt,
that a little change, and a glimpse of life out of school, may be useful, in helping you to know
your own mind, and form a cooler judgment.
Suppose you were to take a little journey now,
Suppose you were to go down into the old part of the country again, for instance, and see that
—that out-of-the-way woman with the savagest of names," said my aunt, rubbing her nose, for she
could not give up Peggotty for being called
"Of all things in the world, aunt, I should like it best!"
"Well," said my aunt, "that's lucky, for
I should like it too. But it's natural and rational
that you should like it. And I am very well per-
suaded that whatever you do, Trot, will always
be natural and rational."
"I hope so, aunt."
"Your sister, Betsey Trotwood," said my
aunt, "would have been as natural and rational a
girl as ever breathed. You'll be worthy of her,
won't you?"
"I hope I shall be worthy of you, aunt. That
will be enough for me."
"It's a mercy that poor deary baby of a mother
of yours didn't live," said my aunt, looking at me approvingly, "or she'd have been so vain of her
boy by this time, that her soft little head would have been completely turned, if there was
anything of it left to turn." (My aunt always excused any weakness of her own in my behalf, by
transferring it in this way to my poor mother.)
"Bless me, Trotwood, how you do remind me of
her!"
"Pleasingly, I hope, aunt?" said I.
"He's as like her, Dick," said my aunt, emph-
atically, "he's as like her, as she was that
afternoon, before she began to fret. Bless my heart, he's as like her, as he can look at me out of
his two eyes!"
"Is he indeed?" said Mr. Dick.
"And he's like David, too," said my aunt, de-
cisively.
"He is very like David!" said Mr. Dick.
"But what I want you to be, Trot," resumed
my aunt, "—I don't mean physically, but morally;
you are very well physically—is, a firm fellow. A
fine fellow, with a will of your own. With
resolution," said my aunt, shaking her cap at me,
and clenching her hand. "With determination.
With character, Trot. With strength of character
that is not to be influenced, except on good reason,
by anybody, or by anything. That's what I want
you to be. That's what your father and mother
might both have been, Heaven knows, and been
the better for it."
I intimated that I hoped I should be what she
described.
"That you may begin in a small way, to have
a reliance upon yourself, and to act for yourself," said my aunt, "I shall send you upon your trip,
alone. I did think, once, of Mr. Dick's going
with you; but, on second thoughts, I shall keep
him to take care of me."
Mr. Dick, for a moment, looked a little disappoin-
ted; until the honor and dignity of having to
take care of the most wonderful woman in the
world, restored the sunshine to his face.
of treating me like a plaything, was more agreeable to me than any behavior he could have adopted. It reminded me of our old acquaintance; it seemed the natural sequel of it; it showed me that he was unchanged; it relieved me of any uneasiness I might have felt, in comparing my merits with his, and measuring my claims upon his friendship by any equal standard: above all, it was a familiar, unrestrained, affectionate demeanor that he used towards no one else. As he had treated me at school differently from all the rest, I joyfully believed that he treated me in life unlike any other friend he had. I believed that I was nearer to his heart than any other friend, and my own heart warmed with attachment to him.

He made up his mind to go with me into the country, and the day arrived for our departure. He had been doubtful at first whether to take Little or not, but decided to leave him at home. The respectable creature, satisfied with his lot whatever it was, arranged our portmanteaus on the little carriage that was to take us into London, as if they were intended to defy the shocks of ages; and received my modestly proffered donation with perfect tranquillity.

We bade adieu to Mrs. Steerforth and Miss Darce, with many thanks on my part, and much kindness on the devoted mother's. The last thing I saw was Littimer's unruffled eye, fraught, as I fancied, with the silent conviction that I was very young indeed.

What I felt, in returning so auspiciously to the old familiar places, I shall not endeavor to describe. We went down by Mail. I was so concerned, I recollect, even for the honor of Yarmouth, that when Steerforth said, as we drove through its dark streets to the inn, that, as well as he could make it out, it was a good, queer, out-of-the-way kind of hole, I was highly pleased. We went to bed on our arrival (I observed a pair of dirty shoes and gaiters in connexion with my old friend the Dolphin as we passed that door), and breakfasted late in the morning. Steerforth, who was in great spirits, had been strolling about the beach before I was up, and had made acquaintance, he said, with half the boatmen in the place. Moreover, he had seen, in the distance, what he was sure must be the identical house of Mr. Peggotty, with smoke coming out of the chimney; and had had a great mind, he told me, to walk in and swear he was myself grown out of knowledge.

"When do you propose to introduce me there, Daisys?" he said. "I am at your disposal. Make your own arrangements."

"Why, I was thinking that this evening would be a good time, Steerforth, when they are all sitting round the fire. I should like you to see it when it's snug, it's such a curious place."

"So be it!" returned Steerforth. "This evening.""I shall not give them any notice that we are here you know," said I, delighted. "We must take them by surprise.""Oh, of course! It's no fun," said Steerforth, "unless we take them by surprise. Let us see the natives in their aboriginal condition."

"Though they are that sort of people that you mentioned," I returned.

"Aha! What do you recollect of my skirmish with Roos, do you?" he exclaimed with a grin. "Confound the girl, I am half afraid of her. She's like a goblin to me. But never mind her. Now what are you going to do? You are going to see your nurse, I suppose?"

"Why, yes," I said, "I must see Peggotty first of all."

"Well," replied Steerforth, looking at his watch. "Suppose I deliver you up to her first, and then over for a couple of hours. Is that long enough?"

I answered, laughing, that I thought we might get through it in that time, but that he must come also; for he would find that his renown had preceded him, and that he was almost as great a personage as I was.

"I'll come anywhere you like," said Steerforth, "or do anything you like. Tell me when to come to; and in two hours I'll produce myself in any state you please, sentimental or comic."

I gave him minute directions for finding the residence of Mr. Barkis, carrier to Yarmouth and elsewhere; and, on this understanding, went out alone. There was a sharp bracing air; the ground was dry; the sea was crisp and clear; the sun was diffusing abundance of light, if not warmth; and everything was fresh and lively. It was so fresh and lively myself, in the pleasure of being there, that I could have stopped the people in the streets and shaken hands with them.

The streets looked small, of course. The streets that we have only seen as children always do. I believe, when we go back to them. But I had forgotten nothing in them, and found nothing changed, until I came to Mr. Omer's shop. Omer and Johan was now written up, where Omer used to be; but the inscription, Draper, Tailor, Haberdasher, Funeral Furnisher, &c., remained as it was.

My footsteps seemed to tend so naturally to the shop-door, after I had read these words from end to end, that I went across the road and looked in. There was a pretty woman at the back of the shop, dancing a little child in her arms, while another little fellow clung to her apron. I had no difficulty in recognizing either Minnie or Min's children. The glass door of the parlor was now open; but in the workshop across the yard I could faintly hear the old tune playing, as if it had never left off.

"Is Mr. Omer at home?" said I, entering.

"I should like to see him, for a moment, if he is."

"Yes, sir, he is at home," said Minnie. "This weather don't suit his asthma out of doors, Joe, call your grandfather!"

The little fellow, who was holding her arm, gave such a lusty shout, that the sound of it made him blush, and he buried his face in her skirt to her great satisfaction. There was a heavy curtain
and blowing coming towards us, and soon Mr. Omer, shorter-winded than of yore, but not much elder-looking, stood before me.

"Servant, sir," said Mr. Omer, "What can I do for you, sir?"

"You can shake hands with me, Mr. Omer, if you please," said I, putting out my own. "You were very good-natured to me once, when I am afraid I didn't show that I thought so."

"Was I thought?" returned the old man.

"I'm glad to hear it, but I don't remember when.

Are you sure it was me?"

"Quite."

"I think my memory has got as short as my breath," said Mr. Omer, looking at me and shaking his head; "for I don't remember you."

"Don't you remember your coming to the house to meet me, and my having breakfast here, and our riding out to Blunderstone together; you, and I, and Mrs. Joram, and Mr. Joram too—who wasn't her husband then?"

"Why, Lord bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Omer, after being thrown by his surprise into a fit of coughing, "you don't say so! Minnie, my dear, you recollect? Dear me, yes; the party was a lady, think?"

"My mother," I rejoined.

"To—be—sure," said Mr. Omer, touching his waistcoat with his forefinger, "and there was a little child too! There was two parties. The one party was laid along with the other party, over at Blunderstone it was, of course. Dear me! And how have you been since?"

Very well, I thanked him, as I hoped he had been too.

"Oh! nothing to grumble at, you know," said Mr. Omer. "I find my breath gets short, but it won't get longer as a man gets older. I take it as it comes, and make the most of it. That's the best way, ain't it?"

Mr. Omer coughed again, in consequence of talking, and was assisted out of his fit by his daughter, who now stood close beside us, dancing her smallest child on the counter.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Omer. "Yes, to be sure.

Two parties! Why, in that very ride, if you'll believe me, the day was named for my Minnie to marry Joram. 'Do name it, sir,' says Joram. 'Yes, do, father,' says Minnie. And now he's come into the business. And look here! Thejumpest!"

Minnie laughed, and stroked her bandied hair upon her temples, as her father put one of his fat fingers into the hand of the child she was dancing on the counter.

"Two parties, of course!" said Mr. Omer, nodding his head retrospectively. "Exactly so! And Joram's at work, at this minute, on a grey one with silver nails, not this measurement—the measurement of the dancing child upon the counter—"by a good two inches. Will you take something?"

I thanked him, but declined.

"Let me see," said Mr. Omer. "Barkis's the carrier's wife—Peggotty's the boatman's sister—she had something to do with your family? She was in service there, sure?"

My answering in the affirmative gave him great satisfaction.

"I believe my breath will get long next, my memory's getting so much so," said Mr. Omer. "Well, sir, we've got a young relation of hers here, under articles to us, that has as elegant a taste in the dress-making business— I assure you I don't believe there's a Duchess in England can touch her."

"Not little Emly?" said I, involuntarily.

"Emly's her name," said Mr. Omer, "and she's little too. But if you'll believe me, she has such a face of her own that half the women in this town are mad against her."

"Nonsense, father!" cried Minnie.

"My dear," said Mr. Omer, "I don't say it's the case with you," winking at me, "but I say that half the women in Yarmouth, ah! and in five mile round, are mad against that girl."

"Then she should have kept to her own station in life, father," said Minnie, "and not have given them any hold to talk about her, and then they couldn't have done it."

"Couldn't have done it, my dear!" retorted Mr. Omer. "Couldn't have done it! Is that your knowledge of life? What is there that any woman couldn't do, that she shouldn't do—especially on the subject of another woman's good looks? I really thought it was all over with Mr. Omer, after he had uttered this unliberal pleasure. He coughed to that extent, and his breath ended all his attempts to recover it with that obstinacy, that I fully expected to see his head go down behind the counter, and his little black breeches, with the dusty little bunches of ribbons at the knees, come quivering up in a last ineffectual struggle. At length, however, he got better, though he still panted hard, and was so exhausted that he was obliged to sit on the stool of the shop-desk."

"You see," he said, wiping his head, and breathing with difficulty, "she hasn't taken much to any companions here; she hasn't taken kindly to any particular acquaintances and friends, not to mention sweethearts. In consequence, an ill-natured story got about, that Emly wanted to be a lady. Now, my opinion is, that it came into circulation principally on account of her sometimes sitting at the school, that if she was a lady, she would like to do so—and so for her uncle—don't you see?—and buy him such-and-such fine things."

"I assure you, Mr. Omer, she has said so to me," I returned eagerly, "when we were both children."

Mr. Omer nodded his head and rubbed his chin. "Just so. Then out of a very little, she could dress herself, you see, better than most others could out of a deal, and that made things unpleasant. Moreover, she was rather what might be called wayward. I'll go so far as to say what I should call wayward myself," said Mr.
“Omer: ‘didn’t know her own mind quite; a little spoiled; and con’ that, at first, exactly bind herself down. No more than that was ever said against her, Minnie?’”

“No, father,” said Mrs. Jorah. “That’s the worst. I believe.”

“So when she got a situation,” said Mr. Omer, “to keep a fractions old lady company, they didn’t very well agree, and she didn’t stop. At least she came here for, apprenticed for three years. Nearly two of ‘em are over, and she has been as good a girl as ever was. Worth any six! Minnie, is she worth any six, now?”

“Yes, father,” replied Minnie. “Never say I detracted from her!”

“Very good,” said Mr. Omer. “That’s right. And so, young gentleman,” he added, after a few moments’ further rubbing of his chin, “that you may not consider me long-winded as well as short-breaded, I believe that’s all about it!”

As they had spoken in a subdued tone, while speaking of Emily, I had no doubt that she was near. On my asking now, if that were not so, Mr. Omer nodded yes, and nodded towards the door of the parlor. My hurried inquiry if I might peep in, was answered with a free permission; and, looking through the glass, I saw her sitting at her work. I saw her, a most beautiful little creature, with the cloudless blue eyes, that had looked into my childish heart, turned laughingly upon another child of Minnie’s who was playing near her; with enough of wilfulness in her bright face to justify what I had heard; with much of the old capricious coyness lurking in it; but with nothing in her pretty looks, I am sure, but what was meant for goodness and for happiness, and what was on a good and happy course.

The tune across the yard that seemed as if it never had left off—ah! It was the tune that never does leave off—was beating, softly, all the while.

“Wouldn’t you like to step in,” said Mr. Omer, “and speak to her? Walk in and speak to her, sir! Make yourself at home!”

I was too bashful to do so then—I was afraid of confusing her, and I was so less afraid of confusing myself; but I informed myself of the hour at which she left of an evening. In order that our visit might be timed accordingly; and taking leave of Mr. Omer, and his pretty daughter, and her little children, went away to my dear old Peggoty’s.

Here she was, in the tiled kitchen, cooking dinner! The moment I knocked at the door she opened it, and asked me what I pleased to want. I looked at her with a smile, but she gave me no smile in return. I had never ceased to write to her, but it must have been seven years since we had met.

“Is Mr. Barkis at home, mam’? I said, feigning to speak roughly to her.

“He’s at home, sir,” returned Peggoty, “but he’s had abed with the rheumatism!”

“Don’t he go over to Blunderstone now?” I asked.

“When he’s well he does,” she answered.

“Do you ever go there, Mrs. Barkis?”

She looked at me more attentively, and tied a quick movement of her hands two each other.

“Because I want to ask a question about house there, that they call the—what is it?—Rookery,” said I.

She took a step backward, and put out hands in an undecided frightened way, as I keep me off.

“Peggotty!” I cried to her.

She cried, “My darling boy!” and we burst into tears, and were locked in one other arms.

What extravagances she committed; laughing and crying over me; what peals I showed, what joy, what sorrow that she who pride and joy I might have been, could never me in a fond embrace; I have not the heart to tell. I was troubled with no misgiving that was young in me to respond to her emotion; had never laughed and cried in all my life, I say, not even to her, more freely than I did that morning.

“Barkis will be so glad,” said Peggoty wiping her eyes with her apron, “that it him more good than pliers of linen. May I and tell him you are here? Will you come and see him, my dear?”

Of course I would. But Peggoty couldn’t get out of the room as easily as she meant to, as often as she got to the door and looked me at me, she came back again to have another by and another cry upon my shoulder. At last, make the matter easier, I went up-stairs to her; and having waited outside for a minute while she said a word of preparation to Mr. Barkis, presented myself before that invalid.

He received me with absolute enthusiasm. He was too rheumatic to be shaken hands, but he begged me to shake the tassel of his nightcap, which I did most cordially. We sat down by the side of the bed, he said this him a world of good to feel as if he was saying me on the Blunderstone road again. He lay in bed, face upward, and so covered, with a exception, that he seemed to be nothing his face—like a conventional cherub—like is the queerest object I ever beheld.

“What name was it as I wrote up in the sir?” said Mr. Barkis, with a slow rheumatic smile.

“Aha! Mr. Barkis, we had some grave it about that matter, hadn’t we?”

“I was willin’ a long time, sir?” said Mr. Barkis.

“A long time,” said I.

“And I don’t regret it,” said Mr. Barkis; “you remember what you told me once, about making all the apple pastries and doing all cooking?”

“Yes, very well,” I returned.

“It was as true,” said Mr. Barkis, “as has
It was as true," said Mr. Barkis, nodding his head. "As taxes are. And nothing's truer than them."

Mr. Barkis turned his eyes upon me, as if for my assent to this result of his reflections in bed; and I gave it.

"Nothing's truer than them," repeated Mr. Barkis; "a man as poor as I am, finds that out in his mind when he's laid up. I'm a very poor man, sir?"

"I am sorry to hear it, Mr. Barkis."

"A very poor man, indeed I am," said Mr. Barkis.

Here his right hand came slowly and feebly from under the bedclothes, and with a purposeless uncertain grasp took hold of a stick which was loosely tied to the side of the bed. After some poking about with this instrument, in the course of which his face assumed a variety of disjointed expressions, Mr. Barkis poked it against a box, an end of which had been visible to me all the time. Then his face became composed.

"Old clothes," said Mr. Barkis.

"Oh!" said I.

"I wish it was Money, sir," said Mr. Barkis.

"I wish it was, indeed," said I.

"But it ain't," said Mr. Barkis, opening both eyes as wide as he possibly could.

I expressed myself quite sure of that, and Mr. Barkis, turning his eyes more gently to his wife, said:

"She's the usefulllest and best of women, C. P. Barkis. All the praise that any one can give C. P. Barkis she deserves, and more! My dear, you'll get a dinner to-day, for company; something good to eat and drink, will you?"

I should have protested against this unnecessary demonstration in my honor, but that I saw Peggotty, on the opposite side of the bed, extremely anxious I should not. So I held my tongue.

"I have got a trifle of money somewhere about me, my dear," said Mr. Barkis, "but I'm a bit tired. If you and Mr. David will leave me a short nap, I'll try and find it when I wake."

We left the room, in compliance with this request. When we got outside the door, Peggotty informed me that Mr. Barkis, being now "a little manner" than he used to be, always resorted to his same device before producing a single coin from his store; and that he endured unheard-of agonies in crawling out of bed alone, and taking it from that unlucky box. In effect, we presently heard him uttering suppressed groans of the most deplorable nature, as this magpie proceeding raked him in every joint; but while Peggotty's eyes were full of compassion for him, she said his generous impulse would do him good, and it was better not to check it. So he groaned on, until he had got into bed again, suffering, I have no doubt, a martyrdom; and then called us in, pretending to have just woke up from a refreshing sleep, and to produce a guinea from under his pillow. His satisfaction in which happy imposition on us, and in having preserved the impenetrable secret of the box, appeared to be a sufficient compensation to him for all his tortures.

I prepared Peggotty for Steerforth's arrival, and it was not long before he came. I persuaded her to know no difference between his having been a personal benefactor of hers and a kind friend to me, and that she would have received him with the utmost gratitude and devotion in any case. But his easy, spirited, good humor; his genial manner, his handsome looks, his natural gift of adapting himself to whomsoever he pleased, and making direct, when he cared to do it, to the main point of interest in anybody's heart; bound her to him wholly in five minutes. His manner to me, alone, would have won her. But, through all these causes combined, I sincerely believe she had a kind of adoration for him before he left the house that night.

He stayed there with me to dinner—If I were to say willingly, I should not half express how readily and gaily. He went into Mr. Barkis's room like light and air, brightening and refreshing it as if he were healthy weather. There was no noise, no effort, no consciousness, in anything he did; but in everything an indescribable lightness, a seeming impossibility of doing anything else, or doing anything better, which was so graceful, so natural, and agreeable, that it overcomes me, even now, in the remembrance.

We made merry in the little parlor, where the Book of Martyrs, unthumbed since my time, was laid upon the desk as of old, and where I now turned over its terrific pictures, remembering the old sensations they had awakened, but not feeling them. When Peggotty spoke of what she called my room, and of its being ready for me at night, and of her hoping I would occupy it, before I could so much as look at Steerforth, hesitating, he was possessed of the whole case.

"Of course," he said. "You'll sleep here, while we stay, and I shall sleep at the hotel."

"But to bring you so far," I returned, "and to separate, seems bad companionship, Steerforth."

"Why in the name of Heaven, where do you naturally belong?" he said. "What is 'aceme,' compared to that?" It was settled at once.

He maintained all his delightful qualities to the last, until we started forth, at eight o'clock, for Mr. Peggotty's boat. Indeed, they were more and more brightly exhibited as the hours went on: for I thought even then, and I have no doubt now, that the consciousness of success in his determination to please, inspired him with a new delicacy of perception, and made it, subtle as it was, more easy to him. If any one had told me, then, that all this was a brilliant game, played for the excitement of the moment, for the employment of high spirits, in the thoughtless love of superiority, in a mere wasteful careless course of winning what was worthless to him, and next minute thrown away: I say, if any one had told me such a lie that night, I wonder in what way..."
ner of receiving it my indignation would have found a vent!

Probably only in an increase, had that been possible, of the romantic feelings of fidelity and friendship with which I walked beside him, over the dark wintry sands, towards the old boat; the wind sighing around us even more mournfully than it had sighed and moaned upon the night when I first darkened Mr. Peggotty's door.

"This is a wild kind of place, Steerforth, is it not?"

"Dreadful enough in the dark," he said; "and the sea roars as if it were hungry for us. Is that the boat, where I see a light yonder?"

"That's the boat," said I.

"And it's the same I saw this morning," he returned. "I came straight to it, by instinct, I suppose."

We said no more as we approached the light, but made softly for the door. I laid my hand upon the latch; and whispering Steerforth to keep close to me, went in.

A murmur of voices had been audible on the outside, and, at the moment of our entrance, a clapping of hands; which latter noise, I was surprised to see, proceeded from the generally disconsolate Mrs. Gummidge. But Mrs. Gummidge was not the only person there who was unusually excited. Mr. Peggotty, his face lighted up with uncommon satisfaction, and laughing with all his might, held his ruddy arms wide open, as if for little Em'ly to run into them; Ham, with a mixed expression in his face of admiration, exultation, and a trembling sort of bashfulness that sat upon him very well, held little Em'ly by the hand, as if he were presenting her to Mr. Peggotty; little Em'ly herself, blushing and shy, but delighted with Mr. Peggotty's delight, as her joyous eyes expressed, was stopped by our entrance (for she saw us first) in the very act of springing from Ham to nestle in Mr. Peggotty's embrace. In the first glimpse we had of them all, and at the moment of our passing from the dark cold night into the warm light room, this was the way in which they were all employed: Mrs. Gummidge in the background, clapping her hands like a madwoman.

The little picture was so instantaneously dissolved by our going in, that one might have doubted whether it had ever been. I was in the midst of the astonished family, face to face with Mr. Peggotty, and holding out my hand to him, when Ham shouted:

"Mas'r Davy! It's Mas'r Davy!"

In a moment we were all shaking hands with one another, and asking one another how we did, and telling one another how glad we were to meet, and all talking at once. Mr. Peggotty was so proud and overjoyed to see us, that he did not know what to say or do, but kept over and over again shaking hands with me, and then with Steerforth, and then with me, and then ruffling his shaggy hair all over his head, and laughing with such glee and triumph, that it was a treat to see him.

"Why, that you two gent'lmens—gent'lmens growed—should come to this here roof to-night, of all nights in my life," said Mr. Peggotty, "is such a thing as never happened afore, I do think believe! Em'ly, my darling, come here! Oan here, my little witch! There's Mas'r Davy's friend, my dear! There's the gent'lmans as you've heard on, Em'ly. Be comes to see you, along with Mas'r Davy, on the brightest night of your uncle's life as ever was or will be, Gorn he 'ther one, and honour for it!"

After delivering this speech all in a breath, and with extraordinary animation and pleasure, Mr. Peggotty put one of his large hands roughly on each side of his niece's face, and kissing it a dozen times, laid it with a gentle pride and love upon his broad chest, and putted it as if his hand had been a lady's. Then he let her go; and as she ran into the little chamber where I used to sleep, looked round upon us, quite hot and out of breath with his uncommon satisfaction.

"If you two gent'lmens—gent'lmens growed now, and such gent'lmens—" said Mr. Peggotty.

"So th' are, so th' are!" cried Ham. "Well said! So th' are. Mas'r Davy bor—gent'lmens growed—so th' are!"

"If you two gent'lmens, gent'lmens growed," said Mr. Peggotty, "don't excuse me for being in a state of mind, when you understand matters, I'll ask your pardon. Em'ly, my dear!—She knows I'm going to tell her, here his delight broke out again, and has made off. Would you be so good as look after her, Mawther, for a minute?"

Mrs. Gummidge nodded and disappeared.

"If this isn't," said Mr. Peggotty, sitting down among us by the fire, "the brightest night of my life, I'm a shellfish—bliled too—and more I can't say. This here little Em'ly, sir," in a low voice to Steerforth, "—her as you see a blushing here just now—"

Steerforth only nodded; but with such a pleased expression of interest, and of participation in Mr. Peggotty's feelings, that the latter answered him as if he had spoken.

"To be sure," said Mr. Peggotty. "That's her, and so she is. Thankee, sir."

Ham nodded to me several times, as if he would have said so too.

"This here little Em'ly of ours," said Mr. Peggotty, "has been in our house, what I suppose (I'm a ignorant man, but that's my belief) no one but a little bright-eyed creature can be in a house. She ain't my child; I never had one; but I couldn't love her more. You understand! I couldn't do it!"

"I quite understand," said Steerforth.

"I know you do, sir," returned Mr. Peggotty. "And thankee again, Mas'r Davy, he can remember what she was; you may judge for your own self what she is; but neither of you can tell how she has been, is, and will be, to my
I DINE WITH THE MICAWBERS.

I found Mr. Micawber in
who had called to say that the dinner
place as proposed. When I asked
remittance had come, he pressed me
departed.

As looking out of window that same
surprised me, and made me rather
see Mr. Micawber and Uriah Heep
arm in arm: Uriah humbly sensible of
hat was done him, and, Mr. Micawber
and delight in extending his patronage
but I was still more surprised, when I
little hotel next day at the appointed
which was four o'clock, to find, from
Micawber said, that he had gone home
and had drunk brandy-and-water at
I tell you what, my dear Copperfield,”
Micawber, “your friend Heep is a young
might be attorney-general. If I had
young man, at the period when my
name to a crisis, all I can say is, that I
creditors would have been a great
man aged than they were.”

understood how this could have been,
Mr. Micawber had paid them nothing
for; but I did not like to ask. Neither
say, that I hoped he had not been too
dive to Uriah; or to inquire if they
much about me. I was afraid of hurt-
Micawber’s feelings, or, at all events,
there’s, she being very sensitive; but I
portable about it, too, and often thought
wards.

a beautiful little dinner. Quite an
of fish; the kidney-end of a loin of
ed; fried sausage-meat; a partridge;
ing. There was wine, and there was
and after dinner Mrs. Micawber made
hot punch with her own hands.

Micawber was uncommonly convivial.
I am such good company. He made his
with the punch, so that it looked as if
varnished all over. He got cheerfully
about the town, and proposed success-
that Mrs. Micawber and himself
made extremely snug and comfortable
that he never should forget the agree-
they had passed in Canterbury. He
afterwards; and he, and Mrs. Mi-
and, I took a review of our past acquain-
to course of which, we sold the property
. Then I proposed Mrs. Micawber;
said, modestly, “If you’ll allow me,
ber, I shall now have the pleasure of
or health, ma’am.” On which Mr.
elevered an eulogium on Mrs. Micaw-
ter, and said she had ever been his
father, and friend, and that he would
me, when I came to a marrying time
marry such another woman, if such
man could be found.

such disappeared, Mr. Micawber’s
 friendly and convivial, Mrs. Mi-
cawber’s spirits becoming elevated, too, we sang
“Auld Lang Syne.” When we came to “Here’s
a hand, my trusty fero,” we all joined hands
round the table; and when we declared we
“take a right good Willie Waght,” and hadn’t
the least idea what it meant, we were really af-
fected.

In a word, I never saw anybody so thoroughly
joyful as Mr. Micawber was, down to the very last
moment of the evening, when I took a hearty
farewell of himself and his amiable wife. Conse-
sequently, I was not prepared, at seven o’clock
next morning, to receive the following communi-
cation, dated half-past nine in the evening; a
quarter of an hour after I had left him:

“My Dear Young Friend,

“The die is cast—all is over. Hiding the
ravages of care with a sickly mask of mirth, I
have not informed you, this evening, that there is
no hope of the remittance! Under these circum-
stances, alike humiliating to endure, humiliating
to contemplate, and humiliating to relate, I have
discharged the pecuniary liability, contracted at
this establishment, by giving a note of hand,
made payable fourteen days after date, at my
residence, Pentonville, London. When it be-
comes due, it will not be taken up. The result is
destruction. The bolt is impending, and the tree
must fall.

“Let the wretched man who now addresses
you, my dear Copperfield, be a beacon to you
through life. He writes with that intention, and
in that hope. If he could think himself of so
much use, one gleam of day might, by possibility,
penetrate into the cheerless dungeon of his re-
main under existence—though his longevity is, at
present (to say the least of it), extremely pro-
blematical.

“This is the last communication, my dear
Copperfield, you will ever receive

“From

“The

“Begged Outcast,

“WILKINS MICAWBER.”

I was so shocked by the contents of this heart-
rending letter, that I ran off directly towards the
little hotel with the intention of taking it on my
way to Dr. Strong’s, and trying to soothe Mr.
Micawber with a word of comfort. But, half-way
there, I met the London coach with Mr. and Mrs.
Micawber up behind; Mr. Micawber, the very
picture of tranquil enjoyment, smiling at Mrs.
Micawber’s conversation, eating walnut out of a
paper bag, with a bottle sticking out of his breast
pocket. As they did not see me, I thought it
best, all things considered, not to see them. So,
with a great weight taken off my mind, I turned
into a by-street that was the nearest way
to school, and felt, upon the whole, relieved that
they were gone; though I still liked them very
much, nevertheless.
CHAPTER XVIII.
A RETROSPECT.

My school-days! The silent gliding on of my existence— the unseen, unfelt progress of my life—from childhood up to youth! Let me think, as I look back upon that flowing water, now a dry channel overgrown with leaves, whether there are any marks along its course, by which I can remember how it ran.

A moment, and I occupy my place in the Cathedral, where we all went together, every Sunday morning, assembling first at school for that purpose. The earthy smell, the sunless air, the sensation of the world being shut out, the resounding of the organ through the black and white arched galleries and aisles, are wings that take me back, and hold me hovering above those days, in a half-sleeping and half-waking dream.

I am not the last boy in the school. I have risen, in a few months, over several heads. But the first boy seems to me a mighty creature, dwelling afar off, whose giddy height is unattainable. Agnes says "No," but I say "Yes," and tell her that she little thinks what stores of knowledge have been mastered by the wonderful being, at whose place she thinks I, even I, weak aspirant, may arrive in time. He is not my private friend and public patron, as Steerforth was; but I hold him in a reverential respect. I chiefly wonder what he'll be, when he leaves Dr. Strong's, and what mankind will do to maintain my place against him.

But who is this that breaks upon me? This is Miss Shepherd, whom I love.

Miss Shepherd is a boarder at the Misses Nettingall's establishment. I adore Miss Shepherd. She is a little girl, in a spencer, with a round face and curly flaxen hair. The Misses Nettingall's young ladies come to the Cathedral too. I cannot look upon my book, for I must look upon Miss Shepherd. When the choristers chant, I hear Miss Shepherd. In the service I mentally insert Miss Shepherd's name; I put her in among the Royal Family. At home, in my own room, I am sometimes moved to cry out, "Oh, Miss Shepherd!" in a transport of love.

For some time, I am doubtful of Miss Shepherd's feelings, but, at length, Fate being propitious, we meet at the dancing-school. I have Miss Shepherd for my partner. I touch Miss Shepherd's glove, and feel a thrill go up the right arm of my jacket, and come out at my hair. I say nothing tender to Miss Shepherd, but we understand each other. Miss Shepherd and myself live but to be united.

Why do I secretly give Miss Shepherd twelve Brazil nuts for a present, I wonder? They are not expressive of affection, they are difficult to pack into a parcel of any regular shape, they are hard to crack, even in room doors, and they are oily when cracked; yet I feel that they are appropriate to Miss Shepherd. Soft, cloyed biscuits, also, I bestow upon Miss Shepherd; and oranges innumerable. Once, I kiss Miss Shepherd in a cloak room. Ecstasy! What are my agonies indigestion next day, when I hear a flying s that the Misses Nettingall have stood Miss hard in the stocks for turning in her toes?

Miss Shepherd being the one pervading and vision of my life, how do I ever come in with her? I can't conceive. And yet a ness grows between Miss Shepherd and a Whispers reach me of Miss Shepherd having she wished I wouldn't stare so, and having a preference for Master Jones—for Jones; of no merit whatever! The gulf between Miss Shepherd widens. At last, one day, the Misses Nettingall's establishment outing. Miss Shepherd makes a face as she goes and laughs to her companion. All is over. devotion of a life—it seems a life, it is all the —is at an end; Miss Shepherd comes out morning service, and the Royal Family her no more.

I am higher in the school, and no one by my peace. I am not at all polite, now, to Misses Nettingall's young ladies, and she don't on any of them, if they were twice as and twenty times as beautiful. I think the school—a tiresome affair, and wonder the girls can't dance by themselves and let alone. I am growing great in Latin verses neglect the laces of my boots. Doctor B refers to me in public as a promising scholar. Mr. Dick is wild with joy, and my remits me a guinea by the next post.

The shade of a young butcher rises, the apparition of an armed head in Macbeth. Is this young butcher? He is the terror of Canterbury. There is a vagabond, that the beef suet with which he has his hair gives him unnatural strength, and he is a match for a man. He is a broad-shouldered, young butcher, with rough red cheeked, an ill-conditioned mind, and an injurious voice. His main use of this tongue, is, to dispastle Miss Shepherd's young gentlemen. He says, put that they want anything he'll give it 'em names individuals among them (myself not whom he could undertake to settle with one and the other tied behind him. He wayls smaller boys to punish their unprotected, and calls challenges to me in the open. For these sufficient reasons I resolve to fig butcher.

It is a summer evening, down in a gree low, at the corner of a wall. I meet the by appointment. I am attended by a select of our boys; the butcher, by two other young publicans, and a sweep. The pedals are adjusted, and the butcher and I stand face to face. In a moment the highlights ten thousand candles out of my brow. In another moment, I don't know the wall is, or where I am, or where anybody I hardly know which is myself and which butcher, we are always in such a trai
I FIGHT WITH THE BUTCHER.

about the trodden grass. Some-
butcher, bloody but confiden-
tothing, and sit gasping on my
sometimes I go in at the butcher
my knuckles open against his
earing to discompose him at all.
very queer about the head, as
up, and see the butcher walking
by the two other butchers and
ablan, and putting on his coat
which I anguish, justly, that the
ome in a sad plight, and I have
to my eyes, and am rubbed with
dy, and find a great white puffy
ton my upper lip, which swells
for three or four days I remain
ll-looking subject, with a green
yes; and I should be very dull,
isa sister to me, and condole
ads to me, and makes the time
Agnes has my confidence com-
tell her all about the butcher,
he has heaped upon me; she
have done otherwise than fight
le she shrieks and trembles at
him.
en on unobserved, for Adams is
in the days that are come now,
this many and many a day.
the school so long, that when he
visit to Doctor Strong, there are
besides myself, who know him.
to be called to the bar almost
be an advocate, and to wear ar
risd to find him a meek man
ht, and less imposing in appear-
staggered the world yet, either;
well as I can make out pretty
is if he had never joined it.
ugh which the warriors of poetry
ich on in stately hosts that seem
and what comes next! I am the
look down on the line of boys
condescending interest in such
; to my mind the boy I was my-
came there. That little fellow
part of me; I remember him as
hind upon the road of life—as
passed, rather than have actually
it think of him as of some one
; girl I saw on that first day at
where is she? Gone also. In
fect likeness of the picture, a
more keenness about the house;
sweet sister, as I call her in
y uncles, and friend, the better
es of all who come within her
- denying influence, is quite a

hangs have come upon me, be-
in my growth and looks, and in
ave garnered all this while? I
wear a gold watch and chain, a ring upon my
little finger, and a long-tailed coat; and I use
a great deal of bear's grease—which, taken in
conjunction with the ring, looks bad. Am I in
love again? I am. I worship the eldest Miss
Larkins.

The eldest Miss Larkins is not a little girl.
She is a tall, dark, black-eyed, fine figure of a
woman. The eldest Miss Larkins is not a chicken;
for the youngest Miss Larkins is not that, and the
oldest must be three or four years older. Perhaps
the eldest Miss Larkins may be about thirty. My
passion for her is beyond all bounds.

The eldest Miss Larkins knows officers. It is
an awful thing to bear. I see them speaking
to her in the street. I see them cross the
to meet her, when her bonnet (she has a bright
taste in bonnet) is seen coming down the
pavement, accompanied by her sister's bonnet. She
laughs and talks, and seems to like it. I spend a
good deal of my own spare time in walking up
and down to meet her. If I can bow to her once
in the day (I know her to bow to, knowing Mr.
Larkins), I am happier. I deserve a bow now
and then. The raging agonies I suffer on the
of the Race Ball, where I know the eldest
Miss Larkins will be dancing with the military,
ought to have some compensation, if there be
even-handed justice in the world.

My passion takes away my appetite, and makes
me wear my newest silk neckerchief continually.
I have no relief but in putting on my best clothes,
and having my boots cleaned over and over again.
I seem, then, to be worther of the eldest Miss
Larkins. Everything that belongs to her, or is
connected with her, is precious to me. Mr. Lar-
kine (a gruff old gentleman with a double chin,
and one of his eyes immovable in his head) is
frught with interest to me. When I can't meet
his daughter, I go where I am likely to meet him.
To say "How do you do, Mr. Larkins? Are the
young ladies and all the family quite well?" seems
so pointed, that I blush.

I think continually about my age. Say I am
seventeen, and say that seventeen is young for the
oldest Miss Larkins, what of that? Besides, I
shall be one-and-twenty in no time almost. I reg-
ularly take walks outside Mr. Larkins's house in
the evening, though it cuts me to the heart to see
the officers go in, or to hear them up in the draw-
ing-room, where the eldest Miss Larkins plays the
harp. I even walk, on two or three occasions, in
a sickly, spoony manner, round and round the
house after the family are gone to bed, wondering
which is the eldest Miss Larkins's chamber (and
pitching, I dare say now, on Mr. Larkins's in-
stead); wishing that fire would burst out; that
the assembled crowd would stand appalled; that
I, dashing through them with a ladder, might rear
it against her window, save her in my arms, go
back for something she had left behind, and per-
ish in the flames. For I am generally disinter-
est in my love, and think I could be content to
make a figure before Miss Larkins, and expire.
"'Up from anywhere, then?' said I, taking my seat near him.

"'I was looking at the pictures in the fire,"' he returned.

"'But you are spoiling them for me,'" said I, as he stirred it quickly with a piece of burning wood, striking out of it a gain of red-hot sparks that went careering up the little chimney, and roaring out into the air.

"'You would not have seen them,'" he returned. "'I detest this mongrel time, neither day nor night. How late are you! Where have you been?'

"'I have been taking leave of my usual walk,'" said I.

"'And I have been sitting here,'" said Steerforth, glancing round the room, "'thinking that all the people we found so glad on the night of our coming down, might—to judge from the present wasted air of the place—be dispersed, or dead, or come to I don't know what harm. David, I wish to God I had had a judicious father these last twenty years!'

"'My dear Steerforth, what is the matter?'

"'I wish with all my soul I had been better guided!'" he exclaimed. "'I wish with all my soul I could guide myself better!'

There was a passionate dejection in his manner that quite amazed me. He was more unlike himself than I could have supposed possible.

"'It would be better to be this poor Peggotty, or his loft of a rathow,'" he said, getting up and leaning moodily against the chimney-piece, with his face towards the fire, than to be myself, twenty times richer and twenty times wiser, and be the torment to myself that I have been, in this Devil's bank of a boat, within the last half-hour!'"

I was so confounded by the alteration in him, that at first I could only observe him in silence, as he stood leaning his head upon his hand, and looking gloomily down at the fire. At length I begged him with all the earnestness I felt, to tell me what had occurred to cross him so unusually, and to let me sympathise with him, if I could not hope to advise him. Before I had well concluded, he began to laugh—heartily at first, but soon with returning sadness.

"'Tut, it's nothing, Daisy! nothing!'" he replied. "'I told you at the inn in London, I am heavy company for myself, sometimes. I have been a nightmare to myself just now—must have had one, I think. At odd dull times, nursery tales come up into the memory, unrecognised for what they are. I believe I have been confusing myself with the bad boy who 'didn't care,' and became food for lions—a grander kind of going to the dogs, I suppose. What old women call the horrors, have been creeping over me from head to foot. I have been afraid of myself.'"

"'You are afraid of nothing else, I think,'" said I.

"'Perhaps not, and yet may have enough to be afraid of too,'" he answered. "'Well! So it goes by! I am not about to be hipped again, David; but I tell you, my good fellow, once more, that it would have been well for me (and for more than me) if I had had a steadfast and judicious father!'"

His face was always full of expression, but I never saw it express such a dark kind of earnestness as when he said these words, with his glass bent on the fire.

''So much for that!'' he said, raising as it were a tossing something light into the air, with his hand.

"'Why, being gone, I am a man again, like Macbeth. And now for dinner! If I have not (Macbeth-like) broken up the feast with not admired disorder, Daisy.'"

"'But where are they all, I wonder?'" said I.

"'God knows,'" said Steerforth. "'After sitting to the ferry looking for you, I strolled in here and found the place deserted. That set me thinking, and you found me thinking.'"

The advent of Mrs. Gummidge with a basket explained how the house had happened to be empty. She had hurried out to buy something that was needed, against Mr. Peggotty's wish with the title; and had left the door open in the meanwhile, lest Ham and little Emily, with whom it was an early night, should come home while she was gone. Steerforth, after very much improving Mrs. Gummidge's spirits by a cheerful salutation and a jeuous embrace, took my arm, and hurried me away.

He had improved his own spirits, no less than Mrs. Gummidge's, for they were again at their usual flow, and he was full of vivacious conversation as we went along.

"'And so,'" he said, gaily, "'we abandon this buccaneer life to-morrow, do we?'

"'So we agreed,'" I returned. "'And our plans by the coach are taken, you know.'"

"'Ay! there's no help for it, I suppose,'" said Steerforth. "'I have almost forgotten that there is anything to do in the world but to go out testing on the sea here. I wish there was not.'"

"'As long as the novelty should last,'" said I, laughing.

"'Like enough,' he returned; "'though there's a sarcastic meaning in that observation for an amiable piece of innocence like my young friend. Well! I dare say I am a captious fellow, David. I know I am; but while the iron is hot, I can strike it vigorously too. I could pass a reasonably good examination already, as a pilot in these waters, I think.'"

"'Mr. Peggotty says you are a wonder,'" I returned.

"'A nautical phenomenon, eh?'' laughed Steerforth.

"'Indeed he does, and you know how truly, knowing how ardent you are in any pursuit you follow, and how easily you can master it. And that amazes me most in you, Steerforth—that you should be contented with such fruitful uses of your powers.'"

"'Contented?'" he answered, merrily. "'I am never contented, except with your freshness, my
Suppose you were to go down into the old part of the country again, for instance, and see that—out-of-the-way woman with the savagest of names," said my aunt, rubbing her nose, for she could never thoroughly forgive Pegotty for being so called.

"Of all things in the world, aunt, I should like it best!"

"Well," said my aunt, "that's lucky, for I should like it too. But it's natural and rational that you should like it. And I am very well persuaded that whatever you do, Trot, will always be natural and rational."

"I hope so, aunt."

"Your sister, Betsey Trotwood," said my aunt, "would have been as natural and rational a girl as ever breathed. You'll be worthy of her, won't you?"

"I hope I shall be worthy of you, aunt. That will be enough for me."

"It's a mercy that poor dear baby of a mother of yours didn't live," said my aunt, looking at me approvingly, "or she'd have been so vain of her boy by this time, that her soft little head would have been completely turned, if there was anything of it left to turn." (My aunt always excused any weakness of her own in my behalf, by transferring it in this way to my poor mother.) "Bless me, Trotwood, how you do remind me of her!"

"Pleasantly, I hope, aunt?" said I.

"He's as like her, Dick," said my aunt, emphatically, "he's as like her, as she was that afternoon, before she began to fret. Bless my heart, he's as like her, as he can look at me out of his two eyes!"

"Is he indeed?" said Mr. Dick.

"And he's like David, too," said my aunt, decisively.

"He is very like David!" said Mr. Dick.

"But what I want you to be, Trot," resumed my aunt, "—I don't mean physically, but morally; you are very well physically—is, a firm fellow. A fine fellow, with a will of your own. With resolution," said my aunt, shaking her cap at me, and clenching her hand. "With determination. With character, Trot. With strength of character that is not to be influenced, except on good reason, by anybody, or by anything. That's what I want you to be. That's what your father and mother might both have been. Heaven knows, and been the better for it."

I intimated that I hoped I should be what she described, and Mr. Dick smiled; though he felt a little disappointed; until the honor and dignity of having to take care of the most wonderful woman in the world, restored the sunshine to his face.
the light of fire and candle shone upon us, seated warm and merry, at table.

Littimer was there, and had his usual effect upon me. When I said to him that I hoped Mrs. Steerforth and Miss Dartle were well, he answered respectfully, and of course respectfully, that they were tolerably well, he thanked me, and had sent their compliments. This was all; and yet he seemed to me to say as plainly as a man could say: "You are very young, sir: you are exceedingly young."

We had almost finished dinner, when taking a step or two towards the table, from the corner where he kept watch upon us, or rather upon me, as I felt, he said to his master:

"I beg your pardon, sir. Miss Mowcher is down here."

"Who?" cried Steerforth, much astonished.

"Miss Mowcher, sir."

"Why, what on earth does she do here?" said Steerforth.

"It appears to be her native part of the country, sir. She informs me that she makes one of her professional visits here, every year, sir. I met her in the street this afternoon, and she wished to know if she might have the honor of waiting on you after dinner, sir." 

"Do you know the Giantess in question, Daisy?" inquired Steerforth.

I was obliged to confess—felt ashamed, even of being at this disadvantage before Littimer—that Miss Mowcher and I were wholly unacquainted.

"Then you shall know her," said Steerforth. "For she is one of the seven wonders of the world. When Miss Mowcher comes, show her in."

I felt a certain curiosity and excitement about this lady, especially as Steerforth burst into a fit of laughing when I referred to her, and positively refused to answer any question of which I made her the subject. I remained, therefore, in a state of considerable expectation until the cloth had been removed some half an hour, and we were sitting over our decanter of wine before the fire, when the door opened, and Littimer, with his habitual serenity quite undisturbed, announced:

"Miss Mowcher!"

I looked at the doorway and saw nothing. I was still looking at the doorway, thinking that Miss Mowcher was a long while making her appearance, when, to my infinite astonishment, there came waddling round a sofa which stood between me and it, a purty dwarf, of about forty or forty-five, with a very large head and face, a pair of ragged grey eyes, and such extremely little arms, that, to enable herself to lay a finger archly against her snub nose as she ogled Steerforth, she was obliged to meet the finger half-way, and lay her nose against it. Her chin, which was what is called a double-chin, was so fat that it entirely swallowed up the strings of her bonnet, bow and all. Threat she had none; waist she had none; legs she had none, worth mentioning: for though she was more than full-sized down to where her waist would have been, if she had had any, and though she terminated, as human beings generally do, in a pair of let, she was so short that she stood at a common-sized chair as at a table, resting a bag she carried on the seat. This lady, dressed in an off-and-on easy style; bringing her nose and her features together, with the difficulty I have described, standing with her head necessarily on one side, and, with one of her sharp eyes shut up, making an uncommonly knowing face; after ogling Steerforth for a few moments, broke into a torrent of words.

"What! My flower!" she pleasantly cried, shaking her large head at him. "You're there, are you! Oh, you naughty boy, fie for shame, what do you do so far away from home? Up to mischief, I'll be bound. Oh, you've a devilish fellow, Steerforth, so you are, and I'm another, ain't I? Ha, ha, ha! You've got betted a hundred pound to five, now, that you wouldn't have seen me here, wouldn't you? Bless you, an alive, I'm everywhere. I'm here, and there, and wherever, like the conjuror's half-crown in the lady's handkerchief. Talking of handkerchiefs and talking of ladies—what a comfort you are to your blessed mother, ain't you, my dear boy, every one of my shoulders, and I don't say which?"

Miss Mowcher untied her bonnet at this passage of her discourse, threw back the strings, and sat down, panting, on a footstool in front of the fire—making a kind of area of the dining-table, which spread its mahogany shelter over her head.

"Oh my stars and what's-her-name?" we went on, clapping a hand on each of our little knees, and glancing shrilly at me. "I'm too full a habit, that's the fact, Steerforth. After a flight of stairs, it gives me as much trouble to draw every breath I want, as if it was a bucket of water. If you saw me looking out of an upper window, you'd think I was a few woman, wouldn't you?"

"I should think that, wherever I saw you," replied Steerforth.

"Go along, you dog, do!" cried the little creature, making a whisk at him with the handkerchief with which she was wiping her face, and "don't be impudent! But I give you my word and honor I was at Lady Mithers's last week—there's a woman! How she wears!—and Mithers himself came into the room where I was waiting for her—there's a man! How he wears! He's mad as a March hare! You'd have to have a great deal of head to carry that down to your shoos."

"What were you doing for Lady Mithers?" asked Steerforth.

"That's telling, my blessed infants," she retorted, tapping her nose again, and springing up her face, and twinkling her eyes like an eye.
I IMPROVE MISS MOWCHER'S ACQUAINTANCE.

"Never you mind! You'd like to know whether I stop her hair from falling off, or dye it, or touch up her complexion, or improve her eyebrows, wouldn't you? And so you shall, my darling—when I tell you! Do you know what my great grandfather's name was?"

"No," said Steerforth.

"It was Walker, my sweet pet," replied Miss Mowcher, "and he came of a long line of Walkers, that I inherit all the Hookey estates from."

"I never beheld anything approaching to Miss Mowcher's wink, except Miss Mowcher's self-possession. She had a wonderful way too, when coming to what was said to her, or when waiting for an answer to what she had said herself, of clasping her head cunningly on one side, and her eye turned up like a magpie's. Altogether I was lost in amazement, and sat staring at her, quite oblivious, I am afraid, of the laws of politeness.

She had by this time drawn the chair to her side, and was busily engaged in producing from her bag (plunging in her short arm up to the boulder, at every dive) a number of small bottles, jongs, combs, brushes, bits of flannel, little vials of curling-irons, and other instruments, which she tumbled in a heap upon the chair. from this employment she suddenly desisted, and said to Steerforth, much to my confusion:

"Who's your friend?"

"Mr. Copperfield," said Steerforth; "he wants to know you."

"Well, then, he shall! I thought he looked as he did!" returned Miss Mowcher, wadding up her bag in hand, and laughing on me as she went. "Face like a peach!" standing on tiptoe to pinch my cheek as I sat. "Quite tempting! I am very fond of peaches. Happy to make your acquaintance, Mr. Copperfield, I'm sure."

"I said that I congratulated myself on having the honor to make hers, and that the happiness was mutual.

"Oh, my goodness, how polite we are!" exclaimed Miss Mowcher, making a preposterous attempt to cover her large face with her morel of hand. "What a world of gammon and spinage it is, though, ain't it?"

"This was addressed confidentially to both of us, as the morel of a hand came away from the face, and buried itself, arm and all, in the bag again.

"What do you mean, Miss Mowcher?" said Steerforth.

"Ha! ha! ha! What a refreshing set of humbugs we are, to be sure, ain't we, my sweet child?" replied that morel of a woman, feeling in the bag with her hand on one side and her eye in the air. "Look here!" taking something out.

"Scars of the Russian Prince's nails! Prince Alphabet turned topsy-turvy, I call him, for his name's got all the letters in it, higgledy-piggledy."

"The Russian Prince is a client of yours, is he?" said Steerforth.

"I believe you, my pet," replied Miss Mowcher. "I keep his nails in order for him. Twice a week! Fingers and toes."

"He pays well, I hope?" said Steerforth.

"Pays as he speaks, my dear child—through the nose," replied Miss Mowcher. "None of your close shavers the Prince ain't. You'd say so, if you saw his moustachios. Rod by nature, black by art."

"By your art, of course," said Steerforth. Miss Mowcher winked assent. "Forced to send for me. Couldn't help it. The climate affected his dye; it did very well in Russia, but it was no go here. You never saw such a rusty Prince in all your born days as he was. Like old iron?"

"Is that why you called him a humbug, just now?" inquired Steerforth.

"Oh, you're a broth of a boy, ain't you?" returned Miss Mowcher, shaking her head violently.

"I said, what a set of humbugs we were in general, and I showed you the scraps of the Prince's nails to prove it. The Prince's nails do moro for me in private families of the genteel sort, than all my talents put together. I always carry 'em about. They're the best introduction. If Miss Mowcher cuts the Prince's nails, she must be all right. I give 'em away to the young ladies. They put 'em in albums, I believe. Ha! ha! ha! Upon my life, 'the whole social system' (as the men call it when they make speeches in Parliament) is a system of Prince's nails!'" said this least of women, trying to fold her short arms, and nodding her large head.

Steerforth laughed heartily, and I laughed too. Miss Mowcher continuing all the time to shake her head (which was very much on one side), and to look into the air with one eye, and to wink with the other.

"Well, well!" she said, smiting her small knees, and rising, "this is not business. Come, Steerforth, let's explore the polar regions, and have it over."

She then selected two or three of the little instruments, and a little bottle, and asked (to my surprise) if the table would bear. On Steerforth's replying in the affirmative, she pushed a chair against it, and begging the assistance of my hand, mounted up, pretty nimbly, to the top, as if it were a stage.

"If either of you saw my ankles," she said, when she was safely elevated, "say so, and I'll go home and destroy myself."

"I did not," said Steerforth.

"I did not," said I.

"Well, then," cried Miss Mowcher, "I'll consent to live. Now, ducky, ducky, ducky, come to Mrs. Bond and be killed."

This was an invocation to Steerforth to place himself under her hands; who, accordingly, sat himself down, with his back to the table, and his laughing face towards me, and submitted the head.
to her inspection, evidently for no other purpose than our entertainment. To see Miss Mowcher standing over him, looking at his rich profusion of brown hair through a large round magnifying glass, which she took out of her pocket, was a most amazing spectacle.

"You're a pretty fellow!" said Miss Mowcher, after a brief inspection. "You'd be as bald as a cricket on the top of your head in twelve months, but for me. Just half a minute, my young friend, and we'll give you a polishing that shall keep your curls on for the next ten years!"

With this, she tilted some of the contents of the little bottle on to one of the little bits of flannel, and, again imparting some of the virtues of that preparation to one of the little brushes, began rubbing and scraping away with both on the crown of Steerforth's head in the busiest manner I ever witnessed, talking all the time.

"There's Charley Pyegra, the duke's son," she said, "You know Charley?" peeping round into his face.

"A little," said Steerforth.

"What a man is! There's a whisker! As to Charley's legs, if they were only a pair (which they aren't) they'd defy competition. Would you believe he tried to do without me—in the Life-Guards, too?"

"Mad!" said Steerforth.

"It looks like it. However, mad or sane, he tried," returned Miss Mowcher. "What does he do, but lo and behold you, he goes into a perfumer's shop, and wants to buy a bottle of the Madagascar Liquid."

"Charley does!" said Steerforth.

"Charley does. But they haven't got any of the Madagascar Liquid."

"What is it? Something to drink?" asked Steerforth.

"To drink?" returned Miss Mowcher, stopping to slip his cheek. "To doctor his own moustachios with, you know. There was a woman in the shop—elderly female—quite a Griffin—who had never even heard of it by name. 'Begging pardon, sir,' said the Griffin to Charley, 'it's not—not—not moustachios, is it?' 'Rouge,' said Charley to the Griffin. 'What the unmentionable to ears polite, do you think I want with rouge? No offence, sir,' said the Griffin; 'we have it asked for by so many names, I thought it might be.' Now that, my child," continued Miss Mowcher, rubbing all the time as busily as ever, "is another instance of the refreshing humbug I was speaking of. I do something in that way myself—perhaps a good deal—perhaps a little—sharp's the word, my dear boy—never mind!"

"In what way do you mean? In the rouge way?" said Steerforth.

"Put this and that together, my tender pupil," returned the wavy Mowcher, touching his nose, "work it by the rule of Secrets in all trades, and the product will give you the desired result. I say I do a little in that way myself. One Dowager, she calls it Brysalis. Another, she calls it gloves. Another, she calls it tucker-edging. Another, she calls it a fan. I call it whatever they call it. I supply it for 'em, but we keep up the trick so, to one another, and make believe with such a face, that they'd as soon think of laying it on before a whole drawing-room, as before me. And when I wait upon 'em, they'll say to me sometimes—with it on—thick, and no mistake—'I am looking, Mowcher? Am I pale?' 'Ha! ha! ha! Isn't that refreshing, my young friend?'"

I never did in my days behold anything like Mowcher as she stood upon the dining-table, intensely enjoying this refreshment, rubbing busily at Steerforth's head, and wrinkling at me over it.

"Ah!" she said. "Such things are not much in demand hereabouts. That sets me off again! I haven't seen a pretty woman since I've been here, Jimmy."

"No?" said Steerforth.

"Not the ghost of one," replied Miss Mowcher.

"We could show her the substance of one, I think?" said Steerforth, addressing his eyes to mine. "'Eh, Daisy?"

"Yes, indeed," said I.

"Aha?" cried the little creature, glancing sharply at my face, and then peeping round at Steerforth's. "Umph?"

The first exclamation sounded like a question put to both of us, and the second like a question put to Steerforth only. She seemed to have found no answer to either, but continued to rub, with her head on one side and her eye turned up, as if she were looking for an answer in the air, and were confident of its appearing presently.

"A sister of yours, Mr. Copperfield?" she cried, after a pause, and still keeping the same look-out. "Aya, aye?"

"No," said Steerforth, before I could reply. "Nothing of the sort. On the contrary, Mr. Copperfield need—or I am much mistaken—to have a great admiration for her."

"Why, hasn't he now?" returned Miss Mowcher. "Is he feeble? oh, for shame! Did he not every flower, and change every hour, until his passion requited?—in her name Polly?"

The Elinor suddenness with which she pounced upon me with this question, and a searching look, quite disconcerted me for a moment.

"No, Miss Mowcher," I replied. "Her name is Emily."

"Aha!" she cried exactly as before. "Umph? What a rattle I am! Mr. Copperfield, ain't I?"

Her tone and look implied something that was not agreeable to me in connexion with the subject. So I said, in a graver manner than any of us had yet assumed:

"She is as virtuous as she is pretty. She engaged to be married to a most worthy and serving man in her own station of life. I can her for good sense, as much as I admire her good looks."

"Well said!" cried Steerforth. "Well said!"
I DINED WITH THE MICAWBERS.

I called next forenoon, and found Mr. Micawber in his parlor; who had called to say that dinner was to take place as proposed. When I asked him if the remittance had come, he pressed my hand and departed.

As I was looking out of window that same evening, it surprised me, and made me rather easy, to see Mr. Micawber and Uriah Heep walk past, arm in arm: Uriah humbly sensible of a honor that was done him, and Mr. Micawber knowing a bland delight in extending his patronage. Uriah. But I was still more surprised, when I went to the little hotel next day at the appointed inner-hour, which was four o’clock, to find, from Mr. Micawber, that he had gone home with Uriah, and had drunk brandy-and-water at Mr. Heep’s.

“‘And I’ll tell you what, my dear Copperfield,’” said Mr. Micawber, “‘your friend Heep is a young man who might be attorney-general. If I had known that young man, at the period when my difficulties came to a crisis, all I can say is, that I think my creditors would have been a great deal better managed than they were.’”

I hardly understood how this could have been, being that Mr. Micawber had paid them nothing half as it was; but I did not like to ask. Neither did I like to say, that I hoped he had not been too communicative to Uriah; or to inquire if they had talked much about me. I was afraid of hurting Mr. Micawber’s feelings, or, at all events, Mr. Micawber’s, she being very sensitive; but I was uncomfortable about it, too, and often thought about it afterwards.

We had a very good little dinner. Quite an excellent dish of fish; the kidney-end of a loaf of bread, roasted; fried sausage-meat; a partridge, and a pudding. There was wine, and there was no ale; and after dinner Mrs. Micawber made a bowl of hot punch with her own hands.

Mr. Micawber was uncommonly convivial. I never saw him so cheerful. He made his punch with the punch, so that it looked as if it had been varnished all over. He got cheerfully sentimental about the town, and proposed success to him; observing that Mrs. Micawber and himself had been made extremely snug and comfortable, and that he never should forget the agreeable hours they had passed in Canterbury. He proposed me afterwards; and he, and Mrs. Micawber, and I, took a review of our past acquaintance, in the course of which, we sold the property over again. Then I proposed Mrs. Micawber; and, at last, said, modestly, “If you’ll allow me, Mrs. Micawber, I shall now have the pleasure of making your health, ma’am.” On which Mr. Micawber delivered an eloquent on Mrs. Micawber’s character, and said she had been his wife, philosopher, and friend, and that he would recommend me, when I came to a marrying time of life, to marry such another woman, if such another woman could be found.

As the punch disappeared, Mr. Micawber became still more friendly and convivial. Mrs. Micawber’s spirits becoming elevated, too, we sang “Auld Lang Syne.” When we came to “Here’s a hand, my trusty frier,” we all joined hands round the table; and when we declared we would “take a right grue Willie Waight,” and hadn’t the least idea what it meant, we were really affected.

In a word, I never saw anybody so thoroughly jovial as Mr. Micawber was, down to the very last moment of the evening, when I took a hearty farewell of himself and his amiable wife. Consecutively, I was not prepared, at seven o’clock next morning, to receive the following communication, dated half-past nine in the evening; a quarter of an hour after I had left him:

“My dear Young Friend,

“The die is cast—all is over. Hiding the ravages of care with a sickly mask of mirth, I have not informed you, this evening, that there is no hope of the remittance! Under these circumstances, alike humiliating to endure, humiliating to contemplate, and humiliating to relate, I have discharged the pecuniary liability, contracted at this establishment, by giving a note of hand, made payable fourteen days after date, at my residence, Fentvile, London. When it becomes due, it will not be taken up. The result is destruction. The bolt is impending, and the tree must fall.

“Let the wretched man who now addresses you, my dear Copperfield, be a beacon to you through life. He writes with that intention, and in that hope. If he could think himself of so much use, one gleam of day might, by possibility, penetrate into the cheerless dungeon of his remaining existence—though his longevity is, at present (to say the least of it), extremely problematical.

“This is the last communication, my dear Copperfield; you will ever receive

“From

“The

Beggared Outcast,

WILKIN MICAWBER.”

I was so shocked by the contents of this heart-rending letter, that I ran off directly towards the little hotel with the intention of taking it on my way to Dr. Strong’s, and trying to soothe Mr. Micawber with a word of comfort. But, half-way there, I met the London coach with Mr. and Mrs. Micawber up behind; Mr. Micawber, the very picture of tranquil enjoyment, smiling at Mrs. Micawber’s conversation, eating walnuts out of a paper bag, with a bottle sticking out of his breast pocket. As they did not see me, I thought it best, all things considered, not to see them. So, with a great weight taken off my mind, I turned into a by-street that was the nearest way to school, and felt, upon the whole, relieved that they were gone; though I still liked them very much, nevertheless.
her sympathies were generally on the right side of things; but, not succeeding in attracting his attention to these questions after two or three attempts, I forbore or forgot to repeat them. He told me instead, with much rapidity, a good deal about her skill, and her profits; and about her being a scientific copper, if I should ever have occasion for her service in that capacity.

She was the principal theme of our conversation during the evening: and when we parted for the night, Steerforth called after me over the banisters, "Bob swears!" as I went down-stairs.

I was surprised when I came to Mr. Barkis's house, to find Ham walking up and down in front of it, and, still more surprised, to learn from him that little Em'ly was inside. I naturally inquired why he was not there too, instead of pacing the streets by himself?"

"Why, you see, Mas'r Davy," he rejoined, in a hesitating manner, "Em'ly's a-sitting to some 'un at home here."

"I should have thought," said I, smiling, "that that was a reason for your being in here too, Ham."

"Well, Mas'r Davy, in a general way, so would be," he returned, "but look ye here, Mas'r Davy," lowering his voice, and speaking very gravely, "It's a young woman, sir—a young woman, that Em'ly knew long, and doesn't expect to know no more."

When I heard these words, a light began to fall upon the figure I had seen following them, some hours ago.

"It's a poor wretch, Mas'r Davy," said Ham, "as is trod under foot by all the town. Up street and down street. The mowld o' the churchyard don't hold any that the folk shrink away from, more."

"Did I see her to-night, Ham, on the sands, after we met you?"

"Keeping us in sight?" said Ham. "It's like you old, Mas'r Davy. Not that I know'd then, she was there, sir, but along of her creeping soon afterwards under Em'ly's little winder, when she see the light come, and whispering 'Em'ly, Em'ly, for Christ's sake, have a woman's heart toward me. I was once like you!' Those were solemn words, Mas'r Davy, far to hear!"

"They were, indeed, Ham. What did Em'ly do?"

"Says Em'ly, 'Martha, is it you? Oh, Martha, can it be you!' for they had sat at work together, many a day, at Mr. Omer's."

"I recollect her now!" cried I, recalling one of the two girls I had seen when I first went there. "I recollect her quite well!"

"Martha Endell," said Ham. "Two or three year older than Em'ly, but was at the school with her."

"I never heard her name," said I. "I didn't mean to interrupt you."

"For the matter of that, Mas'r Davy," replied Ham, "all's told 'most in them words, 'Em'ly, Em'ly, for Christ's sake have a woman's heart towards me. I was once like you!' She to speak to Em'ly. Em'ly couldn't speak her, for her leaning uncle was come home; he wouldn't—no, Mas'r Davy," said he, with great earnestness, "he couldn't, kind-hearted as he is, see 'em two side by side, for all the treasures that's in the sea."

I felt how true this was. I knew it instinct, quite as well as Ham.

"So Em'ly writes in pencil on a bit of he pursued, "and gives it to her out-dow to bring here. 'Show that,'" she says aunt, Mrs. Barkis, and she'll set you down fire, for the love of me, till uncle is gone. I can come. By—that she told me the how you, Mas'r Davy, and asks me to bring here? She doesn't ought to know a but I can't deny her, when the tears if face."

He put his hand into the breast of his jacket, and took out with great care a purse.

"And if I could deny her when the here on her face, Mas'r Davy," said Ham, tending it on the rough palm of his hand, "could I deny her when she gives me this for her—knowing what she brought it for a toy as it is!" said Ham, thoughtfully on it. "With such a little money in it, is dear!"

I shook him warmly by the hand who put it away again—for that was more safe to me than saying anything—and we went down, for a minute or two, in silent door opened then, and Peggotty appearing, going to Ham to come in. I would have it, but she came after me, entreating me to too. Even then, I would have avoided it where they all were, but for its being tilled kitchen I have mentioned more the. The door opening immediately into it, myself among them, before I considered I was going.

The girl—the same I had seen upon it—was near the fire. She was sitting ground, with her head and one arm laid chair. I fancied, from the disposition figure, that Em'ly had been now risen a chair, and that the forlorn head might have been lying on her lap. I saw the the girl's face, over which her hair fell scattered, as if she had been disordering her own hands; but I saw that she was and of a fair complexion, Peggotty said ing. So had little Em'ly. Not a word spoken when we first went in; and the clock by the dresser seemed, in the at tick twice as loud as usual.

Em'ly spoke first.

"Martha wants," she said to Ham, "London."

"Way to London?" returned Ham. He stood between them, looking on.
I FIGHT WITH THE BUTCHER.

knocking about the trodden grass. Some-
I see the butcher, bloody but confident; times I see nothing, and sit gasping on my lees knee; sometimes I go in at the butcher, and cat my knuckles open against his without appearing to discomposure him at all.

I am taken home in a sad plight, and I have steaks put to my eyes, and am rubbed with par and brandy, and find a great white puff a bursting out on my upper lip, which swells iello. For three or four days I remain same, a very ill-looking subject, with a green a over my eyes; and I should be very dull, that Agnes is a sister to me, and condole me, and reads to me, and makes the time t and happy. Agnes has my confidence com-
plly, always; I tell her all about the butcher, the wrong he has heaped upon me; she be couldn't have done otherwise than fight butcher, while she shrinks and trembles at having fought him.

Time has stolen on unobserved, for Adams is the head-boy in the days that are come now, has been this many and many a day, and has left the school so long, that when he comes back, on a visit to Doctor Strong, there are many there, besides myself, who know him. is going to be called to the bar almost exy, and is to be an advocate, and to wear a : I am surprised to find him a meek man I had thought, and less imposing in appear-
a. He has not staggered the world yet, either; it goes on (as well as I can make out) pretty x the same as if he had never joined it.

A blank, through which the warriors of poetry i history march on in stately hosts that seem have no end—and what comes next! I am the d-boy, now! I look down on the line of boys to me, with a condescending interest in such them as bring to my mind the boy I was my- t, when I first came there. That little fellow am to be no part of me; I remember him as sitting left behind upon the road of life—as nothing I have passed, rather than have actually en—and almost think of him as of some one e. And the little girl I saw on that first day at Wickfield's, where is she? Gone also. In stead, the perfect likeness of the picture, a ed likeness no more, most like her now; and Agnes, my sweet sister, as I call her in my sepa, my counsellor and friend, the better gel of the lives of all who come within her I, good, self-denying influence, is quite a mean.

What other changes have come upon me, be-
side the changes in my growth and looks, and in knowledge I have garnered all this while? I wear a gold watch and chain, a ring upon my little finger, and a long-tailed coat; and I use a great deal of bear's grease—which, taken in conjunction with the ring, looks bad. Am I in love again? I am. I worship the eldest Miss Larkins.

The eldest Miss Larkins is not a little girl. She is a tall, dark, black-eyed, fair figure of a woman. The eldest Miss Larkins is not a chicken; for the youngest Miss Larkins is not that, and the eldest must be three or four years older. Perhaps the eldest Miss Larkins may be about thirty. My passion for her is beyond all bounds.

The eldest Miss Larkins knows officers. It is an awful thing to bear. I see them speaking to her in the street. I see them cross the way to meet her, when her bonnet (she has a bright taste in bonnets) is soon coming down the pavem-
ment, accompanied by her sister's bonnet. She laughs and talks, and seems to like it. I spend a good deal of my own spare time in walking up and down to meet her. If I can bow to her once in the day (I know her to bow to, knowing Mr. Larkins), I am happier. I deserve a bow now and then. The raging agonies I suffer on the night of the Race Ball, where I know the eldest Miss Larkins will be dancing with the military, ought to have some compensation, if there be even-handed justice in the world.

My passion takes away my appetite, and makes me wear my newest silk neckerchief continually. I have no relief but in putting on my best clothes, and having my boots cleaned over and over again. I seem, then, to be worthier of the eldest Miss Larkins. Everything that belongs to her, or is connected with her, is precious to me. Mr. Larkins (a gruff old gentleman with a double chin, and one of his eyes immovable in his head) is sought with Interest to me. When I can't meet his daughter, I go where I am likely to meet him. To say "How do you do, Mr. Larkins? Are the young ladies and all the family quite well?" seems so pointed, that I blush.

I think continually about my age. Say I am seventeen, and say that seventeen is young for the eldest Miss Larkins, what of that? Besides, I shall be one-and-twenty in no time almost. I regularly take walks outside Mr. Larkins's house in the evening, though it cuts me to the heart to see the officers go in, or to hear them up in the draw-
ing-room, where the eldest Miss Larkins plays the harp. I even walk, on two or three occasions, in a sickly, spoozy manner, round and round the house after the family are gone to bed, wondering which is the eldest Miss Larkins's chamber and pithing; I dare say how on Mr. Larkins's instead; wishing that a fire would burst out; that the assembled crowd would stand appalled; that I, dashing through them with a ladder, might rear it against her window, save her in my arms, go back for something she had left behind, and perish in the flames. For I am generally disinterested in my love, and think I could be content to make a figure before Miss Larkins, and expire.
Generally, but not always, sometimes brighter visions rise before me. When I dress (the occupation of two hours), for a great ball given at the Larkins' (the anticipation of three weeks), I indulge my fancy with pleasing images. I picture myself taking courage to make a declaration to Miss Larkins. I picture Miss Larkins sinking her head upon my shoulder, and saying, "Oh, Mr. Copperfield, can I believe my ears?" I picture Mr. Larkins writing on me next morning, and saying, "My dear Copperfield, my daughter has told me all. Youth is no objection. Here are twenty thousand pounds. Be happy!" I picture my aunt relenting, and blessing us; and Mr. Dick and Doctor Strong being present at the marriage ceremony. I am a sensible fellow, I believe—I believe, on looking back, I mean—and modest I am sure; but all this goes on notwithstanding.

I repair to the enchanted house, where there are lights, chattering, music, flowers, officers (I am sorry to see), and the eldest Miss Larkins, a blaze of beauty. She is dressed in blue, with blue flowers in her hair—forget-me-nots. As if she had any need to wear forget-me-nots! It is the first really grown-up party that I have ever been invited to, and I am a little uncomfortable; for I appear not to belong to anybody, and nobody appears to have anything to say to me, except Mr. Larkins, who asks me how my school-fellows are, which he needn't do, as I have not come there to be insulted.

But after I have stood in the doorway for some time, and feasted my eyes upon the goddess of my heart, she approaches me—she, the eldest Miss Larkins! and asks me pleasantly, if I dance?

I stammer, with a bow, "With you, Miss Larkins."

"With no one else?" inquires Miss Larkins.

"I should have no pleasure in dancing with any one else."

Miss Larkins laughs and blushes (or I think she blushes), and says, "Next time but one, I shall be very glad."

The time arrives. "It is a waltz, I think," Miss Larkins doubtfully observes, when I present myself. "Do you waltz? If not, Captain Bailey—"

But I do waltz (pretty well, too, as it happens), and I take Miss Larkins out. I take her sternly from the side of Captain Bailey. He is wretched, I have no doubt; but he is nothing to me. I have been wretched, too. I waltz with the eldest Miss Larkins! I don't know where, among whom, or how long. I only know that I swim about in space, with a blue angel, in a state of blissful delirium, until I find myself alone with her in a little room, resting on a sofa. She admires a flower (pink camellia japonica, price half-a-crown), in my button-hole. I give it her, and say:

"I ask an inestimable price for it, Miss Larkins."

"Indeed! What is that?" returns Miss Larkins.

"A flower of yours, that I may trust, that I may trust."

"You're a bold boy," says Miss "There."

She gives it me, not displeased; and I my lips, and then into my breast. Miss laughing, draws her hand through my says, "Now take me back to Captain Bailey."

I am lost in the recollection of this interview, and the waltz, when she comes again, with a plain elderly gentleman, I been playing whilst all night, upon her she says:

"Oh! here is a bold friend! Mr. wants to know you, Mr. Copperfield."

I feel at once that he is a friend of the and am much gratified.

"I admire your taste, sir," says Mr. "It does you credit. I suppose you do much interest in hope; but I am a pro grower myself; and if you ever like to come to our neighborhood—neighborhood of A, and take a run about our place, we shall for you to stop as long as you like."

I think Mr. Chestate warmly, and shab I think I am in a happy dream. I waltz eldest Miss Larkins once again. She waltz so well! I go home in a state of exible bliss, and waltz, in imagination, a long, with my arm round the blue waist dear divinity. For some days after lost in rapturous reflections; but I neither in the street, nor when I call. I am not consulted for this disappointment by the pledge, the perished flower.

"Trotwood," says Agnes, one day after. "Who do you think is going to be married row? Some one you admire."

"Not you, I suppose, Agnes?"

"Not me! raising her cheerful face music she is copying. "Do you hear him — the eldest Miss Larkins."

"To—to Captain Bailey?" I have just power to ask.

"No; to no Captain. To Mr. Chestate grower."

I am terribly dejected for about a week. I take off my ring; I wear my worst cloth no bear's grease, and I frequently lament late Miss Larkins's faded flower. Being, time, rather tired of this kind of life, and received new provocation from the be throw the flower away, cut with the, and gloriously defeat him.

This, and the resumption of my ring, as of the bear's grease in moderation, are marks I can discern, now, in my prog seventeen.

CHAPL XIX.

I LOOK ABOUT ME, AND MAKE A DISCO

I am doubtful whether I was at best sorry, when my school-days drew to an
Suppose you were to go down into the old part of the country again, for instance, and see that—
that out-of-the-way woman with the savagest of names," said my aunt, rubbing her nose, for she

could never thoroughly forgive Peggotty for being so called.

"Of all things in the world, aunt, I should like

it best!"

"Well," said my aunt, "that's lucky, for I

should like it too. But it's natural and rational

that you should like it. And I am very well per-

suaded that whatever you do, Trot, will always

be natural and rational."

"I hope so, aunt."

"Your sister, Betsey Trotwood," said my

aunt, "would have been as natural and rational a

girl as ever breathed. You'll be worthy of her,

won't you."

"I hope I shall be worthy of you, aunt. That

will be enough for me."

"It's a mercy that poor dear baby of a mother

of yours didn't live," said my aunt, looking at

me approvingly, "or she'd have been so vain of

her boy by this time, that her soft little head

would have been completely turned, if there was

anything of it left to turn." (My aunt always ex-

cused any weakness of her own in my behalf, by

transferring it in this way to my poor mother.)

"Bless me, Trotwood, how you do remind me of

her!"

"Pleasantly, I hope, aunt?" said I.

"He's as like her, Dick," said my aunt, em-

phatically, "he's as like her, as she was that

afternoon, before she began to fret. Bless my

heart, he's as like her, as he can look at me out

of his two eyes!"

"Is he Indeed?" said Mr. Dick.

"And he's like David, too," said my aunt, de-

cisively.

"He is very like David I!" said Mr. Dick.

"But what I want you to be, Trot," resumed

my aunt, "—I don't mean physically, but morally;

you are very well physically—is, a firm fellow. A

fine firm fellow, with a will of your own. With

resolution," said my aunt, shaking her cap at me,

and clinching her hand. "With determination.

With character, Trot. With strength of character

that is not to be influenced, except on good reason,

by anybody, or by anything. That's what I want

you to be. That's what your father and mother

might both have been, Heaven knows, and been

the better for it."

I intimated that I hoped I should be what she
described.

"That you may begin in a small way, to have

a reliance upon yourself, and to act for yourself," said my aunt. "I shall send you upon your trip,

alone. I did think, once, of Mr. Dick's going with

you; but, on second thoughts, I shall keep him to take care of me."

Mr. Dick, for a moment, looked a little disap-

appointed; until the honor and dignity of having to

take care of the most wonderful woman in the

world, restored the sunshine to his face.
"Besides," said my aunt, "there's the Memorial."

"Oh, certainly," said Mr. Dick, in a hurry, "I intend, Trotwood, to get that done immediately—it really must be done immediately! And then it will go in, you know—and then,—" said Mr. Dick, after checking himself, and pausing a long time, "there'll be a pretty kettle of fish!"

In pursuance of my aunt's kind scheme, I was shortly afterwards fitted out with a handsome purse of money, and a pommelbox, and tenderly dismissed upon my expedition. At parting, my aunt gave me some good advice, and a good many kisses; and said that as her object was that I should look about me, and should think a little, she would recommend me to stay a few days in London, if I liked it, either on my way down into Suffolk, or in coming back. In a word, I was at liberty to do what I would, for three weeks or a month; and no other conditions were imposed upon my freedom than the before-mentioned thinking and looking about me, and a pledge to write three times a week and faithfully report myself.

I went to Canterbury first, that I might take leave of Agnes and Mr. Wickfield (my old room in whose house I had not yet relinquished), and also of the good Doctor. Agnes was very glad to see me, and told me that the house had not been like itself since I had left it.

"I am sure I am not like myself when I am away," said I. "I seem to want my right hand, when I miss you. Though that's not saying much; for there's no head in my right hand, and no heart. Every one who knows you, consults with you, and is guided by you, Agnes."

"Every one who knows me, spoils me, I believe," she answered, smiling.

"No. It's because you are like no one else. You are so good, and so sweet-tempered. You have such a gentle nature, and you are always right."

"You talk," said Agnes, breaking into a pleasant laugh, as she sat at work, "as if I were the late Miss Larkins."

"Come! It's not fair to abuse my confidence," I answered, reddening at the recollection of my blue enveloom. "But I shall confide in you, just the same, Agnes. I can never grow out of that. Whenever I fall into trouble, or fall in love, I shall always tell you, if you'll let me—even when I come to fall in love in earnest."

"Why, you have always been in earnest!" said Agnes, laughing again.

"Oh! that was as a child, or as a school-boy," said I, laughing in my turn, not without being a little shame-faced. "Times are altering now, and I suppose I shall be in a terrible state of earnestness one day or another. My wonder is, that you are not in earnest yourself, by this time, Agnes."

Agnes laughed again, and shook her head.

"Oh, I know you are not!" said I, "because if you had been, you would have told me. Or at least," for I saw a faint blush in her face, "would have let me find it out myself. But there is no one that I know of, who deserves you, Agnes. Some one of a nobler character, more worthy altogether than any one I have seen here, must rise up, before I give my vote. In the time to come, I shall have a wary eye to admire and shall exact a great deal from an admiring one, I assure you."

We had gone on, so far, in a mixture of sentimental jest and earnest, that had long gradually cut off our familiar relations, begun children. But Agnes, now suddenly lifting her eyes to mine, and speaking in a different tone:

"Trotwood, there is something that I ask you, and that I may not have another tensity of asking for a long time, perhaps, thing I would ask, I think, of no one. Have you observed any gradual alteration in Papa?"

I had observed it, and had often wondered whether she had too. I must have seen much, now, in my face; for her eyes were dimmed and I saw tears in them.

"Tell me what it is," she said, in a half voice.

"I think,—shall I be quite plain, Agnes? He is so much, now, in my face;—for her eyes were dimmed and I saw tears in the—"

"Yes," she said.

"I think he does himself no good habit that has increased upon him since I came here. He is often very nervous, or so."

"It is not fancy," said Agnes, shaking her head.

"His hand trembles, his speech is not clear, and his eyes look wild. I have remarked at those times, and when he is least himself, he is most certain to be wanted on business."

"By Uriah," said Agnes.

"Yes; and the sense of being untrust that is not having understood it, or of having his condition in spite of himself, seems to him so uneasy, that the next day he is worse, a day worse, and so he becomes jaded and his. Do not be alarmed by what I say, Agnes; in this state I saw him, only the other evening, down his head upon his desk, and shed tears for a child."

Her hand passed softly before my lips, as I was yet speaking, and in a moment she looked at her father at the door of the room, and was opening on his shoulder. The expression of her face, as they both looked towards me, I felt to be the most touching. There was such deep fondness and gratitude to him for all his love and her beautiful look: and there was such an appeal to me to deal tenderly with him, even in her most thoughts, and to let no harsh command find an answer against him; she was, at one time, so proud of him and devoted to him, yet, so the children and so tender and sorry, and so loving upon us.
nothing she could have said would ed more to me, or moved me more.
to drink tea at the Doctor’s. We the usual hour; and round the study I the Doctor, and his young wife, and The Doctor, who made as much of way as if I were going to China, re-an honored guest; and called for a to be thrown on the fire, that he e face of his old pupil reddening in ot see many more new faces in Trot; Wickfield,” said the Doctor, warm-
I: “I am getting lazy, and want ease. ass all my young people in another and lead a quieter life.”
he said so, any time these ten years, Wickfield answered.
I mean to do it,” returned the Doc-
ast master will succeed me—I am in t—so you’ll soon have to arrange our d to bind us firmly to them, like aives.”
ak care,” said Mr. Wickfield, “that imposed on, eh? As you certainly any contract you should make for el! I am ready. There are worse at, in my calling.”
vie nothing to think of, then,” said with a smile, “but my Dictionary; r contract-bargain—Annie.”
wickfield glanced towards her, sitting ble by Agnes, she seemed to me to k with such unwonted hesitation and t his attention became fixed upon something were suggested to his as a post come in from India, I ob-
d, after a short silence.
ye! and letters from Mr. Jack Malhe Doctor.

“ar Jack!” said Mrs. Markleham, read. “That trying climate! Like ell me, on a sand-heap, underneath a s! He looked strong, but he wasn’t, for, it was his spirit, not his consti-ue ventured on so boldly. Annie, my re you must perfectly recollect that never was strong; not what can be you know,” said Mrs. Markleham, is, and looking round upon us gen-
the time when my daughter and a children, together, and walking arm, the livelong day.”
us addressed, made no reply.
her from what you say, ma’am, that is ill?” asked Mr. Wickfield.
pelled the Old Soldier. “My dear sir, so things!”
well?” said Mr. Wickfield.
well, indeed! I said the Old Soldier. d dreadful strokes of the sun, no age fevers and agues, and every kind of thing you can mention. As to his liver,” said the Old Soldier resignedly, “that, of course, he gave up altogether, when he first went out!”
“Does he say all this?” asked Mr. Wickfield.
“Say? My dear sir,” returned Mrs. Markleham, shaking her head and her fan, “you little know my poor Jack Maldon when you ask that question. Say? Not he. You might drag him at the heels of four wild horses first.”
“Mamma!” said Mrs. Strong.
“Annie, my dear,” returned her mother, “once for all, I must really beg that you will not interfere with me, unless it is to confirm what I say. You know as well as I do, that your cousin Maldon would be dragged at the heels of any number of wild horses—why should I confine myself to four! I won’t confine myself to four—eight, sixteen, two-and-thirty, rather than say anything calculated to overturn the Doctor’s plans.”
“Wickfield’s plans,” said the Doctor, stroking his face, and looking penitently at his adviser. “That is to say, our joint plans for him. I said myself, abroad or at home.”
“And I said,” added Mr. Wickfield gravely, “abroad. I was the means of sending him abroad. It’s my responsibility.”
“Ah! Responsibility!” said the Old Soldier.
“Everything was done for the best, my dear Mr. Wickfield; everything was done for the kindest and best, we know. But if the dear fellow can’t live there, he can’t live there. And if he can’t live there, he’ll die there, sooner than he’ll over-
turn the Doctor’s plans. I know him,” said the Old Soldier, fanning herself, in a sort of calm prophetic agony, “and I know he’ll die there, sooner than he’ll overturn the Doctor’s plans.”
“Well, well, ma’am,” said the Doctor cheerfully, “I am not bigoted to my plans, and I can overturn them myself. I can substitute some other plans. If Mr. Jack Maldon comes home on account of ill health, he must not be allowed to go back, and we must endeavor to make some more suitable and fortunate provision for him in this country.”
Mrs. Markleham was so overcome by this generous speech (which, I need not say, she had not at all expected or led up to) that she could only tell the Doctor it was like himself, and go several times through that operation of kling the sticks of her fan, and then tapping his hand with it. After which she gently chid her daughter Annie, for not being more demonstrative when such kindnesses were showered, for her sake, on her old playfellow: and entertained us with some particulars concerning other deserving members of her family, whom it was desirable to set on their deserving legs.
All this time, her daughter Annie never once spoke or lifted up her eyes. All this time, Mr. Wickfield had his glance upon her as she sat by his own daughter’s side. It appeared to me that he never thought of being observed by any one; but was so intent upon her, and upon his own thoughts in connexion with her, as to be
aunt had mentioned to me that there was that opening, and that I believed I should like it very much. That I was strongly inclined to like it, and had taken immediately to the proposal. That I could not absolutely pledge myself to like it, until I knew something more about it. That although it was little else than a matter of form, I must have a opportunity of trying how I liked it, before I bound myself to it irreversibly.

"Oh surely! surely!" said Mr. Spenlow. "We always, in this house, propose a month—an initiatory month. I should be happy, myself, to propose two months—one—an indefinite period, in fact—but I have a partner. Mr. Jorkins."

"And the premium, sir?" I returned, "is a thousand pounds."

"And the premium, Stamp included, is a thousand pounds," said Mr. Spenlow. "As I have mentioned to Miss Trotwood, I am actuated by no mercenary considerations; few men are less so, I believe; but Mr. Jorkins has his opinions on these subjects, and I am bound to respect Mr. Jorkins's opinions. Mr. Jorkins thinks a thousand pounds too little, in short."

"I suppose, sir," said I, "I still desiring to spare my aunt, that it is not the custom here, if an article clerk were particularly useful, and made himself a perfect master of his profession—I could not help thinking this looked so like praising myself—"I suppose it is not the custom, in the later years of his time, to allow him any—"

Mr. Spenlow, by a great effort, just lifted his head far enough out of his cravat, to shake it, and answered, anticipating the word "salary."

"No. I will not say what consideration I might give to that point myself, Mr. Copperfield, if I were unfettered. Mr. Jorkins is immovable."

I was quite dismayed by the idea of this terrible Jorkins. But I found out afterwards that he was a man of a heavy temperament, whose place in the business was to keep himself in the background, and be constantly exhibited by name as the most obdurate and ruthless of men. If a clerk wanted his salary raised, Mr. Jorkins wouldn't listen to such a proposition. If a client were slow to settle his bill of costs, Mr. Jorkins was resolved to have it paid; and however painful these things might be (and always were) to the feelings of Mr. Spenlow, Mr. Jorkins would have his bond. The heart and hand of the good angel Spenlow would have been always open, but for the restraining demon Jorkins. As I have grown older, I think I have had experience of some other houses doing business on the principle of Spenlow and Jorkins!

It was settled that I should begin my month's probation as soon as I pleased, and that my aunt need neither remain in town nor return at its expiration, as the articles of agreement of which I was to be the subject, could easily be sent to her at home for her signature. When we had got so far, Mr. Spenlow offered to take me into Court then and there, and show me what it was. As I was willing enough to go out with this object, leaving my aunt behind; who would trust herself, she said, in such a place, and who, I think, regarded Law as a sort of powder-mills that blew up at any time. Mr. Spenlow conducted me through the courtyard formed of grave brick houses, inferred from the Doctors' names upon the door to be the official abiding-places of the vocates of whom Steerforth had told me; a large dull room, not unlike a chapel, sitting on the left hand. The upper part was fenced off from the rest; and the two sides of a raised platform of the form, sitting on easy old-fashioned chairs, were saddle gentlemen in red wig and grey wigs, whom I found to be the Doctors. Blowing over a little desk in the curve of the horse-shoe, gentle, gentleman, whom, if I had seen him before, I should certainly have taken for an old connoisseur, was the presiding judge. He was not to go on about the level of the floor, other gentlemen of Mr. Spenlow's grave old, like him in black gowns and brown upon them, sitting at a long green table. The cravats were in general stiff, I thought they looked haughty; but in this last respect, I conjectured, I had done them an injustice when two or three of them had to answer a question of the presiding judge, never saw anything more sleepy, represented by a boy with a comical face and a shabby-genteel man secretly eating the tail of his coat pockets, was warming himself in the centre of the Court. The language of the place was only broken by the fire and by the voice of one of the doctors, who was reading slowly through the library of evidence, and stopping then and time to time, at little road-side inns, on the journey. Altogether, I have not an occasion, made one at such a busy, fashionable, time-forgotten, sleepy but family-party in all my life; and I felt quite a soothing opiate to the character—except perhaps as a sedative. Very well satisfied with the dream of this retreat, I informed Mr. Spenlow that I had seen enough for that time, and we parted; in company with whom I parted from the Commons, feeling when I went out of Spenlow and Jorkins's account of the clerks padding out at their pens to point me out.

We arrived at Lincoln's Inn Fields about any new adventures, except encounter...
MY SET OF CHAMBERS.

Mrs. Crupp was taken with a troublesome cough, in the midst of which she articulated with much difficulty. "He was took ill here, ma'am, and—ugh! ugh! ugh! dear me!—and he died!"
"Hey! What did he die of?" asked my aunt.
"Well, ma'am, he died of drink," said Mrs. Crupp, in confidence. "And smoke."
"Smoke? You don't mean chimneys?" said my aunt.
"No, ma'am," returned Mrs. Crupp. "Cigars and pipes."
"That's not catching, Trot, at any rate," remarked my aunt, turning to me.
"No, indeed," said I.

In short, my aunt, seeing how enraptured I was with the premises, took them for a month, with leave to remain for twelve months when that time was out. Mrs. Crupp was to find linen, and to cook; every other necessary was already provided; and Mrs. Crupp expressly intimated that she should always yearn towards me as a son. I was to take possession the day after to-morrow, and Mrs. Crupp said, thank Heaven she had now found some use she could care for!

On our way back, my aunt informed me how she confidently trusted that the life I was now to lead would make me firm and self-reliant, which was all I wanted. She repeated this several times next day, in the intervals of our arranging for the transmission of my clothes and books from Mr. Wickfield's; relative to which, and to all my late holiday, I wrote a long letter to Agnes, of which my aunt took charge, as she was to leave on the succeeding day. Not to lengthen these particulars, I need only add, that she made a handsome provision for all my possible wants during my month of trial; that Steerforth, to my great disappointment and hers too, did not make his appearance before she went away! I that saw her safely seated in the Dover coach, exulting in the coming comfort of the vagrant donkeys, with Janet at her side; and that when the coach was gone, I turned my face to the Adelphi, pondering on the old days when I used to roam about its subterranean arches, and on the happy changes which had brought me to the surface.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MY FIRST DISSIPATION.

It was a wonderfully fine thing to have that lofty castle to myself, and to feel, when I shut my outer door, like Robinson Crusoe, when he had got into his fortification, and pulled his ladder up after him. It was a wonderfully fine thing to walk about town with the key of my house in my pocket, and to know that I could ask any fellow to come home, and make quite sure of its being inconvenient to nobody, if it were not so to me. It was a wonderfully fine thing to let myself in and out, and to come and go without a word to any one, and to ring Mrs. Crupp up, gasping, from the depths of the earth, when I wanted her, and when she was disposed to come. All this, I say, was
wonderfully fine; but I must say, too, that there were times when it was very dreary.

It was fine in the morning, particularly in the fine mornings. It looked a very fresh, free life, by daylight: still fresher, and more free, by sunlight. But as the day declined, the life seemed to go down too. I don’t know how it was; it seldom looked well by candle-light. I wanted somebody to talk to, then. I missed Agnes. I found a tremendous blank, in the place of that smiling repository of my confidence. Mrs. Crupp appeared to be a long way off. I thought about my predecessor, who had died of drink and smoke; and I could have wished he had been so good as to live, and not bother me with his decease.

After two days and nights, I felt as if I had lived there for a year, and yet I was not an hour older, but was quite as much tormented by my own youthfulness as ever.

Steerforth not yet appearing, which induced me to apprehend that he must be ill. I left the Commons early on the third day, and walked on to Highgate. Mrs. Steerforth was very glad to see me, and said that he had gone away with one of his Oxford friends to see another who lived near St. Albans, but that she expected him to return to-morrow. I was so fond of him, that I felt quite jealous of his Oxford friends.

As she pressed me to stay to dinner, I remained, and I believe we talked about nothing but him all day. I told her how much the people liked him at Yarmouth, and what a delightful companion he had been. Miss Dartie was full of hints and mysterious questions, but took a great interest in all our proceedings there, and said, “Was it really thought?” and so forth, so often, that she got everything out of me she wanted to know. Her appearance was exactly what I have described it, when I first saw her; but the society of the two ladies was so agreeable, and came so natural to me, that I felt myself falling a little in love with her. I could not help thinking, several times in the course of the evening, and particularly when I walked home at night, what delightful company she would be in Buckingham Street.

I was taking my coffee and roll in the morning, before going to the Commons—and I may observe in this place that it is surprising how much coffee Mrs. Crupp used, and how weak it was, considering—when Steerforth himself walked in, to my unbounded joy.

“My dear Steerforth,” cried I, “I began to think I should never see you again!”

“I was carried off, by force of arms,” said Steerforth, “the very next morning after I got home. Why, Daisy, what a rare old bachelor you are here!”

I showed him over the establishment, not omitting the pantry, with no little pride, and he recommended it highly. “I tell you what, old boy,” he added, “I shall make quite a town-house of this place, unless you give me notice to quit.”

This was a delightful hearing. In he waited for that, he would have doomsday.

“But you shall have some breakfast with my hand on the bell-rope,” and shall make you some fresh coffee, or you some bacon in a bachelor’s Dutch have got here.”

“No, no!” said Steerforth. “Do can’t! I am going to breakfast with our fellows who is at the Piazza Hotel Garden.”

“But you’ll come back to dinner?”

“I can’t, upon my life. There’s should like better, but I must remain two fellows. We all three go of to-morrow morning.”

“Then bring them here to dinner,”

“Do you think they would come?”

“Oh! they would come fast enough, Steerforth; but we should have no rooms after his approval of them, and it a desire to develop their utmost to therefore made him promise positively not names of his two friends, and we o’clock as the dinner-hour.

When he was gone, I rang for Mrs. Crupp said, in the first place, of course known she couldn’t be expected to we knew a handy young man, who she who be prevailed upon to do it, and we would be five shillings, and what I said, certainly we would have him.

Cruft said it was clear she couldn’t places at once (which I felt to be reason that “a young girl” stationed in the a bed-room candle, there never to washing plates, would be indispensable, what would be the expense of this you and Mrs. Crupp said she supposed sight would neither make me nor break me supposed not; and that was settled.

Cruft said, “Now about the dinner,”

It was a remarkable instance of we thought on the part of the ironmonger made Mrs. Crupp’s kitchen fire-place, capable of cooking nothing but a pot of potatoes. As to a fish-kettle, Mrs. C. well! I would only come and look at. She couldn’t say fairness than that. We look and look at it? As I should not have the wiser if I had looked at it, I it said, “Never mind fish.” But Mrs. C.

Don’t say that; oysters was in, as same! So that was settled. Mrs. C. said what she would recommend was:

A pair of hot roast towels—from the ye
I GIVE A DINNER.

A dish of stewed beef, with vegetables—from the pastry-cook's; two little corner things, as a raised pie and a dish of kidneys—from the pastry-cook's; a tart, and (if I liked) a shape of jelly—from the pastry-cook's. This, Mrs. Crupp said, would leave her at full liberty to concentrate her mind on the potatoes, and to serve up the cheese and celery as she could wish to see it done.

I acted on Mrs. Crupp's opinion, and gave the order at the pastry-cook's myself. Walking along the Strand, afterwards, and observing a hard molten substance in the window of a ham and beef shop, which resembled marble, but was labelled "Mock Turtle," I went in and bought a slab of it, which I have since seen reason to believe would have sufficed for fifteen people. This preparation, Mrs. Crupp, after some difficulty, consented to warm up; and it shrunk so much in a liquid state, that we found it what Steerforth called "rather a tight fit" for four.

These preparations happily completed, I bought a little dessert in Covent Garden Market, and gave a rather extensive order at a retail wine-merchant's in that vicinity. When I came home in the afternoon, and saw the bottles drawn up in a square on the pantry-floor, they looked so numerous (though there were two missing, which made Mrs. Crupp very uncomfortable), that I was absolutely frightened at them.

One of Steerforth's friends was named Grainger, and the other Markham. They were both very gay and lively fellows; Granger, something older than Steerforth; Markham, youthful-looking, and I should say not more than twenty. I observed that the latter always spoke of himself indifferently, as "a man," and seldom or never in the first person singular.

"A man might get on very well here," Mr. Copperfield," said Markham—meaning himself.

"It's not a bad situation," said I, "and the people are really commodious."

"I hope you have both brought appetites with you!" said Steerforth.

"Upon my honor," returned Markham, "town seems to sharpen a man's appetite. A man is hungry all day long. A man is perpetually eating." Being a little embarrassed at first, and feeling much too young to pester, I made Steerforth take the head of the table when dinner was announced, and seated myself opposite to him. Everything was very good; we did not spare the wine; and he exerted himself so brilliantly to make the thing pass off well, that there was no pause in our festivity. I was not quite such good company during dinner as I could have wished to be, for my chair was opposite the door, and my attention was distracted by observing that the handy young man went out of the room very often, and that his shadow always presented itself, immediately afterwards, on the wall of the entry, with a bottle at its mouth. The "young man" likewise occasioned me some uneasiness; not so much by neglecting to wash the plates, as by breaking them. For being of an inquisitive disposition, and unable to confine herself (as her positive instructions were) to the pantry, she was constantly peering in at us, and constantly imagining herself detected; in which belief, she several times retired upon the plate (with which she had carefully paved the floor), and did a great deal of destruction.

These, however, were small drawbacks, and easily forgotten when the cloth was cleared, and the dessert put on the table; at which period of the entertainment the handy young man was discovered to be speechless. Giving him private directions to seek the society of Mrs. Crupp, and to remove the "young man" to the basement also, I abandoned myself to enjoyment.

I began, by being singularly cheerful and light-hearted; all sorts of half-forgotten things to talk about, came rushing into my mind, and made me hold forth in a most unwonted manner. I laughed heartily at my own jokes, and everybody else's; called Steerforth to order for not passing the wine; made several engagements to go to Oxford; announced that I meant to have a dinner-party exactly like that, once a week until further notice; and madly took so much snuff out of Grainger's box, that I was obliged to go into the pantry, and have a private fit of sneezing ten minutes long.

I went on, by passing the wine faster and faster yet, and continually starting up with a corkscrew to open more wine, long before my need was. I proposed Steerforth's health. I said he was my dearest friend, the protector of my boyhood, and the companion of my pranks. I said I was delighted to propose his health. I said I owed him more obligations than I could ever repay, and held him in a higher admiration than I could ever express. I finished by saying, "I'll give you Steerforth! God bless him! Hurrah!" We gave him three times three, and another, and a good one to finish with. I broke my glass in going round the table to shake hands with him, and I said (in two words) "Steerforth, you're the guiding star of my existence."

I went on, by finding suddenly that somebody was in the middle of a song. Markham was the singer, and he sang "When the heart of a man is depressed with care." He said, when he had sung it, he would give us "Woman!" I took objection to that, and I couldn't allow it. I said it was not a respectful way of proposing the toast; and I would never permit that toast to be drunk in my house otherwise than as "The Ladies!" I was very high with him, madly I think, because I saw Steerforth and Grainger laughing at me—or at him—or at both of us. He said he was a man not to be dictated to. I said a man was. He said a man was not to be insulted, then. I said he was right there—never under my roof, where the Lores were sacred, and the laws of hospitality paramount. He said it was no derogation from a man's dignity to confess that I was a devilish good fellow. I instantly proposed his health.

Somebody was smoking. We were all smoking. I was smoking, and trying to suppress a
rising tendency to shudder. Steerforth had made a speech about me, in the course of which I had been affected almost to tears. I returned thanks, and hoped the present company would dine with me to-morrow, and the day after—each day at five o'clock, that we might enjoy the pleasures of conversation and society through a long evening. I felt that I was proper with individual. I would give them my aunt, Miss Betsey Trotwood, the best of her sex!

Somebody was leaning out of my bed-room window, refreshing his forehead against the cool stone of the parapet, and feasting the air upon his face. It was myself. I was addressing myself as "Copperfield," and saying, "Why did you try to smoke? You might have known you couldn't do it." Now, somebody was unsteadily contemplating his features in the looking-glass. That was I. Too. I was very pale in the looking-glass; my eyes had a vacant appearance; and my hair—only my hair, nothing else—looked drunk.

Somebody said to me, "Let us go to the theatre, Copperfield!" There was no bed-room before me, but again the jingling table covered with glasses; the lamp; Granger on my right hand, Markham on my left, and Steerforth opposite—all sitting in a mist, and a long way off. The theatre! To be sure. The very thing. Come along! But they must excuse me if I saw everybody out first, and turned the lamp off—case of fire.

Owing to some confusion in the dark, the door was gone. I was feeling for it in the window-curtains, when Steerforth, laughing, took me by the arm and led me out. We went down-stairs, one behind another. Near the bottom, somebody fell, and rolled down. Somebody else said it was Copperfield. I was angry at that false report, until finding myself on my back in the passage, I began to think there might be some foundation for it.

A very foggy night, with great rings round the lamps in the streets! There was an indistinct talk of its being wet. I considered it frosty. Steerforth dusted me under a lamp-post, and put my hat into shape, which somebody produced from somewhere in a most extraordinary manner, for I hadn't had it on before. Steerforth then said, "You are all right, Copperfield, are you not?" and I told him, "Never better."

A man, sitting in a pigeon-hole place, looked out of the fog, and took money from somebody, inquiring if I was one of the gentlemen paid for, and appearing rather doubtful (as I remember in the glimpse I had of him) whether to take the money for me or not. Shortly afterwards, we were very high up in a very hot theatre, looking down into a large pit, that seemed to me to smoke; the people with whom it was crammed were so indistinct. There was a great stage, too, looking very clean and smooth after the streets; and there were people upon it, talking about something or other, but not at all intelligibly. There was an abundance of bright lights, and there was music, and there were ladies down in the boxes, and I don't know what not. Whole building looked to me, as if it were to swing; it conducted itself in such a countenance manner, when I tried to steady it.

On somebody's motion, we resolve down-stairs to the dress-boxes, where I was. A gentleman lounging, full-faced, with an opera-glass in his hand, before my view, and also my own figure length in a glass. Then I was being in one of these boxes, and found myself something as I sat down, and people crying "Silence!" to somebody, and throwing insignificant glances at me, and—what Agnes, sitting on the seat before me, in a box, with a lady and gentleman beside her, didn't know. I see her face now yet, but I did then, I dare say, with its indelible secret and wonder turned upon me.

"Agnes!" I said thickly, "Lor, bless you!"

"Hush! Pray!" she answered, I conceive why, "You disturb the audience! Look at the stage!"

I tried, on her injunction, to fix it, at something of what was going on there, in vain. I looked at her again by-the-way, I saw her shrink into her corner, and put her hand to her forehead.

"Agnes!" I said. "P'arn't afraid, you're not, is she, you're not."

"Yes, yes, Do not mind me, Trotwood returned. "Listen! Are you going away?

"I ain't going away."

"Yes."

I had a stupid intention of replying I was going to wait, to hand her down-stairs, and then I expressed it somehow; for, after looking at me attentively for a little while, she appeared to understand, and replied in a tone:

"I know you will do as I ask you, if I am very earnest in it. Go away now, I am not at home; ask your friends to come home."

She had so far improved me, for that though I was angry with her, I felt as if with a short "Go!" (which I had "Good-night!"") got up and went away followed, and I stepped at once out of the door into my bedroom, where only Steerforth with me, helping me to undress, and who by turns telling him that Agnes was there adoring him to bring the cork stopper might open another bottle of wine.

How somebody, lying in my bed, had and doing all this over again, at cross; in a feverish dream all night—the bed-sheet that was never still! How, as that slowly settled down into myself, did I envy, and feel as if my outer covering were a hard board; my tongue the bottom empty kettle, turned with long service, a long up over a slow fire; the spout of a hot plates of metal which rove cruelly
But the agony of mind, the remorse, and shame I felt when I became conscious next day! My terror of having committed a thousand offences I had forgotten, and which nothing could ever extirpate—my recollection of that indecipherable look which Agnes had given me—the torturing impossibility of communicating with her, not knowing, Beast that I was, how she came to be in London, or where she stayed—my disgust of the very sight of the room where the revel had been held—my recking head—the smell of smoke, the sight of glasses, the impossibility of going out, or even getting up! Oh, what a day it was!

Oh, what an evening, when I sat down by my fire to a basin of mutton broth, dined all over with fat, and thought I was going the way of my predecessor, and should succumb to his dismal story as well as to his chambers, and had half a mind to rush express to Dover and reveal all! What an evening, when Mrs. Crupp, coming in to take away the broth-basin, produced one kidney on a cheese-plate as the entire remains of yesterday’s feast, and I was really inclined to fall upon her unseeable breast, and say, in heartfelt penitence, “Oh, Mrs. Crupp, Mrs. Crupp, never mind the broken meats! I am very miserable!”—only that I doubted, even at that pass, if Mrs. Crupp were quite the sort of woman to confide in!

CHAPTER XXV.

GOOD AND BAD ANGELS.

I was going out at my door on the morning after that deplorable day of headache, sickness, and repentance, with an odd confusion in my mind relative to the date of my dinner-party, as if a body of Titans had taken an enormous lever and pushed the day before yesterday some months back, when I saw a ticket-porter coming upstairs, with a letter in his hand. He was taking his time about his errand then; but when he saw me on the top of the staircase, looking at him over the banisters, he swung into a trot, and came up panting, as if he had run himself into a state of exhaustion.

“T. Copperfield, Esquire,” said the ticket-porter, touching his hat with his little cane.

I could scarcely lay claim to the name; I was so disturbed by the conviction that the letter came from Agnes. However, I told him I was T. Copperfield, Esquire, and he believed it, and gave me the letter, which he said required an answer. I shut him out on the landing to wait for the answer, and went into my chambers again, in such a nervous state that I was fain to lay the letter down on my breakfast-table, and familiarise myself with the outside of it a little, before I could resolve to break the seal.

I found, when I did open it, that it was a very kind note, containing no reference to my condition at the theatre. All it said was, “My dear Tom—a I am staying at the house of Papa’s agent, Mr. Waterbrook, in Ely-place, Holborn. Will you come and see me to-day, at any time you like to appoint? Ever yours affectionately, Agnes.”

It took me such a long time to write an answer at all to my satisfaction, that I don’t know what the ticket-porter can have thought, unless he thought I was learning to write. I must have written half a dozen answers at least. I began one, “How can I ever hope, my dear Agnes, to escape from your remembrance the disgusting impression”—there I didn’t like it, and then I tore it up. I began another, “Shakespeare has observed, my dear Agnes, how strange it is that a man should put an enemy into his mouth”—that reminded me of Mackham, and it got no farther. I even tried poetry. I began one note, in a six-syllable line, “Oh, do not remember”—but that associated itself with the fifth of November, and became an absurdity. After many attempts, I wrote, “My dear Agnes. Your letter is like you, and what could I say of it that would be higher praise than that? I will come at four o’clock. Affectionately and sorrowfully, T. C.” With this missive (which I was in twenty minds at once about recalling, as soon as I was out of my hands), the ticket-porter at last departed.

If the day were half as tremendous to any other professional gentleman in Doctors’ Commons as it was to me, I sincerely believe he made some expiation for his share in that rotten old ecclesiastical cheese. Although I left the office half-past three, and was prowling about the place of appointment within a few minutes afterwards, the appointed time was exceeded by a full quarter of an hour, according to the clock of St. Andrew’s, Holborn, before I could muster up sufficient desperation to pull the private bell-handle let into the left-hand door-post of Mr. Waterbrook’s house.

The professional business of Mr. Waterbrook’s establishment was done on the ground floor, and the genteel business (of which there was a good deal) in the upper part of the building. I was shown into a pretty but rather close drawing-room, and there sat Agnes, nettling a purse.

She looked so quiet and good, and reminded me so strongly of my airy fresh school days at Canterbury, and the golden, smoky, simple wretch I had been the other night, that, nobody being by, I yielded to my self-reproach and shame, and—in short, made a fool of myself; I cannot deny that I shed tears. To this hour I am undecided whether it was upon the whole the wisest thing I could have done, or the most ridiculous.

“If it had been any one but you, Agnes,” said I, turning away my head, “I should not have minded it half so much. But that it should have been you who saw me! I almost wish I had been dead, first.”

She put her hand—its touch was like no other hand—upon my arm for a moment; and I felt so befriended and comforted, that I could not help moving it to my lips, and gratefully kissing it.
"Sit down," said Agnes, cheerfully. "Don't be unhappy, Trotwood. If you cannot confidently trust me, whom will you trust?"

"Ah, Agnes!" I returned. "You are my good Angel!"

She smiled rather sadly, I thought, and shook her head.

"Yes, Agnes, my good Angel! Always my good Angel!"

"If I were, indeed, Trotwood," she returned, "there is one thing that I should set my heart on very much."

I looked at her inquiringly, but already with a foreknowledge of her meaning.

"On warning you," said Agnes, with a steady glance, "against your bad Angel."

"My dear Agnes," I began, "if you mean Steerforth—"

"I do, Trotwood," she returned.

"Then, Agnes, you wrong him very much. He my bad Angel, or anyone's! He anything but a guide, a support, and a friend to me! My dear Agnes! Now, is it not unjust, and unlike you, to judge him from what you saw of me the other night?"

"If I do not judge him from what I saw of you the other night," she quietly replied, "from what, then?"

"From many things—trifles in themselves, but they do not seem to me to be so, when they are put together. I judge him, partly from your account of him, Trotwood, and your character, and the influence he has over you."

There was always something in her modest voice that seemed to touch a chord within me, answering to that sound alone. It was always earnest; but when it was very earnest, as it was now, there was a thrill in it that quite subdued me. I sat looking at her as she cast her eyes down on her work; I sat seeming still to listen to her; and Steerforth, in spite of all my attachment to him, darkened in that tone.

"It is very bold in me," said Agnes, looking up again, "who have lived in such seclusion, and can know so little of the world, to give you my advice so confidently, or even to have this strong opinion. But I know in what it is engendered, Trotwood,—in how true a remembrance of our having grown up together, and in how true an interest in all relating to you. It is that which makes me bold. I am certain that what I say is right. I am quite sure it is. I feel as if it were some one else speaking to you, and not I, when I caution you that you have made a dangerous friend."

Again I looked at her, again I listened to her after she was silent, and again his image, though it was still fixed in my heart, darkened.

"I am not so unreasonable as to expect," said Agnes, resuming her usual tone, after a little while, "that you will, or that you can, at once, change any sentiment that has become a conviction to you; least of all a sentiment that is rooted in your trusting disposition. You ought not hastily to do that. I only ask you, Trotwood, if you ever think of me—I mean,—with a quiet mind, for I was going to interrupt her, and she knew why, "as often as you think of me—to think of what I have said. Do you forgive me for this?"

"I will forgive you, Agnes," I replied, "when you come to do Steerforth justice, and to like him as well as I do."

"No, not until then?" said Agnes.

I saw a passing shadow on her face which made this mention of him, but she returned a smile, and we were again as unreserved in our mutual confidence as of old.

"And when, Agnes," said I, "will you forget me the other night?"

"When I recall it," said Agnes. She would have dismissed the subject, but I was too full of it to allow that, and insisted in telling her how it happened that I had disgraced myself, and what chain of accidental circumstances had had the theatre for its final link. It was a great relief to me to do this, and to stoop on the obligation that I owed to Steerforth for his care of me when I was unable to take care of myself."

"You must not forget," said Agnes, cancelling the conversation as soon as I had concluded, "that you are always to tell me, not only when you fall into trouble, but when you fall in love. Who has succeeded to Miss Larkins, Trotwood?"

"No one, Agnes."

"Some one, Trotwood," said Agnes, laughing and holding up her finger.

"No, Agnes, upon my word! There is a lady, certainly, at Mr. Steerforth's house, who is very clever, and whom I like to talk to—Miss Dahl—and I don't adore her."

Agnes laughed again at her own self-consciousness, and told me that if I were faithful to her in my confidence she thought she should keep a little register of my violent attentions, with the date, duration, and termination of each, like the table of reigns of the kings and queens, in the History of England. Then she asked me if I had ever loved her."

"Uriah Heep?" said I. "No. Is he in London?"

"He comes to the office down-stairs, every day," returned Agnes. "He was in London a week before me. I am afraid on disagreeable business, Trotwood."

"On some business that makes you uneasy, Agnes, I see," said I. "What can that be?"

Agnes laid aside her work, and replied, folding her hands upon one another, and looking gravely at me out of those beautiful soft eyes of hers:

"I believe he is going to enter into partnership with papa."

"What! Uriah? That mean, sprawling fellow, worm himself into such promotion?" I asked, indignantly. "Have you made no remarriage?
AGNES COMFORTS AND ADVISES ME.

cont it, Agnes? Consider what a connexion it
likely to be. You must speak out. You
must not allow your father to take such a mad
step. You must prevent it, Agnes, while there's
true."

Still looking at me, Agnes shook her head
drily. I was speaking with a faint smile at my
mouth; and then replied:

"You remember our last conversation about
papa? It was not long after that—not more than
two or three days—when he gave me the first
intimation of what I tell you. It was sad to see him
struggling between his desire to represent it to
me as a matter of choice on his part, and his
inability to conceal that it was forced upon him.
I felt very sorry.

"Forced upon him, Agnes! Who forces it
upon him?"

"Uriah," she replied, after a moment's hesita-
tion, "has made himself indispensable to papa.
He is subtle and watchful. He has mastered
papa's weaknesses, fostered them, and taken ad-
vantage of them, until—to say all that I mean in a
word, Trotwood—until papa is afraid of him."

There was more that she might have said;
more that she knew, or that she suspected; I
didly saw. I could not give her pain by asking
what it was, for I know that she withheld it from
me to spare her father. It had long been going
to this. I was sensible: yes, I could not but feel,
the least reflection, that it had been going on
to this for a long time. I remained silent.

"His ascendancy over papa," said Agnes, "is
very great. He professes humility and gratitude
—with truth, perhaps; I hope so—but his position
is really one of power, and I fear he makes a hard
use of this power."

I said he was a hound, which, at the moment,
was a great satisfaction to me.

"At the time I speak of, as the time when
papa spoke to me," pursued Agnes, "he had told
papa that he was going away; that he was very
sorry and unwilling to leave, but that he had bet-
ter prospects. Papa was very much depressed
then, and more bowed down by care than ever
you or I have seen him; but he seemed relieved
by this expedient of the partnership, though at
the same time he seemed hurt by it and ashamed
of it."

"And how did you receive it, Agnes?"

"I told, Trotwood," she replied, "what I hope
was right. Feeling sure that it was necessary for
papa's peace that the sacrifice should be made, I
urged him to make it. I said it would lighten
the load of his life—I hope it will—and that it
would give me increased opportunities of being
his companion. Oh, Trotwood!" cried Agnes,
putting her hands before her face, as her tears
started on it, "I almost feel as if I had been papa's
enemy, instead of his loving child. For I know
how he has altered in his devotion to me. I
knew how he has narrowed the circle of his sym-
pathies and duties, in the concentration of his
whole mind upon me. I know what a multitude
of things he has shut out for my sake, and how
his anxious thoughts of me have shadowed his
life, and weakened his strength and energy, by
turning them always upon one idea. If I could
ever set this right! If I could ever work out his
restoration, as I have so innocently been the
cause of his decline!"

I had never before seen Agnes cry. I had seen
tears in her eyes when I had brought new honors
home from school, and I had seen them there
when we last spoke about her father, and I had
seen her turn her gentle head aside when we took
leave of one another; but I had never seen her
weep like this. It made me so sorry that I could
only say, in a foolish, helpless manner, "Pray,
Agnes, don't! Don't, my dear sister!"

But Agnes was too superior to me in character
and purpose, as I know well now, whatever I
might know or not know then, to be long in need
of my entreaties. The beautiful, calm manner,
which makes her so different in my remembrance
from everybody else, came back again, as if a
cloud had passed from a serene sky.

"We are not likely to remain alone much
longer," said Agnes; "and while I have an op-
portunity, let me earnestly entreat you, Trotwood,
to be friendly to Uriah. Don't repel him! Don't
resent (as I think you have a general disposition
to do) what may be uncongenial to you in him.
He may not deserve it, for we know no certain ill
of him. In my case, think first of papa and me."

Agnes had no time to say more, for the room-
door opened, and Mrs. Waterbrook, who was a
large lady—or who wore a large dress: I don't
exactly know which, for I don't know which was
dress and which was lady—came sailing in. I had
a dim recollection of having seen her at the theatre,
as if I had seen her in a pale magic lantern; but
she appeared to remember me perfectly, and still
to suspect me of being in a state of intoxication.

Finding by degrees, however, that I was
sober, and (I hope) that I was a modest young
gentleman, Mrs. Waterbrook softened towards
me considerably, and inquired, firstly, If I went
much into the parks, and secondly, If I went much
into society. On my replying to both these ques-
tions in the negative, it occurred to me that I felt
again in her good opinion; but she concealed
the fact gracefully, and invited me to dinner next
day. I accepted the invitation, and took my leave,
making a call on Uriah in the office as I went out,
and leaving a card for him in his absence.

When I went to dinner next day, and, on the
street-door being opened, plunged into a vap-
orbath of hunch of muton, I divided that I was
not the only guest; for I immediately identified
the ticket-porter in disguise, assisting the family
servant, and waiting at the foot of the stairs
to carry up my name. He looked, to the best of his
ability, when he asked me for it confidentially, as
if he had never seen me before; but well did
I know him, and well did he know me. Conscien-
tence made cowards of us both.

I found Mr. Waterbrook to be a middle-ag
gentleman, with a short throat, and a good deal of shirt-collar, who only wanted a black nose to be the portrait of a pug-dog. He told me he was happy to have the honor of making my acquaintance; and when I had paid my homage to Mr. Waterbrook, presented me, with much ceremony, to a very awful lady in a black velvet dress, and a great black velvet hat, whom I remember as looking like a near relation of Hamlet’s—say his aunt.

Mrs. Henry Spiker was this lady’s name; and her husband was there too; so cold a man, that his head, instead of being grey, seemed to be sprinkled with hoar-frost. Immense deference was shown to the Hurry Spikers, male and female; which Agnes told me was on account of Mr. Henry Spiker’s being solicitor something or to somebody. I forget what or which, remotely connected with the Treasury.

I found Uriah Heep among the company, in a suit of black, and in deep humility. He told me, when I shook hands with him, that he was proud to be noticed by me, and that he really felt obliged to me for my condescension. I could have wished he had been less obliged to me, for he hovered about me in his gratitude all the rest of the evening; and whenever I said a word to Agnes, was sure, with his shadowless eyes and cadaverous face, to be looking gauntly down upon us from behind.

There were other guests—all clad for the occasion, as it struck me, like the wine. But, there was one who attracted my attention before he came in, on account of my hearing him announced as Mr. Traddles! My mind flew back to Salem House; and could it be Tommy, I thought, who used to draw the skeletons?

I looked for Mr. Traddles with unusual interest. He was a sober, steady-looking young man of retiring manners, with a comic head of hair, and eyes that were rather wide open; and he got into an obscure corner so soon, that I had some difficulty in making out his face. At length, I had a good view of him, and either my vision deceived me, or it was the old unfortunate Tommy.

I made my way to Mr. Waterbrook, and said, that i believed I had the pleasure of seeing an old schoolfellow there.

“Indeed!” said Mr. Waterbrook, surprised.

“You are too young to have been at school with Mr. Henry Spiker?”

“Oh, I don’t mean him!” I returned. “I mean the gentleman named Traddles.”

“Oh, Aye, aye! Indeed!” said my host, with much diminished interest. “Possibly.”

“If it’s really the same person,” said I, glancing towards him, “it was at a place called Salem House where we were together, and he was an excellent fellow.”

“Oh yes. Traddles is a good fellow,” returned my host, nodding his head with an air of toleration. “Traddles is quite a good fellow.”

“‘It’s a curious coincidence,’” said I. “It is really,” returned my host, “quite a coincidence, that Traddles should be here at all; as Traddles was only invited this morning, when the place at table, intended to be occupied by Mrs. Henry Spiker’s brother, became vacant, consequence of his indisposition. A very gentlemanly man, Mrs. Henry Spiker’s brother, Mr. Copperfield.”

I murmured an assent, which was full of belief, considering that I knew nothing at all about him; and I inquired what Mr. Traddles was by profession.

“Traddles,” returned Mr. Waterbrook, “is a young man reading for the bar. Yes. He is a good fellow—nobody’s enemy but his own.”

“Is he his own enemy?” said I, sorry to hear this.

“Well,” returned Mr. Waterbrook, pursing up his mouth, and playing with his watch-chain, in a comfortable, prosperous sort of way, “I should say he was one of those men who stand their own light. Yes, I should say he would never, for example, be worth five hundred pounds. Traddles was recommended to me, by a professional friend. Oh yes. Yes. He has a kind of talent, for drawing briefs, and stating a case in writing, plausibly. I am able to throw something in Traddles’s way, at the course of the year; something—for him—considerable. Oh yes.”

I was much impressed by the extremely comfortable and satisfied manner in which Mr. Waterbrook delivered himself of this little word. Yes,” every now and then. There was was deference expression in it. It completely conveyed the idea of a man who had been born, not with a silver spoon, but with a scaling-ladder, and had gone on mounting all the heights of life on another, until now he looked, from the top of the fortifications, with the eye of a philosopher and a patron, on the people down in the trenches.

My reflections on this theme were still in progress when dinner was announced. Mr. Waterbrook went down with Hamlet’s aunt. Mr. Henry Spiker took Mrs. Waterbrook. Agnes, whom I should have liked to take myself, was given to a simpering fellow with weak legs, Uriah. Traddles, and I, as the junior part of the company, went down last, how we could. I was not so vexed at losing Agnes as I might have been, since it gave me an opportunity of making myself known to Traddles on the stairs, who greeted me with great fervor; while Uriah writhed with such obtrusive satisfaction and self-satisfaction, that I could gladly have pitched him over the banisters.

Traddles and I were separated at table, being billeted in two remote corners: he in the guise of a red velvet lady; I, in the gloom of Hamlet’s aunt. The dinner was very long, and the conversation was about the Aristocracy—and Blood. Mrs. Waterbrook repeatedly told us, that if she had a weakness, it was Blood.

It occurred to me several times that we should have got on better, if we had not been quite so genteel. We were so exceedingly genteel, that our scope was very limited. Mr. and Mrs. Culpepper were of the party, who had scarcely
Sanguinary Small-Talk.

When the question was referred to Lord—I needn’t name him,” said Mr. Gulpidge, checking himself—

“T understand,” said Mr. Spiker, “N.”

Mr. Gulpidge deeply nodded—“was referred to him, his answer was, ‘Money, or no release.’”

“Lord bless my soul!” cried Mr. Spiker.

“Money, or no release,” repeated Mr. Gulpidge, firmly. “The next in reverso—youd understand me?”

“K,” said Mr. Spiker, with an ominous look.

“—K. then positively refused to sign. He was attended at Newmarket for that purpose, and he point-blank refused to do it.”

Mr. Spiker was so interested, that he became quite stony.

“Có the matter rests at this hour,” said Mr. Gulpidge, throwing himself back in his chair.

“Our friend Waterbrook will excuse me if I forebear to explain myself generally, on account of the magnitude of the interests involved.

Mr. Waterbrook was only too happy, as it appeared to me, to have such interests, and such names, even hinted at, across his table. He assumed an expression of gloomy intelligence (though I am persuaded he knew no more about the discussion that I did), and highly approved of the discretion that had been observed. Mr. Spiker, after the receipt of such a confidence, naturally desired to favor his friend with a confidence of his own; therefore the foregoing dialogue was succeeded by another, in which it was Mr. Gulpidge’s turn to be surprised, and that by another in which the surprise came round to Mr. Spiker’s turn again, and so on, turn and turn about. All this time we, the outsiders, remained oppressed by the tremendous interests involved in the conversation, and our host regarded us with pride, as the victims of a salutary awe and astonishment.

I was very glad indeed to get up-stairs to Agnes, and to talk with her in a corner, and to introduce Traddles to her, who was shy, but agreeable, and the same good-natured creature still. As he was obliged to leave early, on account of going away next morning for a month, I had not nearly so much conversation with him as I could have wished; but we exchanged addresses, and promised ourselves the pleasure of another meeting when he should come back to town. He was greatly interested to hear that I knew Steerforth, and spoke of him with such warmth that I made him tell Agnes what he thought of him. But Agnes only looked at me the while, and very slightly shook her head when only I observed her.

As she was not among people with whom I believed she could be very much at home, I was almost glad to hear that she was going away within a few days, though I was sorry at the prospect of parting from her again so soon. This caused me to remain until all the company were gone. Conversing with her, and hearing her sing, was such a delightful remainder to the former days at the office.
happy life in the grave old house she had made so beautiful, that I could have remained there half the night; but, having no excuse for staying any longer, when the lights of Mr. Waterbrook's society were all snuffed out, I took my leave very much against my inclination. I felt then, more than ever, that she was my better Angel; and if I thought of her sweet face and placid smile, as though they had shone on me from some removed being, like an Angel, I hope I thought no harm.

I have said that the company were all gone; but I ought to have excepted Uriah, whom I don't include in that denomination, and who had never ceased to hover near us. He was close behind me when I went down-stairs. He was close beside me, when I walked away from the house, slowly fitting his long skeleton fingers into the still longer fingers of a great Guy Fawkes pair of gloves.

It was in no disposition for Uriah's company, but in remembrance of the entreaty Agnes had made to me, that I asked him if he would come home to my rooms, and have some coffee.

"Oh, really, Master Copperfield," he rejoined, "I beg your pardon, Master Copperfield, but the other comes so natural,—I don't like that you should put a constraint upon yourself to ask a humble person like me to your ease."

"There is no constraint in the case," said I.

"Will you come?"

"I should like it, very much," replied Uriah, with a writh.

"Well, then, come along!" said I.

I could not help being rather short with him, but he appeared not to mind it. We went the nearest way, without conversing much upon the road; and he was so humble in respect of those scarecrow gloves, that he was still putting them on, and seemed to have made no advance in that labor, when we got to my place.

I led him up the dark stairs, to prevent his knocking his head against anything, and really his damp cold hand felt so like a frost in mine, that I was tempted to drop it and run away. Agnes and hospitality prevailed, however, and I conducted him to my fireside. When I lighted my candles, he fell into a meek transport with the room that was revealed to him; and when I heated the coffee in an unassuming block-tin vessel in which Mrs. Crupp delighted to prepare it (chiefly, I believe, because it was not intended for the purpose, being a shaving-pot, and because there was a patent invention of great price mouldering away in the pantry), he preserved so much emotion, that I could joyfully have scolded him.

"Oh, really, Master Copperfield,—I mean Master Copperfield," said Uriah, "as you waiting upon me is what I never could have expected! But, one way and another, so many things happen to me which I never could have expected, I am sure. In my humble station, that it seems to rain blessings on my ed. You have heard some-

thing, I des-say, of a change in my expectations, Master Copperfield.—I should say, Master Copperfield?"

As he sat on my sofa, with his long legs drawn up under his coffee-cup, his hat and gloves upon the ground close to him, his spoon gits softly round and round, his shadowless eye, which looked as if they had scorched themselves off, turned towards me without looking at the disagreeable dints I have formerly described in his nostrils coming and going with his head, and a snaky inclination pervading his face from his chin to his boots, I decided in my own mind that I disliked him intensely. It made me very uncomfortable to have him for a guest, for I was young then, and unused to disguise what I so strongly felt.

"You have heard something, I des-say, of a change in my expectations, Master Copperfield,—I should say, Master Copperfield?" observed Uriah.

"Yes," said I, "something."

"Ah! I thought Miss Agnes would know of it!" he quietly returned. "I'm glad to find Miss Agnes knows of it. Oh, thank you, Master—Mister Copperfield!"

I could have thrown my bootjack at him or lay ready on the rug, for having entrapped me into the disclosure of anything concerning Agnes, however immaterial. But I only drank my coffee.

"What a prophet you have shown yourself, Mister Copperfield!" pursed Uriah. "Dear me, what a prophet you have proved yourself to be! Don't you remember saying to me once, that perhaps I should be a partner in Mr. Wickfield's business, and perhaps it might be Wickfield and Heep? You may not recollect it; but when a person is humble, Master Copperfield, a person treasures such things up!"

"I recollect talking about it," said I, "though I certainly did not think it very likely then."

"Oh! who would have thought it likely, Mister Copperfield!" returned Uriah, enthusiastically. "I am sure I didn't myself. I recollect saying with my own lips, that I was much too humble. So I considered myself really and truly."

He sat, with that carved grin on his face, looking at the fire, as I looked at him.

"But the unblushers, persons, Master Copperfield," he presently resumed, "may be the instruments of good. I am glad to think I have been the instrument of good to Mr. Wickfield, and that I may be more so. Oh what a worthy man he is, Master Copperfield, but how imprudent he has been!"

"I am sorry to hear it," said I. "I could not help adding, rather pointedly, "on all accounts."

"Decidedly so, Master Copperfield," replied Uriah. "On all accounts. Miss Agnes's above all! You don't remember your own eloquent expressions, Master Copperfield; but I re
red-headed animal’s, remained in my mind (when I looked at him, sitting all away as if his mean soul gripped his body), and made me giddy. He seemed to swell and grow before my eyes; the room seemed full of the echoes of his voice; and the strange feeling (to which, perhaps, no one is quite a stranger) that all this had occurred before, at some indefinite time, and that I knew what he was going to say next, took possession of me.

A timely observation of the scene of power that there was in his face, did more to bring back to my remembrance the entreaty of Agnes, in its full force, than any effort I could have made. I asked him, with a better appearance of composure than I could have thought possible a minute before, whether he had made his feelings known to Agnes.

"Oh, no, Master Copperfield!," he returned; "I am, dear, no! Not to any one but you. You see, perhaps, just emerging from, my lowly station. I rest a good deal of hope on her observing how useful I am to her father (for I trust, to be very useful to him indeed, Master Copperfield), and how I smooth the way for him, and keep him straight. She’s so much attached to her father, Master Copperfield (oh what a lovely thing it is in a daughter!), that I think she may come, on his account, to be kind to me."

I summed the depth of the rascal’s whole scheme, and understood why he laid it bare.

"If you’ll have the goodness to keep my secret, Master Copperfield," he pursued, "and not, in general, to go against me, I shall take it as a particular favor. You wouldn’t wish to make unpleasantness. I know what a friendly heart you’ve got; but having only known me on my humble footing (on my humblest, I should say, for I am very humble still), you might, unknownly, go against your father, with my Agnes. I call her mine, you see, Master Copperfield. There’s a song that says, ‘I’d crown her reign, to call her mine!’ I hope to do it, one of these days."

Dear Agnes! So much too loving and too good for any one that I could think of, was it possible that she was reserved to be the wife of such a wretch as this?

"There’s no hurry at present, you know, Master Copperfield," Uriah proceeded, in his simian way, as I sat gazing at him; with this thought in my mind. "My Agnes is very young still; and mother and me will have to work our way upwards, and make a good many new arrangements, before it would be quite convenient. So I shall have time gradually to make her familiar with my hopes, as opportunities offer. Oh, I’m so much obliged to you for this confidence! Oh, it’s such a relief, you can’t think; to know that you understand our situation, and are certain (as you wouldn’t wish to make unpleasantness in the family) not to go against me!"

He took the band which I dared not withhold, and having given it a damp squeeze, referred to *his* pale-faced watch.

"Dear me!" he said, "it’s past our moments slip away so, in the confidence times, Master Copperfield, that it’s almost past one!"

I answered that I had thought it was. Not that I had really thought so, but my conversational powers were exhausted.

"Dear me!" he said, considering that I am stopping at—a sort of hotel and boarding house, Master Copperfield, the New River ed—will have gone to bed within two hours."

"I am sorry," I returned, "that there is one bed here, and that I—"

"Oh, don’t think of mentioning beds, Master Copperfield!" he rejoined ecstasically, up one leg. "But would you have any of the time to my laying down before the fire?"

"If it comes to that, I said, pray take and I’ll lie down before the fire."

His repudiation of this offer was strong enough, in the excess of its surprise and horror, to have penetrated to the ears of Mrs. Cratchit sleeping. I suppose, in a distant chamber at about the level of low water-mark, in her slumber by the ticking of an iron clock, to which she always referred me in any little difference on the score of locality, and which was never less than twenty minutes of an hour too slow, and had always gone right in the morning by the best and truest of arguements. As no arguments I could urge, in my best condition, had the least effect upon his mind in inducing him to accept my bed-room and obligate to make the best arrangements for his repose before the fire. The mattress, the sofa (which was a great deal too short and lank figure), the sofa pillows, a blanket, the cover, a clean breakfast-cloth, and a garment made him a bed and covering, for which I was more than thankful. Having lent him a cap, which he put on at once, and in which he made such a pitiful figure, I have no sooner since, I left him to his rest.

I never shall forget that night. I can never forget how I turned and trembled; how I flew out alone with thinking about Agnes and father; how I considered what could I do, ought I to do; how I could come to no conclusion than that the best course for him was to do nothing, and to keep to myself what I had heard. If I went to sleep for a few minutes, the image of Agnes with her tender eyes and her father looking fondly on her, as I had seen him look, arose before me with all the faces, and filled me with vague terrors. I awoke, the recollection that Uriah was in the next room, sat heavy on me like a night-mare; and oppressed me with a dread, as if I had had some meaner sort of devil for a lodger.

The poker got into my dosing choosiness and wouldn’t come out. I thought..."
URIAH'S SLUMBERS.

I SAW no more of Uriah Heep until the day Agnes left town. I was at the coach-office to take leave of her and see her go; and there was no return to Canterbury by the same conveyance. It was some small satisfaction to me to observe his spare, short-waisted, high-shouldered, cherry-colored great-coat perched up, in company with an umbrella like a small tent, on the back seat on the roof, while Agnes was, of course, inside; but what I underwent in efforts to be friendly with him, while Agnes was on, perhaps deserved that little recompense. At the coach-window, as at the dinner table, he hovered about us without a moment's permission, like a great vulture: gorging himself on every syllable that I said to Agnes, or was said to me.

In the state of trouble into which his disclosure of my fire had thrown me, I had thought very much of the words Agnes had used in reference to a partnership: "I did what I hope was right. Allowing that it was necessary for papa's peace at the sacrifice should be made, I entreated him to make it." A miserable foreboding that she might yield to, and sustain herself by, the same illusion to any sacrifice for his sake, oppressed me ever since. I knew how she had him. I knew what the devotion of her nature was. I knew from her own lips that she ranked herself as the innocent cause of his errors, and as owing him a great debt she ardently desired to pay. I had no consolation in seeing how different she was from this detestable Rufus with the cherry-colored great-coat, for I felt that in the difference between them, in the self-denial of her pure soul and the sordid baseness of his, the greatest danger lay. All this, doubtless, he knew thoroughly, and had, in his cunning, considered well.

Yet, I was so certain that the prospect of such a sacrifice is far off, must destroy the happiness of Agnes; and I was so sure, from her manner, of its being unseen by her then, and having cast no shadow on her yet; that I could as soon have injured her, as given her any warning of what impending. Thus it was that we parted without explanation: she waving her hand and smiling farewell from the coach window; her evil genius writhing on the roof, as if he had her in his clutches and triumphed.

I could not get over this farewell glimpse of them for a long time. When Agnes wrote to tell me of her safe arrival, I was as miserable as when I saw her going away. Whenever I fell into a thoughtful state, this subject was sure to present itself, and all my uneasiness was sure to be redoubled. Hardly a night passed without my dreaming of it. It became a part of my life, and inseparable from my life as my own head.

I had ample leisure to refine upon my uneasiness: for Steerforth was at Oxford, as he wrote to me, and when I was not at the Commons, I was very much alone. I believe I had at this time some lurking distrust of Steerforth. I wrote to him most affectionately in reply to his, but I think I was glad, upon the whole, that he could not come to London just then to dispel the truth to be, that the influence of Agnes was upon me, undisturbed by the sight of him; and that it was the more powerful with me, because she had so large a share in my thoughts and interest.

In the meantime, days and weeks slipped away. I was articled to Spenlow and Jorkins. I had ninety pounds a year (exclusive of my house-rent and sundry collateral matters) from my aunt. My rooms were engaged for twelve months certain: and though I still found them dreary of an evening, and the evenings long, I could settle down into a state of equable spirits, and resign myself to coffee; which I seem, on looking back, to have taken by the gallon at about this period of my existence. At about this time, too, I made three discoveries: first, that Mrs. Crupp was a martyr to a curious disorder called "the spasms," which was generally accompanied with inflammation of the nose, and required to be constantly treated with peppermint; secondly, that something peculiar in the temperature of my pantry, made the brandy-bottles burst; thirdly, that I was alone in the world, and much given to record that circumstance in fragments of English versification.

On the day when I was articled, no festivity took place, beyond my having sandwiches and sherry into the office for the clerks, and going alone to the theatre at night. I went to see "The Stranger" as a Doctors' Commons sort of play, and was so dreadfully cut up, that I hardly knew myself in my own glass when I got home. Mr. Spenlow remarked, on this occasion, when we
concluded our business, that he should have been happy to have seen me at his house at Norwood to celebrate our becoming connected, but for his domestic arrangements being in some disorder, on account of the expected return of his daughter from finishing her education at Paris. But, he intimated that when she came home he should hope to have the pleasure of entertaining me. I knew that he was a widower with one daughter, and expressed my acknowledgments.

Mr. Spencelay was as good as his word. In a week or two, he referred to his engagement, and said, that if I would do him the favor to come down next Saturday, and stay till Monday, he would be extremely happy. Of course I said I should do him the favor; and he was to drive me down in his phaeton, and to bring me back.

When the day arrived, my very carpet-bag was an object of veneration to the stipendiary clerks, to whom the house at Norwood was a sacred mystery. One of them informed me that he had heard that Mr. Spencelay was entirely off plate and china; and another hinted at champagne being constantly on draught, after the usual custom of table beer. The old clerk with the wig, whose name was Mr. Tifney, had been down on business several times in the course of his career, and had on each occasion penetrated to the breakfast-parlor. He described it as an apartment of the most sumptuous nature, and said that he had drunk brown East India sherry there, of a quality so precious as to make a man wink.

We had an adjourned cause in the Consistory that day—about excommunicating a baker who had been objecting in a vestry to a paving-rate—and as the evidence was just twice the length of Robinson Crusoe, according to a calculation I made, it was rather late in the day before we finished. However, we got him excommunicated for six weeks, and sentenced in no end of costs; and then the baker’s proctor, and the judge, and the advocates on both sides (who were all nearly related), went out of town together, and Mr. Spencelay and I drove away in the phaeton.

The phaeton was a very handsome affair; the horses arched their necks and lifted up their legs as if they knew they belonged to Doctors’ Commons. There was a good deal of competition in the Commons on all points of display, and it turned out some very choice equipages then; though I always have considered, and always shall consider, that in my time the great article of competition there was starch—which I think was worn among the proctors to as great an extent as it is in the nature of man to bear.

We were very pleasant, going down, and Mr. Spencelay gave me some hints in reference to my profession. He said it was the genteelst profession in the world, and must on no account be confounded with the profession of a solicitor; being quite another sort of thing, infinitely more exclusive, less mechanical, and more profitable. We took things much more easily in the Commons than they could be taken anywhere else, he observed, and that sets us, as a privilege apart. He said it was impossible to connect a disagreeable fact, that we were chiefly a by solicitors; but he gave me to understand that they were an inferior race of men, looked down upon by all proper pretensions.

I asked Mr. Spencelay what he considered the best sort of professional business? He said that a good case of a disputed will, where was a neat little estate of thirty or forty pounds, was, perhaps, the best of all. In such a case, he said, not only were there venial pickings, in the way of arguments at or of the proceedings, and mountains uplands of evidence on interrogatory and interrogatory (to say nothing of an appointment to the Delegates, and then to the Lords), the costs being pretty sure to come out at last, both sides went at it in a spirited manner, and expense was no objection. Then, he launched into a generalization on the Commons. What was to be praised (he said) in the Commons, was its roundness. It was the most convenient place in the world. It was the idea of snugginess. It lay in a nut-shell:

- You brought a divorce case, or a will case, into the Consistory. Very as a hot day. You made little round game of it, among a family, and you played it out at leisure. Sometimes not satisfied with the Consistory, you do then? Why, you went into the

What was the Archers? The same consistory, room, with the same bar, and practitioners, but another judge, for the Consistory Judge could plead any counsel-advocate. Well, you played your round of it. Still you were not satisfied. You What did you do then? Why, you went to the Delegates. Who were the Delegates? Ecclesiastical Delegates were the advocates in any business, who had looked at a game when it was playing in both courts, seen the cards shuffled, and cut, and played to all the players about it, came fresh, as judges, to settle the matter. Satisfaction of everybody! Discontents might talk of corruption in the Commons, and the necessity forming the Commons, said Mr. Spencelay, in conclusion; but when the price per bushel was highest, the Commonwealth was busiest; and a man might lay upon his heart, and say this to the world.—“Touch the Commons, and down the country!”

I listened to all this with attention, though, I must say, I had my doubts as to the country was quite as much obliged to me as Mr. Spencelay made out, I respected to his opinion. That about the wheat per bushel, I modestly felt was a
my strength, and quite settled the question. I am never, to this hour, got the better of that sheet of wheat. It has reappeared to ammulate, all through my life, in connexion with all classes of subjects. I don't know now, exactly, as it has to do with me, or what right it has to sniff me, on an infinite variety of occasions; but the very old friend of the bushel brought by the head and shoulders (as he always is, observe), I give up a subject for lost.

This is a digression. I was not the man to rush the Commons, and bring down the country, submissively expressed, by my silence, my absence in all I had heard from my superior years and knowledge; and we talked about 

The Stranger" and the Drama, and the pair of horses, until we came to Mr. Spenlow's gate.

There was a lovely garden to Mr. Spenlow's use; and though that was not the best time of the year for seeing a garden, it was so beautifully put that I was quite enchanted. There was a green lawn, there were clusters of trees, and two perspective walks that I could just distinguish in the dark, arched over with trelliswork, on which shrubs and flowers grew in the spring season. "Here Miss Spenlow walks by moonlight," I thought. "Dear me!"

We went into the house, which was cheerfully lit up, and into a hall where there were all sorts of hate, caps, great-coats, plaid, gloves, big, and waking-sticks. "Where is Miss Spenlow?" said Mr. Spenlow to the servant. "Dora!" I thought. "What a beautiful name!"

We turned into a room near at hand (I think it was the dining-room), made memorable by the brown East Indian sherry, and I ventured, "Mr. Copperfield, my daughter Dora, and my daughter Dora's confidential friend!" It was, no doubt, Mr. Spenlow's voice, but I didn't know its voice, and I didn't care whose it was. All was over in a moment. I had fulfilled my destiny. I was a captive and a slave. I loved Miss Spenlow to distraction!

She was more than human to me. She was a Sylph, I don't know what she was—anything that no one ever saw, and everything that anybody ever wanted. I was swallowed up in abysses of love in an instant. There was no being on the brink; no looking down, or looking back; I was gone, headlong, before I had time to say a word to her.

"I," observed a well-remembered voice, when bowed and murmured something, "have no Mr. Copperfield before." The speaker was not Dora. No; the confident friend was Miss Murdstone.

I don't think I was much astonished. To the best of my judgment, no capacity of astonishment was left in me. There was nothing worth mentioning in the material world, but Dora Spenlow, so astonished about. I said, "How do you do, Miss Murdstone?" She answered, "Very well." I said, "How is Mr. Murdstone?" She replied, "My brother is robust, I am obliged to you."

Mr. Spenlow, who, I suppose, had been surprised to see us recognise each other, then put in his word.

"I am glad to find," he said, "Copperfield, that you and Miss Murdstone are already acquainted."

"Mr. Copperfield and myself," said Miss Murdstone, with severe composure, "are connections. We were once slightly acquainted. It was in his childhood days. Circumstances have separated us since. I should not have known him."

"I replied that she should have known her, anywhere. Which was true enough.

"Miss Murdstone has had the goodness," said Mr. Spenlow to me, "to accept the office—if I may so describe it—of my daughter Dora's confidential friend. My daughter Dora having, unhappily, no mother, Miss Murdstone is obliging enough to become her companion and protector."

A passing thought occurred to me that Miss Murdstone, like the pocket instrument called a life-preserver, was not so much designed for purposes of protection as of assailants. But as I had none but passing thoughts for any subject save Dora, I glanced at her, directly afterwards, and was thinking that I saw, in her pretty pigtails, manner, that she was not very much inclined to be particularly confidential to her companion and protector, when a bell rang, which Mr. Spenlow said was the first dinner-bell, and so carried me off to dress.

The idea of dressing one's self, or doing anything in the way of action, in that state of love, was a little too ridiculous. I could only sit down before my fire, biting the key of my carpet-bag, and think of the captivating girlish, bright-eyed, lovely Dora. What a form she had, what a face she had, what a graceful, variable, enchanting manner!

The bell rang again so soon that I made a mere scramble of my dressing; instead of the careful operation I could have wished under the circumstances, and went down-stairs. There was some company. Dora was talking to an old gentleman with a grey head. Grey as he was—and a great-grandfather into the bargain, for he said so—I was madly jealous of him.

What a state of mind I was in! I was jealous of everybody. I couldn't bear the idea of anybody knowing Mr. Spenlow better than I did. It was torturing to me to hear them talk of occurrences in which I had had no share. When a most amiable person, with a highly polished bald head, asked me across the dinner-table, if that were the first occasion of my seeing the grounds, I could have done anything to him that was savage and revengeful.

I don't remember who was there, except Dora. I have not the least idea what we had for dinner, besides Dora. My impression is, that I dined off Dora entirely, and sent away half-a-dozen plates.
"Sit down," said Agnes, cheerfully. "Don't be unhappy, Trotwood. If you cannot confidently trust me, whom will you trust?"

"Ah, Agnes!" I returned. "You are my good Angel!"

She smiled rather sadly, I thought, and shook her head.

"Yes, Agnes, my good Angel! Always my good Angel!"

"If I were, indeed, Trotwood," she returned, "there is one thing that I should set my heart on very much."

I looked at her inquiringly; but already with a foreknowledge of her meaning.

"On warning you," said Agnes, with a steady glance, "against your bad Angel."

"My dear Agnes," I began, "if you mean Steerforth—"

"I do, Trotwood," she returned.

"Then, Agnes, you wrong him very much. He my bad Angel, or anyone's! He anything but a guide, a support, and a friend to me! My dear Agnes! Now, is it not unjust, and unlike you, to judge him from what you saw of me the other night?"

"I do not judge him from what I saw of you the other night," she quietly replied.

"From what, then?"

"From many things—trifles in themselves, but they do not seem to me to be so, when they are put together. I judge him, partly from your account of him, Trotwood, and your character, and the influence he has over you."

There was always something in her modest voice that seemed to touch a chord within me, answering to that sound alone. It was always earnest; but when it was very earnest, as it was now, there was a thrill in it that quite subdued me. I sat looking at her as she cast her eyes down on her work; I sat seeming still to listen to her; and Steerforth, in spite of all my attachment to him, darkened in that tone.

"It is very bold in me," said Agnes, looking up again, "who have lived in such seclusion, and can know so little of the world, to give you my advice so confidently, or even to have this strong opinion. But I know in what it is engendered, Trotwood,—in how true a remembrance of our having grown up together, and in how true an interest in all relating to you. It is that which makes me bold. I am certain that what I say is right. I am quite sure it is. I feel as if it were some one else speaking to you, and not I, when I caution you that you have made a dangerous friend."

Again I looked at her, again I listened to her after she was silent, and again his image, though it was still fixed in my heart, darkened.

"I am not so unreasonable as to expect," said Agnes, resuming her usual tone, after a little while, "that you will, or that you can, at once, change any sentiment that has become a conviction to you; least of all a sentiment that is rooted in your trusting disposition. You ought not hastily to do that. I only ask you, Trotwood, if you ever think of me—"

"I will forgive you, Agnes," I replied, "that you came to do Steerforth justice, and to like him as well as I do."

"Not until then?" said Agnes.

I saw a passing shadow on her face when I made this mention of him, but she returned my smile, and we were again as unreserved in our mutual confidence as of old.

"And when, Agnes," said I, "will you forgive me the other night?"

"When I recall it," said Agnes.

She would have dismissed the subject so, but I was too full of it to allow that, and insisted telling her how it happened that I had disgraced myself, and what chain of accidental circumstances had had the theatre for its final link. It was a great relief to me to do this, and to place on the obligation that I owed to Steerforth for his care of me when I was unable to take care of myself."

"You must not forget," said Agnes, only changing the conversation as soon as I had concluded, "that you are always to tell me, not only when you fall into trouble, but when you fall in love. Who has succeeded to Miss Larkins, Trotwood?"

"No one, Agnes."

"Some one, Trotwood," said Agnes, laughing and holding up her finger.

"No, Agnes, upon my word! There is a lady, certainly, at Mrs. Steerforth's house, who is very clever, and whom I like to talk to—Miss Dora—but I don't adore her." Agnes laughed again at her own penetration, and told me that if I were faithful to her in confidence, she thought she should keep a little register of my violent attachments, with the dates, duration, and termination of each, like the table of the reigns of the kings and queens, in the History of England. Then she asked me if I had seen Uriah.

"Uriah Hoop?" said I. "No. Is he in London?"

"He comes to the office down-stairs, every day," returned Agnes. "He was in London a week before me. I am afraid on disagreeable business, Trotwood."

"On some business, that makes you uneasy, Agnes, I see," said I. "What can that be?"

Agnes laid aside her work, and replied, raising her hands upon one another, and looking passively at me out of those beautiful soft eyes of hers:

"I believe he is going to enter into partnership with papa."

"What! Uriah? That mean, farming fellow, worm himself into such positions?" I cried, in indignantly. "Have you read no newspaper?
AGNES COMFORTS AND ADVISES ME.

Agnes? Consider what a connexion it to be. You must speak out. You allow your father to take such a mad a must prevent it, Agnes, while there's looking at me, Agnes shook her head as speaking; with a faint smile at my and then replied: remember our last conversation about was not long after that—not more than 'ee days—when he gave me the first In of what I tell you. It was sad to see him: between his desire to represent it to aatter of choice on his part, and his inaoneal that it was forced upon him. I sorry.ed upon him, Agnes! Who forces it?" "1," she replied, after a moment's hesit- was made himself indispensable to papa, and watchful. He has mastered weakness, fostered them, and taken ad-f them, until—to say all that I mean in a flash—until papa is afraid of him." was more that she might be saved; she knew, or that she suspected; I w. I could not give her pain by asking as, for I knew that she withheld it from her father. It had long been going s, I was sensible; yes, I could not but the least reflection, that it had been going for a long time. I remained silent. ascendency over papa," said Agnes, "is he professes humility and gratitude th; perhaps, I hope so—but his position me of power, and I fear he makes a hard power." he was a hound, which, at the moment, at satisfaction to me. he time I speak of, as the time when ce to me," pursued Agnes, "he had told: he was going away; that he was very unwilling to leave; but that he had be-sects. Papa was very much depressed more bowed down by care than ever have seen him; but he seemed relieved expedient of the partnership, though at time he seemed hurt by it and ashamed how did you receive it, Agnes?" , Trotwood," she replied, "what I hope. Feeling sure that it was necessary for ace that the sacrifice should be made, I him to make it. I said it would lighten of his life—I hope it will!—and that it me increased opportunities of being sanlon. Oh, Trotwood!" cried Agnes, her hands before her face, as her tears at it, "I almost feel as if I had been papa instead of his loving child. For I know has altered in his devotion to me. w he has narrowed the circle of his sym-nd duties, in the concentration of his sud upon me. I know what a multitude of things he has shut out for my sake, and how his anxious thoughts of me have shadowed his life, and weakened his strength and energy, by turning them always upon one idea. If I could ever set this right! If I could ever work out his restoration, as I have so innocently been the cause of his decline!"

I had never before seen Agnes cry. I had seen tears in her eyes when I had brought new honors home from school, and I had seen them there when we last spoke about her father, and I had seen her turn her gentle head aside when we took leave of one another; but I had never seen her grieve like this. It made me so sorry that I could only say, in a foolish, helpless manner, "Pray, Agnes, don't! Don't, my dear sister!"

But Agnes was too superior to me in character and purpose, as I know well now, whatever I might know or not know then, to be long in need of my entreaties. The beautiful, calm manner, which makes her so different in my remembrance from everybody else, came back again, as if a cloud had passed from a serene sky.

"We are not likely to remain alone much longer," said Agnes; "and while I have an opportunity, let me earnestly entreat you, Trotwood, to be friendly to Uriah. Don't repel him! Don't resent (as I think you have a general disposition to do) what may be uncongenial to you in him. He may not deserve it, for we know no certain ill of him. In any case, think first of papa and me."

Agnes had no time to say more, for the room-door opened, and Mrs. Waterbrook, who was a large lady—or who wore a large dress: I don't exactly know which, for I don't know which was dress and which was lady—came sailing in. I had a dim recollection of having seen her at the theatre, as if I had seen her in a pale magic lantern; but she appeared to remember me perfectly, and still to suspect me of being in a state of intoxication.

Finding by degrees, however, that I was sober, and (I hope) that I was a modest young gentleman, Mrs. Waterbrook softened towards me considerably, and inquired, firstly, if I went much into the parks, and secondly, if I went much into society. On my replying to both these questions in the negative, it occurred to me that I fell again in her good opinion; but she concealed the fact gracefully, and invited me to dinner next day. I accepted the invitation, and took my leave, making a call on Uriah in the office as I went out, and leaving a card for him in his absence.

When I went to dinner next day, and, on the street-door being opened, plunged into a vapor-bath of haunch of mutton, I divined that I was not the only guest; for I immediately identified the ticket-porter in disguise, assisting the family servant, and waiting at the foot of the stairs to carry up my name. He looked, to the best of his ability, when he asked me for it confidentially, as if he had never seen me before; but well did I know him, and well did he know me. Conscience made cowards of us both.

I found Mr. Waterbrook to be a middle-
that day, with his pocket-handkerchief over his head, how fervently I was embracing him, in my fancy, as his son-in-law! Little did he think, when I took leave of him at night, that he had just given his full consent to my being engaged to Dora, and that I was invoking blessings on his head!

We departed early in the morning, for we had a Salvage case coming on in the Admiralty Court, requiring a rather accurate knowledge of the whole science of navigation, in which (as we couldn’t be expected to know much about these matters in the Commons) the judge had entreated two old Trinity Masters, for charity’s sake, to come and help him out. Dora was at the breakfast-table to make the tea again, however; and I had the melancholy pleasure of taking off my hat to her in the placent, as she stood on the doorstep with dip in her arms.

What the Admiralty was to me that day; what nonsense I made of our case in my mind, as I listened to it; how I saw “Dora” engraved upon the blade of the silver oar which they lay upon the table, as the emblem of that high jurisdiction; and how I felt when Mr. Spenlow went home without me (I had had an insane hope that he might take me back again), as if I were a mariner myself, and the ship to which I belonged had sailed away and left me on a desert island; I shall make no fruitless efforts to describe. It that sleepy old court could rouse itself, and present in any visible form the day dreams I have had in it about Dora, it would reveal my truth.

I don’t mean the dreams that I dreamed on that day alone, but day after day, from week to week, and term to term. I went there, not to attend to what was going on, but to think about Dora. If ever I bestowed a thought upon the cases, as they dragged their slow length before me, it was only to wonder, in the matrimonial cases (remembering Dora), how it was that married people could ever be otherwise than happy; and, in the Prerogative cases, to consider, if the money in question had been left to me, what were the foremost steps I should immediately have taken in regard to Dora. Within the first week of my passion, I bought four sumptuous waistcoats—not for myself: I had no pride in them; for Dora—and took to wearing straw-colored kid gloves in the streets, and laid the foundations of all the corns I have ever had. If the boots I wore at that period could only be produced and compared with the natural size of my feet, they would show what the state of my heart was, in a most affecting manner.

And yet, wretched cripple as I made myself by this act of homage to Dora, I walked miles upon miles daily in the hope of seeing her. Not only was I soon as well known on the Norwood Road as the postman on that beat, but I pervaded London likewise. I walked about the streets where the best shops for ladies were, I haunted the Bazaar like an unquiet spirit, I fagged through the Park again and again, long after I was quite knocked up. Sometimes, at long intervals and on rare occasions, I saw her. Perhaps a glove waved in a carriage window; perhaps, walked with her and Miss Mudstone away, and spoke to her. In the latter, I was always very miserable afterwards, to think I had said nothing to the purpose; or that I had no idea of the extent of my devotion, or cared nothing about me. I was always out, as may be supposed, for another hour at Mr. Spenlow’s house. I was always left pointed, for I got none.

Mrs. Crupp must have been a woman of moderation; for when this attachment was two weeks old, and I had not had the courage to be more explicitly even to Agnes, than I was to Mr. Spenlow’s house, “whose wife,” I added, “consists of one daughter”;—I Crupp must have been a woman of passion for, even in that early stage, she said it was come up to me one evening, when I went to ask (she being then afflicted with the fever) if she had mentioned it if I could oblige her with a little tincture of cardamom, mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, I would; and with seven drops of the elixir, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever;—or, if I had not such a thing at home, to let her have a little tincture of cardamom mixed with a little tincture of cardamom, which was the best remedy for the fever.

“Cheer up, sir,” said Mrs. Crupp.

I abear to see you so, sir: I am a mother myself. I did not quite perceive the application of this fact to myself, but I smiled on Mrs. Crupp as kindly as was in my power.

“Come, sir,” said Mrs. Crupp. “Explain to me what it is, sir. There’s a lady in the room.”

“Mrs. Crupp,” I returned, reddenthed.

“Oh, bless you! Keep a good heart, and I’ll do the best I can. Mrs. Crupp,” said Mrs. Crupp, nodding encouragement, “say die, sir! If She doesn’t smile upon you it will be a many as will. You’re a young gentleman, who must be encouraged. Mr. Copperfield, and you must keep on, sir.”

Mrs. Crupp always called me Mr. Copperfield; firstly, no doubt, because I was not a gentleman, and secondly, I was inclined to think, in the distinct association with a washing-day.

“What makes you suppose there is a lady in the case, Mrs. Crupp?” I said.

“Mr. Copperfield,” said Mrs. Crupp, “I’ve a great deal of feeling. I’m a mother myself, and for some time Mrs. Crupp could not bear to see me in your company, without your name being devouted to any improper use. She take in my presence.

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I VISIT TRADDLES.

...now found summons I can care for! 'twas eat enough, sir, nor yet drink."
what you found your supposition on, said I.
old Mrs. Crupp, in a tone approaching
"I've laundred other young gentles yourself. A young gentleman may be useful of himself, or he may be under- himself. He may brush his hair too unregular. He may wear his boots age for him, or much too small. That as the young gentleman has his order formed. But let him go to which may, sir, there's a young lady in both
pp shook her head in such a determiner, that I had not an inch of 'vantage-
but the gentleman which died here before," said Mrs. Crupp, "that fell in love urmait—and had his waistcoats took though much swelled by drinking."
"Humph," said I. "I must beg you not to young lady in my case with a bramait, of that sort, if you please."
"Humperful," returned Mrs. Crupp, "I'm myself, and not likely. I ask your part intrude. I should never wish to lecture. I were not welcome. But you are a man, Mr. Copperfull, and my advice—cheer up, sir, to keep a good heart, or your own wail. If you was to take g, sir," said Mrs. Crupp, "if you was skittles, now, which is healthy, you divert your mind, and do you good."
"As words, Mrs. Crupp, affecting to be of the brandy—which was all gone— with a majestic courtesy, and retired. re disappeared into the gloom of the counsel certainly presented itself to my light of a slight liberty on Mrs. Crupp's at the same time, I was content to remain another point of view, as a word to the warning in future to keep my secret

CHAPTER XXVII.

Tommy Traddles have been in consequence of Mrs. Tom, and, perhaps, for no better reason there was a certain similarity in the skittles and Traddles, that it my head, next day, to go and look after. The time he had mentioned was more and he lived in a little street near the College at Camden Town, which was tenant, as one of our clerks who direction informed me, by gentlemen who bought live donkeys, and made exam those quadrupeds in their private. Having obtained from this clerk & the academic grove in question, I set out, the same afternoon, to visit my old school-fellow.

I found that the street was not as desirable a one as I could have wished it to be, for the sake of Traddles. The inhabitants appeared to have a propensity to throw any little trifles they were not in want of, into the road: which not only made it rank and sloppily, but unduly too, on account of the cabbage-leaves. The refuse was not wholly vegetable either, for I myself saw a shoe, a doubled-up saucepan, a black bonnet, and an umbrella, in various stages of decomposition, as I was looking out for the number I wanted.

The general air of the place reminded me forcibly of the days when I lived with Mr. and Mrs. Micawber. An indescribable character of faded gentility that attached to the house I sought, and made it unlike all the other houses in the street—though they were all built on one monotonous pattern, and looked like the early copies of a blundering boy who was learning to make houses, and had not yet got out of his cramped brick-and-mortar potholes—reminded me still more of Mr. and Mrs. Micawber. Happening to arrive at the door as it was opened to the afternoon milkman, I was reminded of Mr. and Mrs. Micawber more forcibly yet.

"Now," said the milkman to a very youthful servant girl. "Has that there little bill of mine been heard on?"
"Oh, master says he'll attend to it immediate," was the reply.

"Because," said the milkman, going on as if he had received no answer, and speaking, as I judged from his tone, rather for the edification of somebody within the house, than of the youthful servant—an impression which was strengthened by his manner of glaring down the passage—"because that there little bill has been running so long, that I begin to believe it's run away altogether, and never was be heard of. Now, I'm not a going to stand it, you know," said the milkman, still throwing his voice into the house, and glaring down the passage.

As to his dealing in the mild article of milk, by-the-bye, there never was a greater anomaly. His deportment would have been fierce in a butcher or a brandy-merchant.

The voice of the youthful servant became faint, but she seemed to me, from the action of her lips, again to murmur that it would be attended to immediate.

"I tell you what," said the milkman, looking hard at her for the first time, and taking her by the chin, "are you fond of milk?"
"Yes, I likes it," she replied.
"Good," said the milkman. "Then you won't have none to-morrow. D'yeh hear? Not a fragment of milk you won't have to-morrow."

I thought she seemed, upon the whole, relieved, by the prospect of having any to-day. The milkman, after shaking his head at her, darkly, released her chin, and with anything rather than good-will opened his can, and deposited the
usual quantity in the family jug. This done, he went away, muttering, and uttered the cry of his trade next door, in a vindictive shrill.

"Does Mr. Traddles live here?" I then inquired.

A mysterious voice from the end of the passage replied: "Yes." Upon which the youthful servant replied: "Yes."

"Is he at home?" said I.

Again the mysterious voice replied in the affirmative, and again the servant echoed it. Upon this, I walked in, and in pursuance of the servant's directions walked up-stairs; conscious, as I passed the back parlor-door, that I was surveyed by a mysterious eye, probably belonging to the mysterious voice.

When I got to the top of the stairs—the house was only a story high above the ground floor—Traddles was on the landing to meet me. He was delighted to see me, and gave me welcome, with great heartiness, to his little room. It was in the front of the house, and extremely neat, though sparsely furnished. It was his only room, I saw; for there was a sofa, bedstead in it, and his blacking-brushes and blacking were among his books—on the top shelf, behind a dictionary. His table was covered with papers, and he was hard at work in an old coat. I looked at nothing, that I know of, but saw everything, even to the prospect of a church upon his china inkstand, as I sat down—and this, too, was a faculty confirmed in me in the old Micawber times. Various ingenious arrangements he had made, for the disguise of his chest of drawers, and the accommodation of his hats, his shaving-glass, and so forth, particularly impressed themselves upon me, as evidences of the same Traddles who used to make models of elephants' dens in writing-paper to put files in; and to comfort himself under ill usage, with the memorable works of art I have so often mentioned.

In a corner of the room was something neatly covered up with a large white cloth. I could not make out what that was.

"Traddles," said I, shaking hands with him again, after I had sat down, "I am delighted to see you."

"I am delighted to see you, Copperfield," he returned. "I am very glad indeed to see you. It was because I was thoroughly glad to see you when we met in Ely Place, and was sure you were thoroughly glad to see me, that I gave you this address instead of my address at chambers."

"Oh! You have chambers?" said I.

"Why, I have the fourth of a room and a passage, and the fourth of a clerk," returned Traddles. "Three others and myself unite to have a set of chambers—to look business-like—and we quarter the clerk too. Half-a-crown a week he costs me."

His simple character and good temper, and something of his old unlucky fortune also, I thought, smiled at me in the smile with which he made this explanation.

"It's not because I have the least pride, Copperfield, you understand," said Traddles, "don't usually give my address here. I account of those who come to me, who like to come here. For myself, I am in the way on in the world against difficulties would be ridiculous if I made a pretense of anything else."

"You are reading for the bar, Mr. Wickfield?" said I.

"Why, yes," said Traddles, rubbing his eyes slowly over one another, "I am reading for the bar. The fact is, I have just begun to work, on the bar, after rather a long delay. It's since I was articled, but the payment of the dregs pounds was a great pull. A good man, I said Traddles, with a wink, as if he knew all about it."

"Do you know what I can't help?" said I, smiling.

"No," said he.

"That sky-blue suit you used to wear to the bar."

"Lord, to be sure!" cried Traddles.

"Tight in the arms and legs, you know! Well! Those were happy times, they were!"

"I think our schoolmaster might make you happier, without doing any harm, if I acknowledge," I returned.

"Perhaps he might," said Traddles. "Dear me, there was a good deal of fun Do you remember the nights in the old Inn? When we used to have the supper? You used to tell the stories. Ha, ha, ha! Do you remember when I got exiled about Mr. Mell? Old Crankle! I shall see him again, too!"

"He was a brute to you, Traddles," I said, digesting; for his good humor made me think of him. He had seen him beaten but yesterday."

"Do you think so?" he returned. "Really? Perhaps he was, rather. I never examined him, Old Crankle!"

"You were brought up by an uncle," said I.

"Of course I was!" said Traddles. "I was always going to write to him. He didn't, did he? Ha, ha, ha! Yes, I had. He died soon after I left school."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. He was a retired—what do you call it?—draper—cloth-merchant—and had many children. But he didn't like me when I went there."

"Do you really mean that?" I said, so composed, that I fancied he must have another meaning.

"Oh dear yes, Copperfield! I replied. "It was an unfortunate misfortune, but he didn't like me at all. He said I was all what he expected, and so he was."

"And what did you do?" I asked.

"I didn't do anything in particular, Traddles. I lived with them, while
TRADDLE'S HISTORY.

1 the world, until his gout unfortunately struck his stomach—and so he died, and so she died, a young man, and so I wasn't provided

My, you get nothing, Traddles, after all!" said dear, yes I," said Traddles. "I got fifty is. I had never been brought up to any

He, began, with the assist-

I. He had not been there with me; all the

He don't matter," said Traddles. "I began,

He, too, to become acquainted with a person

I Traddles seemed to expect that I should to this as a matter of course, I nodded; he went on, with the same sprightly patience to find no better expression—as before.

He, by little and little, and not living high, I had to scrape up the hundred pounds at

said Traddles: "and, thank Heaven that's

Traddles, wincing again as if he had had his tooth out, "a pull. I am living by the

work I have mentioned, still, and I hope, for these days, to get connected with some

carer: which would almost be the making of fortune. Now, Copperfield, you are so

what you used to be, with that agreeable and it's so pleasant to see you, that I sha'n't

anything. Therefore you must know that

"Engaged! Oh Doras!"

She is a curate's daughter," said Traddles, ten, down in Devonshire. Yes!" For

was quite, involuntarily, at the prospect on stand. "That's the church! You come here, to the left, out of this gate," tracing or along the Inkstand, "and exactly where this pen, there stands the house-facing, therefore, towards the church."

Delight with which he entered into these particulars, did not fully present itself to me until afterwards; for my selfish thoughts were making a ground-plan of Mr. Spenlow's house and garden at the same moment.

"She is such a dear girl!" said Traddles: "a little older than me, but the dearest girl! I told you I was going out of town? I have been down there. I walked there, and I walked back, and I had the most delightful time! I dare say ours is likely to be a rather long engagement, but our motto is 'Wait and hope!' We always say that. 'Wait and hope,' we always say. And she would wait, Copperfield, till she was sixty—any age you can mention—for me!"

Traddles rose from his chair, and, with a triumphant smile, put his hand upon the white cloth I had observed.

"However," he said, "it's not that we haven't made a beginning towards housekeeping. No, no; we have begun. We must get on by degrees, but we have begun. Here,"' drawing the cloth off with great pride and care, "are two pieces of furniture to commence with. This flower-pot and stand, she bought herself. You put that in a parlor-window," said Traddles, falling a little back from it to survey it with the greater admiration, "with a plant in it, and—and there you are! This little round table with the marble top (it's two feet ten in circumference), I bought. You want to lay a book down, you know, or somebody comes to see you or your wife, and wants a place to stand a cup of tea upon, and—and there you are again!" said Traddles. "It's an admirable piece of workmanship—firm as a rock!"

I praised them both, highly, and Traddles replaced the covering as carefully as he had removed it.

"It's not a great deal towards the furnishing," said Traddles, "but it's something. The tablecloths, and pillow-cases, and articles of that kind, are what discourage me most, Copperfield. So does the ironmongery—candle-boxes, and grid-iron, and that sort of necessaries—because those things tell, and mount up. However, 'wait and hope!' And I assure you she's the dearest girl!"

"I am quite certain of it," said I.

"In the meantime," said Traddles, coming back to his chair; "and this is the end of my prosing about myself, I get on as well as I can. I don't make much, but I don't spend much. In general, I board with the people down-stairs, who are very agreeable people indeed. Both Mr. and Mrs. Micawber have seen a good deal of life, and are excellent company."

"My dear Traddles!" I quickly exclaimed.

"What are you talking about?"

Traddles looked at me, as if he wondered what I was talking about.

"Mr. and Mrs. Micawber!" I repeated.

"Why, I am intimately acquainted with them!"

An opportune double knock at the door, which I knew well from old experience in Windsor Terrace, and which nobody but Mr. Micawber
could ever have knocked at that door, resolved any doubt in my mind as to their being my old friends. I begged Traddles to ask his landlord to walk up. Traddles accordingly did so, over the banister; and Mr. Micawber not a bit changed—his tights, his stick, his shirt-collars, and his eye-glasses, all the same as ever—came into the room with a genial and youthful air.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Traddles," said Mr. Micawber, with the old roll in his voice, as he checked himself in humming a soft tune. "I was not aware that there was any individual, alien to this tenement, in your sanctum."

Mr. Micawber slightly bowed to me, and pulled up his shirt-collars.

"How do you do, Mr. Micawber?" said I.

"Sir," said Mr. Micawber, "you are exceedingly obliging. I am in status quo."

"And Mrs. Micawber?" I pursued.

"Sir," said Mr. Micawber, "she is also, thank God, in status quo."

"And the children, Mr. Micawber?"

"Sir," said Mr. Micawber, "I rejoice to reply that they are, likewise, in the enjoyment of sublimity."

All this time, Mr. Micawber had not known me. At least, though he had stood face to face with me. But now seeing me smile, he examined my features with more attention, fell back, cried, "Is it possible! Have I the pleasure of again beholding Copperfield, and shook me by both hands with the utmost favor."

"Good Heaven, Mr. Traddles!" said Mr. Micawber, "to think that I should find you acquainted with the friend of my youth, the companion of earlier days! My dear!" calling over the banisters to Mrs. Micawber, while Traddles looked (with reason) not a little amazed at this description of me. "Here is a gentleman in Mr. Traddles's apartment, whom he wishes to have the pleasure of presenting to you, my love!"

Mr. Micawber immediately reappeared, and shook hands with me again.

"And how is our good friend the Doctor, Copperfield?" said Mr. Micawber, "and all the circle at Canterbury?"

"I have none but good accounts of them," said I.

"I am most delighted to hear it," said Mr. Micawber. "It was at Canterbury where we last met. Within the shadow, I may figuratively say, of that religious edifice, immortalized by Chaucer, which was anciently the resort of Pilgrims from the remotest corners of—in short," said Mr. Micawber, "in the immediate neighborhood of the Cathedral."

I replied that it was. Mr. Micawber continued talking as volubly as he could; but not, I thought, without showing, by some marks of concern in his countenance, that he was sensible of sounds in the next room, as of Mrs. Micawber washing her hands, and hurriedly opening and shutting drawers that were messy in their action.

"You find us, Copperfield," said Mr. Micaw-
silems—if I may be allowed the expres- 
which gleams—in your friend Traddles,
endurable comfort. With a washerwoman 
exposes hard-bake for sale in her par-
dwelling next door, and a Bow-street 
ding over the way, you may imagine 
isiety is a source of consolation to my. 
Mrs. Micawber. I am at present, my 
richest, engaged in the sale of corn upon 
It is not an avocation of a remis-
scription—in other words, it does not 
some temporary embarrassments of a 
ture have been the consequence. I 
er, delighted to add that I have now an 
prospect of something turning up (I 
liberty to say in what direction), which 
enable me to provide, permanently, 
self and for your friend Traddles, in 
e an unaffected interest. You may, 
prepared to hear that Mrs. Micawber 
of health which renders it not wholly 
that an addition may be ultimately 
ose pledges of affection which—in 
e infantile group. Mrs. Micawber’s 
been so good as to express their dis- 
at this state of things. I have merely 
that I am not aware it is any business 
d that I repel that exhibition of feel-
corn, and with defiance!" 
awber then shook hands with me 
left me.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

II. MICAWBER’S GAUNTLET.

The day arrived on which I was to en-
newly-found old friends, I lived prim-
dora and coffee. In my love-lorn con-
appetite languished; and I was glad 
felt as though it would have been an 
ily towards Dora to have a natural 
dinner. The quantity of walking 
ook, was not in this respect attended 
ual consequence, as the disappoint- 
teracted the fresh air. I have my 
, founded on the sence experience ac-
s period of my life, whether a sound 
of animal food can develop itself free-
man subject which is always in to-
tight boots. I think the extremities 
be at peace before the stomach will 
elf with vigor.

occasion of this domestic little party, I 
et my former extensive preparations, 
vised a pair of soles, a small leg of 
 a pigeon-pie. Mrs. Crupp broke out 
on my first bashful hint in refer-
cooking of the fish and joint, and said, 
ified sense of injury, "No! No, sir! 
ot ask me such a thing, for you are 
tained with me than to suppose me 
doing what I cannot do with ampi 
to my own feelings!" But, in the 
romise was effected; and Mrs. Crupp 
sented to achieve this feat, on condition that 
I dined from home for a fortnight afterwards.

And here I may remark, that what I under-
went from Mrs. Crupp, in consequence of the 
ter—annoy she established over me, was dreadful. I 
ever was so much afraid of any one. We made a 
compromise of everything. If I hesitated, she 
was taken with that wonderful disorder which 
was always in ambush in her system, ready, 
at the shortest notice, to prey upon her vitals. If 
I rang the bell impatiently, after half-a-dozen un-
vailing modest pulls, and she appeared at last— 
which was not by any means to be relied upon— 
she would appear with a reproachful aspect, sink 
lessness on a chair near the door, lay her hand 
upon her nankeen bosom, and become so ill, that 
I was glad, at any sacrifice of brandy or anything 
else, to get rid of her. If I objected to having my 
bed made at five o’clock in the afternoon—which 
I do still think an uncomfortable arrangement— 
one motion of her hand towards the same nankeen 
region of wounded sensibility was enough to 
make me suffer an apology. In short, I would 
have done anything in an honorable way rather 
than give Mrs. Crupp offence; and she was the 
terror of my life.

I bought a second-hand dumb-waiter for this 
dinner-party, in preference to re-engaging the 
handy young man; against whom I had con-
ceived a prejudice, in consequence of meeting 
him in the Strand, one Sunday morning, in a 
waistcoat remarkably like one of mine, which had 
been missing since the former occasion. The 
"young gal" was re-engaged; but on the stipula-
tion that she should only bring in the dishes, 
and then withdraw to the landing-place, beyond 
the outer door; where a habit of sniffing she had 
contracted would be lost upon the guests, and 
where her retiring on the plates would be a phyc-
ical impossibility.

Having laid in the materials for a bowl of 
punch, to be compounded by Mr. Micawber; hav-
ing provided a bottle of lavender-water, two wax-
candies, a paper of mixed pins, and a plancement, 
to assist Mrs. Micawber in her toilet, at my dress-
ing-table; having also caused the fire in my bed-
room to be lighted for Mrs. Micawber’s conveni-
ce; and having laid the cloth with my own 
hand, I awaited the result with composure.

At the appointed time, my three visitors 
arrived together. Mr. Micawber with more shirt-
collar than usual, and a new ribbon to his eye-
glass; Mrs. Micawber with her cap in a whit-
brown paper parcel; Traddles carrying the parcel, 
and supporting Mrs. Micawber on his arm. They 
were all delighted with my residence. When I 
conducted Mrs. Micawber to my dressing-table, 
and she saw the scale on which it was prepared 
for her, she was in such raptures, that she called 
Mr. Micawber to come in and look.

"My dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, 
"this is luxurious. This is a way of life which 
reminds me of that period when I was myself in 
state of celibacy, and Mrs. Micawber had not
yet been solicited to plight her faith at the Hymeneal altar.”

“‘He means, solicited by him, Mr. Copperfield,’ said Mrs. Micawber, archly. ‘He cannot answer for others.’

“My dear!” returned Mr. Micawber with sudden seriousness. I have no desire to answer for others. I am too well aware that when, in the inauspicious presence of Fate, you were micawbered for me, it is possible you may have been reserved for one destined, after a protracted struggle, at length to fall a victim to pecuniary involvements of a complicated nature. I understand your allusion, my love. I regret it, but I can bear it.”

“Micawber!” exclaimed Mrs. Micawber, in tears. “Have I deserved this? I, who never have deserted you; who never did desert you, Micawber!”

“My love,” said Mr. Micawber, much affected, “you will forgive, and our old and tried friend, Copperfield will, I am sure, forgive, the momentary laceration of a wounded spirit, made sensitive by a recent collision, with the Minion of Power—in other words, with a ribald Turncock attached to the waterworks—and will pity, not condemn, its excesses.”

Mr. Micawber then embraced Mrs. Micawber, and pressed my hand, leaving me to take from him the broken assurance that his domestic supply of water had been cut off that afternoon, in consequence of default in the payment of the company’s rates.

To divert his thoughts from this melancholy subject, I informed Mr. Micawber that I relied upon him for a bowl of punch, and led him to the lemon. His recent despondency, not to say despair, was gone in a moment. I never saw a man so thoroughly enjoy himself amid the fragrance of lemon-peel and sugar, the odor of burning rum, and the steam of boiling water, as Mr. Micawber did that afternoon. It was wonderful to see his face shining at us out of a thin cloud of these delicious fumes, as he stirred, and inhaled, and tasted, and looked as if he were making, instead of punch, a fortune for his family down to the latest posterity. As to Mrs. Micawber, I don’t know whether it was the effect of the cap, or the lavender-water, or the pins, or the fire, or the wax-candies, but she came out of my room, comparatively speaking, lovely. And I was never gayer than that excellent woman.

I suppose—i never ventured to inquire, but I suppose—that Mrs. Crupp, after frying the soles, was taken ill. Because she broke down at that point. The leg of mutton came up very red within, and very pale without: besides having a foreign substance of a gritty nature sprinkled over it, as if it had had a fall into the ashes of that remarkable kitchen fire-place. But we were not in a condition to judge of this fact from the appearance of the gravy, forasmuch as the “young gals” had dropped it all upon the stairs—where it remained, by-the-bye, in a long train, until it was worn out. The pigeon-pie was not bad, but it was a delicious pie: the crust being pointed head, phrenologically specked and bunked, with nothing particular. In short, the banquet was one that I should have been quite out of the failure, I mean, for I was always about Done—if I had not been regretful in others, to make a suggestion of a good-natured humor of my company, as it were, micawbered Done, to—

“My dear friend, Copperfield,” said Mr. Micawber, “accidents will occur in all families; and in families not that pervading influence which somewhat enhances the—a—I would say, a sort of Woman, in the lofty sense. They may be expected to be borne with philosophy. If you will take the liberty of remarking a few comestibles better, in their Devil, and that I believe, with a little labor, we could accomplish a good young person in attendance could perform, I would put it to you, that the fortune may be easily repaired.”

There was a gridiron in the parlour of the house. As I did not understand, as I was not required to understand, what the man’s business was, I did not know that it was essential to his comfort to have a gridiron at hand, we had slices enough done to begin with, our sleeves still tucked up, and more slices sputtering and blazing in our attention divided between our plates and the mutton then prepared.

What with the novelty of this excellence of it, the bustle of it, the fun of it, the fire up to look after it, the frequent and unceasing dispose of it as the crisp slices came iron hot and hot, the being so busied with the fire, so amused, and in fine, the tempting noise and savour, we were all in a state of mutual affection, and the mutton to the bone. My own was eaten miraculously. I am ashamed but I really believe I forgot Done while. I am satisfied that Mr. and Mrs. Copperfield could not have enjoyed the feast had sold a bed to provide it. That was heartily, almost the whole time, a worked. Indeed, we all did, all at once, but dare say there was no one more at the feast, when I was aware of a sign, in the room, and my eyes enacted
"If you'll excuse me, sir, I don't think I shall see him first."
"In case you do," said I, "pray say that I am sorry he was not here to-day, as an old school-fellow of his was here."
"Indeed, sir!" and he divided a bow between me and Traddles, with a glance at the latter.

He was moving softly to the door, when, in a forlorn hope of saying something naturally—which I never could, to this man—I said:
"Oh! Littimer!"
"Sir!"
"Did you remain long at Yarmouth, that time?"
"Not particularly so, sir."
"You saw the boat completed?"
"Yes, sir. I remained behind on purpose to see the boat completed."
"I know it!" He raised his eyes to mine respectfully. "Mr. Steerforth has not seen it yet, I suppose?"
"I really can't say, sir. I think—but I really can't say, sir. I wish you good night, sir."

He comprehended everybody present, in the respectful bow with which he followed these words, and disappeared. My visitors seemed to breathe more freely when he was gone; but my own relief was very great, for besides the constraint, arising from that extraordinary sense of being at a disadvantage which I always had in this man's presence, my conscience had embarrassed me with whispers that I had mistrusted his master, and I could not repress a vague uneasy dread that he might find it out. How was it, having so little in reality to conceal, that I always did feel as if this man were finding me out?

Mr. Micawber roused me from this reflection, which was blended with a certain remorseful apprehension of seeing Steerforth himself, by bestowing many encomiums on the absent Littimer as a most respectable fellow, and a thoroughly admirable servant. Mr. Micawber, I may remark, had taken his full share of the general bow, and had received it with infinite condescension.

"But punch, my dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, tasting it, "like time and tide, wait for no man. Ah! It is at the present moment in high flavor. My love, will you give me your opinion?"

Mrs. Micawber pronounced it excellent.

"Then I will drink," said Mr. Micawber, "if my friend Copperfield will permit me to take that social liberty, to the days when my friend Copperfield and myself were younger, and fought our way in the world side by side. I may say, of myself and Copperfield, in words we have sung together before now, that"

"We two" has run about the brass
And pulled the gowsans fine

—in a figurative point of view—on several occasions. I am not exactly aware," said Mr. Micawber, with the old roll in his voice, and the old.
Indescribable air of saying something genteel, "what gowans may be, but I have no doubt that Copperfield and myself would frequently have taken a pull at them, if it had been feasible."

Mr. Micawber, at the then present moment, took a pull at his punch. "So we all did!" Traddles evidently lost in wondering at what distant time Mr. Micawber and I could have been comrades in the battle of the world.

"Ahem!" said Mr. Micawber, clearing his throat, and warming with the punch and with the fire. "My dear, another glass?"

"I should much like to have your opinion on Mr. Micawber's prospects. For corn," said Mrs. Micawber argumentatively, "as I have repeatedly said to Mr. Micawber, may be gentlemen, but it is not remunerative. Commission to the extent of two and ninepence in a fortnight cannot, however, united our ideas, be considered remunerative."

We were all agreed upon that.

"Then," said Mrs. Micawber, who prized herself on taking a clear view of things, and keeping Mr. Micawber straight by her woman's wisdom, when he might otherwise go a little crooked, "then I ask myself this question. If corn is not to be relied upon, what is? Are coals to be relied upon? Not at all. We have turned our attention to that experiment, on the suggestion of my family, and we find it fallacious."

Mr. Micawber, leaning back in his chair with his hands in his pockets, eyed us aside, and nodded his head, as much as to say that the case was very clearly put.

"The articles of corn and coals," said Mrs. Micawber, still more argumentatively, "being equally out of the question, Mr. Copperfield, I naturally look round the world, and say, 'What is there in which a person of Mr. Micawber's talent is likely to succeed?' And I exclude the doing anything on commission, because commission is not a certainty. What is best suited to a person of Mr. Micawber's peculiar temperament is, I am convinced, a certainty."

Traddles and I both expressed, by a feeling murmur, that this great discovery was no doubt true of Mr. Micawber, and that it did him much credit.

"I will not conceal from you, my dear Mr. Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "that I have long felt the Brewing business to be particularly adapted to Mr. Micawber. Look at Barclay and Perkins! Look at Truman, Hambury, and Buxton! It is on that extensive footing that Mr. Micawber, I know from my own knowledge of him, is calculated to shine; and the profits, I am told, are ex-nom-mous! But if Mr. Micawber cannot get into those firms—which decline to answer his letters, when he offers his services even in an inferior capacity—what is dwelling upon that idea? None. I have a conviction that Mr. Micawber's manners peculiarly qualify him for the Banking business. I may argue with myself, that if I had a deposit at a bank, the manners of Mr. Micawber, as regards that banking-house, would inspire confidence and must extend the connexion. But various banking-houses refuse to avail themselves of Mr. Micawber's abilities, or receive of him their money in Mr. Micawber's hands, which may be the use of that? Again I contend that farther advanced than we were before."

I shook my head, and said, "No Traddles also shook his head, and said, "Ah!"

"What do I deduce from this?" Mrs. Micawber went on to say, still with the same sinking in a case incident. "What is the conclusion dear Mr. Copperfield, to which I am brought? Am I wrong in saying it is we must live!"

I answered, "Not at all!" and Traddles answered, "Not at all!" and I found myself sagely adding, alone, that a person either live or die.

"Just so," returned Mrs. Micawber precisely that. And the fact is, my dear Copperfield, that we can not live with a thing widely different from existing circumstances of life, and not merely turning up. Now I am convinced, and this I have pointed out to Mr. Micawber, that if circumstances of time, of that kind cannot be turned up, that is necessity, that we must, I presume, assist to turn them up. I may profit by them, but I have formed that opinion."

Both Traddles and I applauded it highly.

"Very well," said Mrs. Micawber, "what do I recommend? Here is Mr. Micawber with a variety of qualifications—with talent—"

"Really, my dear," said Mr. Micawber, "Pray, my dear, allow me to conclude this, with you. Mr. Micawber, with a variety of qualifications—with great talent—I should say, with a talent that may be the partiality of a wife."

Traddles and I both murmured "No."

"And here is Mr. Micawber without a position on employment. Where responsibility rests? Clearly on nobody would make a task so disagreeable."

"I am not sure," said Mrs. Micawber, "that the young man's talents are not equal to the work. We shall see. Judging by the past, I should think that Mr. Micawber is a gentleman with a future, if he will only take the trouble to have a present."

"I think he will," said Mr. Micawber, "I think he will, if he will only make up his mind to work."

"Who could want for work?" said Mrs. Micawber. "He has work in plenty."

"I mean to have work," said Mr. Micawber. "I mean to have work; and I mean to work it."
Mrs. Micawber suggests an investment.

"I defy challenge society to set it right. It appears to me, my dear Mr. Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, forcibly, "that what Mr. Micawber has to do, is to throw down the gauntlet to society, if I may, in effect, "Show me who will take that," let the party immediately step forward." I ventured to ask Mrs. Micawber how this was to be done.

"By advertising," said Mrs. Micawber—"in the papers. It appears to me, that what Mr. Micawber has to do, is to take up his personal name, and make it his business to become known as a man of business in society, and to do that, he must offer something in the way of a reward. Thus, he must employ me, on remunerative terms, to advertise him, post-paid, to W. M., Post-Office, Kent Town.'"

"This idea of Mrs. Micawber's, my dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, making his shirt-collar flap in front of his chin, and glancing at me sideways, "Is, in fact, the leap to which I found, when I last had the pleasure of seeing you.

"Advertising is rather expensive," Trencher, maliciously.

"Exactly so!" said Mrs. Micawber, preserving the same logical air. "Quite true, my dear Mr. Copperfield! I have made the identical observations to Mr. Micawber. It is for that reason especially, that I think Mr. Micawber ought (as I have already said, in justice to himself, and in justice to society) to raise a certain sum of money—on a bill!"

Mr. Micawber, leaning back in his chair, tilted his eye-glass, and cast his eyes up at the ceiling; but I thought him observant of Traddles, who was looking at the fire.

"If no member of my family," said Mrs. Micawber, "is possessed of sufficient natural feeling to negotiate that bill—I believe there is a better term—never to express what I mean—"

"Mr. Micawber, with his eyes still cast up to the ceiling, suggested "Discount."

"To discount that bill," said Mrs. Micawber, "then my opinion is that Mr. Micawber should go into the City, should take that bill into the County, and should dispose of it for what he can get. If the individuals in the Money Market oblige Mr. Micawber to sustain a great sacrifice, that is between themselves and their consciences. I view it, steadily, as an investment. I recommend Mr. Micawber, my dear Mr. Copperfield, to do the same; to regard it as an investment which is sure of return, and to make a sacrifice to his own.

I felt, but I am sure I don't know why, that this was self-denying and devoted in Mrs. Micawber, and I uttered a murmur to that effect. Traddles, who took his tone from me, did likewise, still looking at the fire.

"I will not," said Mrs. Micawber, finishing her punch, and gathering her scarf about her shoulders, preparatory to her withdrawal to my bed-room; "I will not promise these remarks on the subject of Mr. Micawber's pecuniary affairs. At your fireside, my dear Mr. Copperfield, and in the presence of Mr. Traddles, who, though not so old a friend, is quite one of ourselves, I could not refrain from making you acquainted with the course I advise Mr. Micawber to take. I feel that the time is arrived when Mr. Micawber should assert himself and—I will add—assert himself, and it appears to me that these are the means. I am aware that I am merely a female, and that a masculine judgment is usually considered more competent to the discussion of such questions; still I must not forget that, when I lived at home with my papa and mamma, my papa was in the habit of saying, 'Emma's form is fragile, but her grasp of a subject is inferior to none.' That my papa was too partial, I well know; but that he was an observant character in some degree, my duty and my reason equally forbid me to doubt.

With these words, and resisting our entreaties that she would grace the remainder of the punch with her presence, Mrs. Micawber retired to my bed-room. And really I felt that she was a noble woman—the sort of woman who might have been a Roman matron and done all manner of heroic things, in times of public trouble.

In the fervor of this impression, I congratulated Mr. Micawber on the treasure he possessed. S0 did Traddles. Mr. Micawber extended his hand to each of us in succession, and then covered his face with his pocket-handkerchief, which I think had more suffn upon it than he was aware of. He then returned to the punch, in the highest state of exhilaration.

He was full of eloquence. He gave us to understand that in our children we lived again, and that, under the pressure of pecuniary difficulties, any accession to their number was doubly welcome. He said that Mrs. Micawber had latterly had her doubts on this point, but that he had dispelled them, and reassured her. As to her family, they were totally unworthy of her, and their sentiments were utterly indifferent to him, and they—"I quote his own expression—go to the Devil.

Mr. Micawber then delivered a warm eulogy on Traddles. He said Traddles's was a character, to the steady virtues of which he (Mr. Micawber) could lay no claim, but which, he thanked Heaven, he could admire. He feelingly alluded to the young lady, unknown, whom Traddles had honored with his affection, and who had reciprocated that affection by honoring and blessing Traddles with her affection. Mr. Micawber pledged her. So did I. Traddles thanked us both, by saying, with a simplicity and honesty I had sense enough to be quite charmed with, "I am very much obliged to you indeed. And I do assure you, she's the dearest girl!"

Mr. Micawber took an early opportunity, after that, of hinting with the utmost delicacy and cera-
mony, at the state of my affections. Nothing but the serious assurance of my friend Copperfield to the contrary, he observed, could deprive him of the impression that his friend Copperfield loved and was beloved. After feeling very hot and uncomfortable for some time, and after a good deal of blushing, stammering, and denying, I said, having my glass in my hand, "Well! I would give them D."

which so excited and gratified Mr. Micawber, that he ran with a glass of punch into my bed-room, in order that Mrs. Micawber might drink D., who drank it with enthusiasm, crying from within, in a shrill voice, "Hear! hear! My dear Mr. Copperfield, I am delighted. Hear! and tapping at the wall, by way of applause.

Our conversation, afterwards, took a more worldly turn; Mr. Micawber telling us that he found Camden Town inconvenient, and that the first thing he contemplated doing, when the advertisement should have been the cause of something satisfactory turning up, was to move. He mentioned a terrace at the western end of Oxford Street, fronting Hyde Park, on which he had always had his eye, but which he did not expect to attain immediately, as it would require a large establishment. There would probably be an interval, he explained, in which he should content himself with the upper part of a house, over some respectable place of business—say in Piccadilly,—which would be a cheerful situation for Mrs. Micawber; and where, by throwing out a bow window, or carrying up the roof another story, or making some little alterations of that sort, they might live, comfortably and reputedly, for a few years. Whatever was reserved for him, he expressly said, or wherever his abode might be, we might rely on this—there would always be a room for Traddles, and a knife and fork for me. We acknowledged his kindness; and he begged us to forgive his having launched into these practical and business-like details, and to excuse it as natural in one who was making entirely new arrangements in life.

Mrs. Micawber, tapping at the wall again, to know if tea were ready, broke up this particular phase of our friendly conversation. She made tea for us in a most agreeable manner; and, whenever I went near her, in handing about the teacups and bread-and-butter, asked me, in a whisper, whether D. was fair, or dark, or whether she was short, or tall; or something of that kind; which I think I liked. After tea, we discussed a variety of topics before the fire; and Mrs. Micawber was good enough to sing us (in a small, thin, flat voice, which I remembered to have considered, when I first knew her, the very table-voic of acoustics) the favorite ballads of "The Dashing White Serjeant," and "Little Taffy." For both of these songs Mrs. Micawber had been famous when she lived at home with her papa and mamma. Mr. Micawber told us, that when he heard her sing the first one, on the first occasion of his seeing her beneath the parental roof, she had attracted his attention in an extraordinary degree; but that when it came to Little Taffy, he had resolved to win that woman or perish in the attempt.

It was between ten and eleven o'clock when Mrs. Micawber rose to replace her cap in the whitish-brown paper parcel, and to put on her bonnet. Mr. Micawber took the opportunity of Traddles putting on his great-coat, to slip a note into my hand, with a whispered request that I would read it at my leisure. I also took the opportunity of my holding a candle over the letters to light them down, when Mr. Micawber was going, first leading Mrs. Micawber, and Traddles was following with the cap, to detain Traddles a moment on the top of the stairs.

"Traddles," said I, "Mr. Micawber did not mean any harm, poor fellow: but, if I were you, I wouldn't lend him anything."

"My dear Copperfield," returned Traddles, smiling, "I haven't got anything to lend."

"You have got a name, you know," said I.

"Oh! You can't think something to lend," returned Traddles, with a thoughtful look.

"Certainly.""Oh!" said Traddles. "Yes, to be sure! I am very much obliged to you, Copperfield; but I am afraid I have lent him that already."

"For the bill that is to be a certain investment?" I inquired.

"No," said Traddles. "Not for that one. This is the first I have heard of that one. I have been thinking that he will most likely propose that one, on the way home. Mine's another."

"I hope there will be nothing wrong about it," said I.

"I hope not," said Traddles. "I shouldn't think not, though, because he told me, only the other day, that it was provided for. That was Mr. Micawber's expression. 'Provided for.'"

Mr. Micawber looking up at this juncture to where we were standing, I had only time to express my caution. Traddles thanked me, and descended. But I was much afraid, when I observed the good-natured manner in which he went down with the cap in his hand, and gave Mrs. Micawber his arm that he would be carried into the Money Market neck and heels.

I returned to myireside, and was met, half gravely and half laughing, on the chance of Mr. Micawber and the old relations between us, when I heard a quick step ascending the stairs.

At first, I thought it was Traddles coming back for something Mrs. Micawber had left behind; but as the step approached, I knew it, and my heart beat high, and the blood rush to my face, for it was Steerforth's.

I was never unmindful of Agnes, and she never left that sanctuary in my thoughts—if I may call it so—where I had placed her from the first. But when he entered, and stood before me with his hand out, the darkness that had fallen on his changed to light, and I felt confounded and ashamed of having doubted one I loved so heartily. I loved her none the less; I thought of her as the same bewitching, gentle angels in my life.
STEERFORTH ARRIVES.

I myself, not her, with having done him
and I would have made him any stone-
had known what to make, and how to

Daisy, old boy, dumb-founded!" Steerforth, shaking my hand heartily, and
sightly away. "Have I detected you in
us, you Sybarite! Those Doctors? Com-
wars are the gayest men in town, I be-
beat us sober Oxford people all to noth-
is bright glance went merrily round the
he took the seat on the sofa opposite
ch Mrs. Micawber had recently vacated
l the fire into a blaze.

so surprised at first," said I, giving
me with all the cordiality I felt, "that
ly breath to greet you with, Steerforth.
the sight of me is good for sore eyes, as
say," replied Steerforth, "and so is the
Daisy, in full bloom. How are you,
ail?"

very well," said I; "and not at all Bac-
to-night, though I confess to another
whom I met in the street, talking loud
ise," returned Steerforth. "Who's our
he tights?"

the best idea I could, in a few words,
icawber. He laughed heartily at my
rait of that gentleman, and said he was
ow, and he must know him.
ho do you suppose our other friend is?"
my turn.

en knows," said Steerforth. "Not a
oe? I thought he looked a little like one,"
iles!" I replied, triumphantly.
he?" asked Steerforth, in his careless

you remember Traddles? Traddles in
it Salem House?"

That fellow!" said Steerforth, beating
'ed on the top of the fire, with the
is he as soft as ever? And where the
you pick him up?"
ed Traddles in reply, as high as I
f I felt that Steerforth rather slighted
erforth, dismissing the subject with a
and a smile, and the remark that he
glad to see the old fellow too, for he had
n odd fish, inquired if I could give
ing to eat? During most of this short
when he had not been speaking in a
ous manner, he had sat idly beating on
coal with the poker. I observed that
same thing while I was getting out the
't the pigeon-pie, and so forth.

Daisy, here's a supper for a king!" he
, starting out of his silence with a burst;
; his seat at the table. "I shall do it
r I have come from Yarmouth."
ught you came from Oxford?" I re-

"Littimer was here to-day, to inquire for you," I
remarked, "and I understood him that you were
at Oxford; though, now I think of it, he certainly
did not say so."

"Littimer is a greater fool than I thought him,
to have been inquiring for me at all," said Steer-
forth, jovially pouring out a glass of wine, and
drinking to me. "As to understanding him, you
are a cleverer fellow than most of us, Daisy, if
you can do that."

"That's true, indeed," said I, moving my chair
to the table. "So you have been at Yarmouth,
Steerforth!" interested to know all about it.

"Have you been there long?"

"No," he returned. "An escapade of a week
or so."

"And how are they all? Of course, little Em-
ily is not married yet?"

"Not yet. Going to be, I believe—in so many
weeks, or months, or something or other. I have
not seen much of 'em. By-the-bye;" he laid
down his knife and fork, which he had been using
with great diligence, and began feeling in his
pockets; "I have a letter for you."

"From whom?"

"Why, from your old nurse," he returned,
taking some papers out of his breast pocket. "J.
Steerforth, Esquire, debtor, to the Willing Mind;'
that's not it. Patience, and we'll find it presently.
Old what's-his-name's in a bad way, and it's about
that, I believe."

"Barkis, do you mean?"

"Yes!" still feeling in his pockets, and look-
ing over their contents: "it's all over with poor
Barkis, I am afraid. I saw a little apothecary
there—surgeon, or whatever he is—who brought
your worship into the world. He was mighty
learned about the case, to me; but the upshot
of his opinion was, that the carrier was making
his last journey rather fast. Put your hand into
the breast pocket of my great-coat on the chair
yonder, and I think you'll find the letter. Is it
there?"

"Here it is!" said I.

"That's right!"

It was from Peggotty; something less legible
than usual, and brief. It informed me of her hus-
bond's hopeless state, and hinted at his being "a
little nearer" than heretofore, and consequently
more difficult to manage for his own comfort. It
said nothing of her weariness and watching, and
praised him highly. It was written with a plain,
unaffected, homely pietà that I knew to be gen-
uine, and ended with "my duty to my ever dar-
ing"—meaning myself.

While I deciphered it, Steerforth continued to
eat and drink.

"It's a bad job," he said, when I had done;
"but the sun sets every day, and people die every
minute, and we mustn't be scared by the common
lot. If we failed to hold our own, because that
equal foot at all men's doors was heard knocking
somewhere, every object in this world would slip
from us. No! Ride on! Rough-shod if need be.
smooth-shod if that will do, but ride on! Ride on over all obstacles, and win the race!"

"And win what race?" said I.

"The race that one has started in," said he.

"Ride on!"

I noticed, I remember, as he paused, looking at me with his handsome head a little thrown back, and his glass raised in his hand, that, though the freshness of the sea wind was on his face, and it was muddied, there were traces in it, made since I last saw it, as if he had applied himself to some habitual strain of the fervent energy which, when roused, was so passionately roused within him. I had it in my thoughts to remonstrate with him upon his desperate way of pursuing any fancy that he took—such as this buffeting of rough seas, and braving of hard weather, for example—when my mind glanced off to the immediate subject of our conversation again, and pursued that instead.

"I tell you what, Steerforth," said I, "if your high spirits will listen to me—"

"They are potent spirits, and will do whatever you like," he answered, moving from the table to the bedside again.

"Then I tell you what, Steerforth. I think I will go down and see my old nurse. It is not that I can do her any good, or render her any real service; but she is so attached to me that my visit will have as much effect on her, as if I could do both. She will take it so kindly, that it will be a comfort and support to her. It is no great effort to make, I am sure, for such a friend as she has been to me. Wouldn't you go a day's journey, if you were in my place?"

His face was thoughtful, and he sat considering a little before he answered, in a low voice, "Well! Go. You can do no harm."

"You have just come back," said I, "and it would be in vain to ask you to go with me?"

"Quite," he returned. "I am for Highgate tonight. I have not seen my mother this long time, and it lies upon my conscience, for it's something to be loved as she loves her prodigal son.—Bah! Nonsense! You mean to go to-morrow, I suppose?" he said, holding me out at arm's length, with a hand on each of my shoulders.

"Yes, I think so."

"Well, then, don't go till next day. I wanted you to come and stay a few days with us. Here I am, on purpose to bid you, and you fly off to Yarmouth!"

"You are a nice fellow to talk of flying off, Steerforth, who are always running wild on some unknown expedition or other!"

He looked at me a moment without speaking, and then rejoined, still holding me as before, and giving me a shake:

"Come! Say the next day, and pass as much of to-morrow as you can with us! Who knows when we may meet again, else? Come! Say the next day! I want you to stand between Rosa Dartle and me, and keep us asunder."

"Would you love each other too much, without me?"

"Yes; or hate," laughed Steerforth; "for which, Come! Say the next day!"

I said the next day; and he put on his coat and lighted his cigar, and set off home. Finding him in this intention, my own great-coat (but did not light it), having had enough of that for one, and walked with him as far as the open dull road, then, at night. He was to go all the way; and when we parted, and after him going so gallantly and kindly but I thought of his saying, 'Ride on over circles, and win the race!' and wished for time, that he had some worthy race to run.

I was dressing in my own room, when Micawber's letter tumbled on the floor. Minded of it, I broke the seal and read it. It was dated an hour and a half before dawn, and I am sure whether I have mentioned the fact that Mr. Micawber was at any particularly crisis, he used a sort of legal phraseology. he seemed to think equivalent to wind's affairs:

"Sir—for I dare not say my dear Copperfield, it is expedient that I should inform you that the undersigned is crushed. Some efforts to spare you the premature knowledge of his calamitous position, you may observe this day; but hope has sunk beneath the name and the undersigned is crushed."

"The present communication is penned in the personal range (I cannot call it the range of an individual, in a state closely borde intoxicated, employed by a broker. Individual is in legal possession of the premises; a distress for rent. His inventory is not only the chattels and effects of every tenant belonging to the undersigned, as yet unseated of this habitation, but also those appertaining to Mr. Thomas Traddles, lodger, a member of the Honorable Society of the Inner Temple."

"If any drop of gore were wanting, overflowing cup which is now cornering the language of an immortal Wretch, to 1 the undersigned, it would be found in that a friendly acceptance granted to it, signed by the before-mentioned Mr. Traddles, for the sum of 5£ 8s. 9d, is and is not provided for. Also, in the living responsibilities clinging to the undersigned, will, in the course of nature, be by the sum of one more helpless victim—miserable appearance may be looked round numbers—at the expiration of a period, exceeding six lunar months, from the date.

"After promising thus much, it is work of supererogation to add, that the are for ever scattered."

"On the head of"

"Of Wilkins Micawber"
Poor Traddles! I knew enough of Mr. Micawber by this time, to foresee that he might be expected to recover the blow; but my night’s rest was sorely distressd by thoughts of Traddles, and the curate’s daughter, who was one of ten, own in Devonshire, and who was such a dear ri, and who would wait for Traddles (ominous nalse!) until she was sixty, or any age that would be mentioned.

CHAPTER XXIX.

I VISIT STEERFORTH AT HIS HOME, AGAIN.

I MENTIONED to Mr. Spenlow in the morning, of I wanted leave of absence for a short time; ad as I was not in the receipt of any salary, and consequently was not obnoxious to the implacable orkins, there was no difficulty about it. I took cut opportunity, with my voice sticking in my and, and my sight falling as I uttered the words, to express my hope that Miss Spenlow was quite well; to which Mr. Spenlow replied, with no more emotion than if he had been speaking of an ordinary human being, that he was much obliged me, and she was very well.

We articulated clerks, as gers of the patrician order of proctors, were treated with so much consideration, that I was almost my own master at times. As I did not care, however, to get to Highgate before one or two o’clock in the day, ad as we had another little excommunication case in court that morning, which was called The face of the Judge promoted by Tippins against bullock for his soul’s correction, I passed an hour or two in attendance on it with Mr. Spenlow very agreeably. It arose out of a squalid between two churchwardens, one of whom was alleged to have washed the other against a pump; the handle of which pump projecting into a school-house, which school-house was under a gable of the church-roof, made the pump an ecclesiastical offence. It was a amusing case; and sent me up to Highgate, on the box of the stage-coach, thinking about the commons, and what Mr. Spenlow had said about teaching the Commons and bringing down the country.

Mrs. Steerforth was pleased to see me, and so was Rosa Darte. I was agreeably surprised to find that Littimer was not there, and that we were attended by a modest little parlor-maid, with blue ribbons in her cap, whose eye was much more pleasant, and much less discourteous, to catch by accident, than the eye of that respectable man. But what I particularly observed, before I had been half-an-hour in the house, was the close and attentive watch Miss Darte kept upon me; and the lurking manner in which she seemed to compare my face with Steerforth’s, and Steerforth’s with mine, and to lie in wait for something to come out between the two. So surely as I looked towards her, I did see that eager visage, with its quaint black eyes and searching brow, intent on mine; or passing suddenly from mine to Steerforth’s; or comprehending both of us at once. In this lynx-like scrutiny she was so far from filtering when she saw I observed her, that at such a time she only fixed her piercing look upon me with a more intent expression still. Blameless as I was, and knew that I was, in reference to any wrong she could possibly suspect me of, I shrank before her strange eyes, quite unable to endure their hungry lustre.

All day, she seemed to pervade the whole house. If I talked to Steerforth in his room, I heard her dress rustle in the little gallery outside. When he and I engaged in some of our old exercises on the lawn behind the house, I saw her face pass from window to window, like a wandering light, until it fixed itself in one, and watched us. When we all four went out walking in the afternoon, she closed her thin hand on my arm like a spring, to keep me back, while Steerforth and his mother went on in hearing: and then spoke to me.

“You have been a long time,” she said, “without coming here. Is your profession really so engaging and interesting as to absorb your whole attention? I ask because I always want to be informed, when I am ignorant. Is it really, though?”

I replied that I liked it well enough, but that I certainly could not claim so much for it.

“Oh! I am glad to know that, because I always like to be put right when I am wrong,” said Rosa Darte. “You mean it is a little dry, perhaps?”

“Well,” I replied; “perhaps it was a little dry.”

“Oh! and that’s a reason why you want relief and change—excitement, and all that?” said she.

“Ah! very true! But isn’t it a little—eh?—for him; I don’t mean you?”

A quick glance of her eye towards the spot where Steerforth was walking, with his mother leaning on his arm, showed me whom she meant; but beyond that, I was quite lost. And I looked so, I have no doubt.

“Don’t it—I don’t say that it does, mind I want to know—don’t it rather engross him? Don’t it make him, perhaps, a little more restless than usual in his visits to his blindy-doting—eh?” With another quick glance at them, and such a glance at me as seemed to look into my innermost thoughts.

“Miss Darte,” I returned, “pray do not think—”

“I don’t!” she said. “Oh dear me, don’t suppose that I think anything! I am not suspicious. I only ask a question. I don’t state any opinion. I want to found an opinion on what you tell me. Then, it’s not so? Well! I am very glad to know it.”

“It certainly is not the fact,” said I, perplexed, “that I am accountable for Steerforth’s having been away from home longer than usual—if he has been: which I really don’t know at this moment, unless I understand it from you. I have not seen him this long while, until last night.”
"No?"

"Indeed, Miss Darlie, no!"

As she looked full at me, I saw her face grow shaper and paler, and the marks of the old wound lengthen out until it cut through the disfigured lip, and deep into the mother lip, and slanted down the face. There was something positively awful to me in this, and in the brightness of her eyes, as she said, looking fixedly at me:

"What is he doing?"

I repeated the words, more to myself than her, being so amazed.

"What is he doing?" she said, with an eagerness that seemed enough to consume her like a fire. "In what is that man assisting him, who never looks at me without an inscrutable falsehood in his eyes? If you are honorable and faithful, I don't ask you to betray your friend. I ask you only to tell me, is it anger, is it hatred, is it pride, is it restlessness, is it some wild fancy, is it love, what is it, that is leading him?"

"Miss Darlie," I returned, "how shall I tell you, so that you will believe me, that I know of nothing in Steerforth different from what there was when I first came here? I can think of nothing. I firmly believe there is nothing. I hardly understand even what you mean."

As she still stood looking fixedly at me, a twitching or throbbing, from which I could not dissociate the idea of pain, came into that cruel mark; and lifted up the corner of her lip as if with scorn, or with a pity that despised its object. She put her hand upon it hurriedly—a hand so thin and delicate, that when I had seen her hold it up before the fire to shade her face, I had compared it in my thoughts to fine porcelain—and saying, in a quick, fierce, passionate way, "I swear to secrecy about this!" said not a word more.

Mrs. Steerforth was particularly happy in her son's society, and Steerforth was, on this occasion, particularly attentive and respectful to her. It was very interesting to me to see them together, not only on account of their mutual affection, but because of the strong personal resemblance between them, and the manner in which what was haughty or imperious in him was softened by age and sex, in her, to a gracious dignity. I thought, more than once, that it was well no serious cause of division had ever come between them; or two such natures—I ought rather to express it, two such shades of the same nature—might have been harder to reconcile than the two extremest opposites in creation. The idea did not originate in my own discernment; I am bound to confess, but in a speech of Rosa Darlie's.

She said at dinner:

"Oh, but do tell me, though, somebody, because I have been thinking about it all day, and I want to know."

"You want to know what, Rosa?" returned Mrs. Steerforth. "Pray, pray, Rosa, do not be mysterious."

"Mysterious!" she cried, "Oh! I really? Do you consider me so?"

"Do I constantly entrust you," said Mrs. Steerforth, "to speak plainly, in your own natural manner?"

"Oh! then this is not my natural manner," she rejoined. "Now you must really be kind to me, because I ask for information. We can know ourselves."

"It has become a second nature," said Mrs. Steerforth, without any displeasure; "but remember,—and so must you, I think,—what your manner was different, Rosa; when it was not so guarded; and was more truthful."

"I am sure you are right," she returned; "and so it is that bad habits grow upon one! Really! Less guarded and more truthful! How can it be perceptibly, have changed, I wonder! Well, that's very odd! I must study to regain at former self."

"I wish you would," said Mrs. Steerforth, with a smile.

"Oh! I really will, you know!" she answered.

"I will learn frankness from,—let me see,—Ben James."

"You cannot learn frankness, Rosa," said Mrs. Steerforth quickly—for there was always some effect of sarcasm in what Rosa Darlie said, though it was said, as this was, in the most unconscious manner in the world,—"it is in a better school."

"That I am sure of," she answered, with uncommon fervor. "If I am sure of anything, of course, you know, I am sure of that."

Mrs. Steerforth appeared to me to regret having been a little nettled; but she presently said, in a kind tone:

"Well, my dear Rosa, we have not heard what it is that you want to be satisfied about?"

"That I want to be satisfied about?" she replied, with provoking coldness. "Oh! It is only whether people, who are like each other in their moral constitution,—is that the phrase?"

"It's as good a phrase as another," said Steerforth.

"Thank you:—whether people, who are like each other in their moral constitution, are in greater danger than people not so circumstanced, supposing any serious cause of variance to arise between them, of being divided angrily and deeply?"

"I should say yes," said Steerforth.

"Should you?" she retorted. "Dear me! Supposing then, for instance,—any unlikely thing will do for a supposition—that you and your mother were to have a serious quarrel."

"My dear Rosa," interposed Mrs. Steerforth, laughing good-naturedly, "suggest some other supposition! James and I know our duty to each other, better, I pray Heaven!"

"Oh!" said Miss Darlie, nodding her head thoughtfully. "To be sure. That would prevent it. Why, of course it would. Exactly. Now, I am glad I have been so fond, that I put the case for it is so very good to know that your duty to each other would prevent it. "Thank you very much."
er little circumstance connected with it must not omit; for I had reason to think, when all the irretrievable end had been in vain. During the whole of the time especially from this period of it set itself with him, who to charm this nature into a pleasant and pleased combat that he should succeed, was no matter to me. That she should struggle with the idea of his delightful nature I thought it then—did not exist either; for I knew that she was jaded, and perverse. I saw her manner slowly change; I saw him with growing admiration; I saw more and more faintly, but always if she condemned him, with a power that he possessed, I saw her sharp glance soften, until she became quiet and I ceased of her. I had really been all day, and about the fire, talking and laughing it as little reserve as if we had been

it was because we had sat there so cause Steerforth was resolved not to venture. His name is still, I do not know; for remian in the dining-room, while minutes after her departure. "She is not a harp," said Steerforth, softly, at the front door, "and nobody but my mother, in my room alone. get up," said Steerforth (which she said), "my dear Rosa, don't. Be one, and sing us an Irish song?" she

"said Steerforth. "Much more than ever. Here is Daisy, too, loves music. Sing us an Irish song, Rosa! and listen as I used to do."

not touch her, or the chair from which she sat, near him near the harp. She sat for some little while, in a curious through the motion of playing it with wound, but not sounding it. At length

m, and drew it to her; with one sudden played and sang.

know what it was, in her touch or that song the most unceasingly I said in my life, or can imagine. Singing forlorn in the reality of it. It was never written, or set to music, out of the passion within her; which effect utterance in the low sounds of and crouched again when all was still. As when she leaned beside the harp

more, and this had roused me from my trance:—Steerforth had left his seat, and gone to her, and had put his arm laughingly about her, and had said, "Come, Rosa, for the future we will love each other very much!" And she had struck him, and had thrown him off with the fury of a wild cat, and had burst out of the room.

"What is the matter with Rosa?" said Mrs. Steerforth, coming in.

"She has been an angel, mother," returned Steerforth, "for a little while; and has run into the opposite extreme, since, by way of compensation."

"You should be careful not to irritate her, James. Her temper has been soured, remember, and ought not to be tried."

Rosa did not come back; and no other motion was made of her, until I went with Steerforth into his room to say Good-night. Then he laughed about her, and asked me if I had ever seen such a fierce little piece of incomprehensibility.

I expressed as much of my astonishment as was then capable of expression, and asked if he could guess what it was that she had taken so much amiss, so suddenly.

"Oh, Heaven knows," said Steerforth. "Any thing you like—or nothing! I told you she took everything, herself included, to a grindstone, and sharpened it. She is an edge-tool, and requires great care in dealing with. She is always dangerous. Good-night!"

"Good-night!" said I, "my dear Steerforth! I shall be gone before you wake in the morning. Good-night!"

He was unwilling to let me go; and stood, holding me out, with a hand on each of my shoulders, as he had done in my own room.

"Daisy," he said, with a smile—"for though that's not the name your Godfathers and Godmothers gave you, it's the name I like best to call you by—and I wish, I wish, you could give it to me!"

"Why so can, if I choose," said I.

"Daisy, if anything should ever separate us, you must think of me at my best, old boy. Come! Let us make that bargain. Think of me at my best, if circumstances should ever part us!"

"You have no best to me, Steerforth," said I, "and no worst. You are always equally loved, and cherished in my heart."

So much compunction for having ever wronged him, even by a shapeless thought, did I feel within me, that the confession of having done so was rising to my lips. But for the reluctance I had, to betray the confidence of Agnes, but for my uncertainty how to approach the subject with no risk of doing so, it would have reached them before he said, "God bless you, Daisy, and good-night!"

In my doubt, it did not reach them; and we shook hands, and we parted.

I was up with the dull dawn, and, having dressed as quietly as I could, looked into his room. He was fast asleep; lying, easily, with his head upon his arm, as I had often seen him lie at school.
The time came in its season, and that was very soon, when I almost wondered that nothing troubled his repose, as I looked at him. But he slept—let me think of him so again—as I had often seen him sleep at school; and thus, in this silent hour, I left him.

—Never more, oh God forgive you, Steerforth! to touch that passive hand in love and friendship. Never, never more!

CHAPTER XXX.

A LOSS.

I set down to Yarmouth in the evening, and went to the inn. I knew that Peggotty's spare room—my room—was likely to have occupation enough in a little while, if that great Visitor, before whose presence all the living must give place, were not already in the house; so I betook myself to the inn, and dined there, and engaged my bed.

It was ten o'clock when I went out. Many of the shops were shut, and the town was dull. When I came to Omer and Joram's, I found the shutters up, but the shop-door standing open. As I could obtain a perspective view of Mr. Omer inside, smoking his pipe by the parlor-door, I entered, and asked him how he was.

"Why, bless my life, and soul!" said Mr. Omer. "how do you find yourself? Take a seat. Smoke not disagreeable, I hope?"

"By no means," said I. "I like it—in somebody else's pipe."

"What, not in your own, eh?" Mr. Omer returned, laughing. "All the better, sir. Bad habit for a young man. Take a seat. I smoke myself, for the asthma."

Mr. Omer had made room for me, and placed a chair. He now sat down again very much out of breath, gasping at his pipe as if it contained a supply of that necessary, without which he must perish.

"I am sorry to have heard bad news of Mr. Barkis," said I.

"Mr. Omer looked at me, with a steady countenance, and shook his head.

"Do you know how he is to-night?" I asked.

"The very question I should have put to you, sir," returned Mr. Omer, "but on account of delicacy. It's one of the drawbacks of our line of business. When a party's ill, we can't ask how the party is."

The difficulty had not occurred to me; though I had had my apprehensions too, when I went in, of hearing the old tune. On its being mentioned, I recognised it, however, and said as much.

"Yes, yes, you understand," said Mr. Omer, nodding his head. "We weren't do it. Bless you, it would be a shock that the generality of parties mightn't recover, to say 'Omer and Joram's compliments, and how do you find yourself this morning?'—or this afternoon—as it may be."

Mr. Omer and I nodded at each other, and Mr. Omer recited his wind by the aid of his pipe.

"It's one of the things that cut the trail of from attentions they could often wish to show," said Mr. Omer. "Take myself. If I have known Barkis a year, to move to as he went by, I have known him forty years. But I can't go and say, 'how is he?'

I felt it was rather hard on Mr. Omer, and told him so.

"I'm not more self-interested, I hope, than another man," said Mr. Omer. "Look at me. My mind may fail at any moment, and it isn't likely that, to my own knowledge, I'd be as interested under such circumstances. I say ain't likely, in a man who knows his wind willy, when it does go, as if a pair of bellow was open; and that man a grandfather," said Mr. Omer.

"I said, 'Not at all.'"

"It ain't that I complain of my line of business," said Mr. Omer. "It ain't that. Some good and some bad goes, no doubt, to all callings. What I wish is, that parties was brought up stronger-minded."

Mr. Omer, with a very complacent and amiable face, took several puffs in silence, and then said, resuming his first point:

"Accordingly we're obliged, in asserting how Barkis goes on, to limit ourselves to Emily. She knows what our real objects are, and she don't have any more alarms or suspicions about us, than if we was so many lambs. Minnie and Joram have just stepped down to the house, in fact (she's there, after hours, helping her aunt a bit), to ask her how he is to-night; and if you was to please to wait till they come back, they'd give you full particulars. Will you take something? A glass of erub and water, now? I smoke on erub and water myself," said Mr. Omer, taking up his glass, "because it's considered softening to the passages, by which this troublesome breath of mine gets into action. But, Lord bless you," said Mr. Omer, hesitatingly, "it ain't the passages that's out of order! 'Give me breath enough,' says I to my daughter Minnie, 'and I'll find passages, my dear!'

He really had no breath to spare, and it was very alarming to see him laugh. When he was again in a condition to be talked to, I thanked him for the proffered refreshment, which I declined, as I had just had dinner; and, observing that I would wait, since he was so good as to invite me, until his daughter and his son-in-law came back, I inquired how little Emily was.

"Well, sir," said Mr. Omer, removing his pipe, that he might rub his chin; "I tell you truly, I shall be glad when her marriage has taken place."

"Why so?" I inquired.

"Well, she's unsettled at present," said Mr. Omer. "It ain't that she's not as pretty as ever, for she's prettier—I do assure you, she's prettier. It isn't that she don't work as well as ever, for she does. She was worth any six; and she is worth any six. But somehow she wants here..."
NEWS OF LITTLE EMILY.

understand," said Mr. Omer, after rubbing
again, and smoking a little, "what I mean
al way by the expression, 'A long pull,
gull, and a pull altogether, my hear-
sh!' I should say to you, that that was
eral way—what I miss in Em'ly's
er's face and manner went for so much,
id conscientiously nod my head, as di-
meaning. My quickness of apprehen-
d to please him, and he went on:
consider this is principally on ac-
er being in an unsettled state, you see.
al it over a good deal, her uncle and
d her sweetheart and myself, after bust-
i consider it is principally on account
ng unsettled. You must always recol-
ly,' said Mr. Omer, shaking his head
hat she's a most extraordinary affec-
tle thing. The proverb says, 'You can't
ure out of a sow's ear.' Well, I
w about that. I rather think you may,
in early life. She has made a home
it old boat, sir, that stone and marble
sure she has!" said I.
e the clinging of that pretty little thing
be, said Mr. Omer; "to see the way
on to him, tighter and tighter, and closer
, every day, is to see a sight. Now, you
r's a struggle going on when that's the
sh should it be made a longer one than is
ed attentively to the good old fellow,
aced, with all my heart, in what he said.
ore, I mentioned to them," said Mr.
ocomfortable, easy-going tone, "this. I
, don't consider Em'ly nailed down in
me, make it your own time.
be more valuable than was
her learning has been quicker than hee;
Omer and Joram can run their
gh what remains; and she's free when
If she likes to make any little arrange-
wards, in the way of doing any little
is at home, very weil. If she don't, very
We're no losers, anyhow." For-
see," said Mr. Omer, touching me with
'it ain't likely that a man so short of
myself, and a grandfather too, would go
points with a little bit of a blue-eyed
like her?"
all, I am certain," said I.
all! You're right!" said Mr. Omer.
, her cousin—you know it's a cousin
g to be married to?"
ere, I replied. "I know him well.
urse you do," said Mr. Omer. "Well,
cousin being, as it appears, in good
well to do, thanked me in a very manly
ner for this (conducting himself alto-
nest say, in a way that gives me a high
him), and went and took as comfor-
thouse as you or I could wish to clap
That little house is now furnished, right
through, as neat and complete as a doll's parlor;
and but for Barkis's illness having taken this bad
turn, poor fellow, they would have been man and
wife—I dare say, by this time. As it is, there's a
 postponement."
"And Emily, Mr. Omer? I inquired. "Has
she become more settled?"
"Why that, you know," he returned, rubbing
his double chin again, "can't naturally be
expected. The prospect of the change and separa-
tion, and all that, is, as one may say, close to her
and far away from her, both at once. Barkis's
death needn't put it off much, but his lingering
might. Anyway, it's an uncertain state of mat-
ters, you see."
"I see," said I.
"Consequently," pursued Mr. Omer, "Em'ly's
still a little down and a little flustered; perhaps,
upon the whole, she's more so than she was. Every
day she seems to get fonder and fonder of her
uncle, and more lofty to part from all of us. A
kind word from me brings the tears into her eyes;
and if you was to see her with my daughter Min-
nie's little girl, you'd never forget it. Bless my
heart alive!" said Mr. Omer, pondering, "how
she loves that child!"
Having so favorable an opportunity, it occurred
to me to ask Mr. Omer, before our conversation
should be interrupted by the return of his daugh-
ter and her husband, whether he knew anything
of Martha.
"Ah!" he rejoined, shaking his head, and
looking very much dejected. "No good. A sad
story, sir, however you come to know it. I never
thought there was harm in the girl. I wouldn't
wish to mention it before my daughter Minnie—
for she'd take me up directly—but I never did.
None of us ever did."
Mr. Omer, hearing his daughter's feetstep
before I heard it, touched me with his pipe, and shut
up one eye, as a caution. She and her husband
came in immediately afterwards.
Their report was, that Mr. Barkis was "as bad
as bad as bad could be;" that he was quite unconscious;
and that Mr. Chillip had mournfully said in the
kitchen, on going away just now, that the College of
Physicians, the College of Surgeons, and
Apothecaries' Hall, if they were all called in to-
gether, couldn't help him. He was past both
Colleges. Mr. Chillip said, and the Hall could only
poison him.
Hearing this, and learning that Mr. Peggotty
was there, I determined to go to the house at
once. I bade good-night to Mr. Omer, and to Mr.
and Mrs. Joram; and directed my steps thither,
with a solemn feeling, which made Mr. Barkis
quite a new and different creature.
My low tap at the door was answered by Mr
Peggotty. He was not so much surprised to see
me as I had expected. I remarked this in Peg-
gotty, too, when she came down; and I have seen
it since; and I think, in the expectation of that
dread surprise, all other changes and worryraces
dwindle into nothing.
I shook hands with Mr. Peggotty, and passed into the kitchen, while he softly closed the door. Little Emily was sitting by the fire, with her hands before her face. Ham was standing near her.

We spoke in whispers; listening, between whites, for any sound in the room above. I had not thought of it on the occasion of my last visit, but how strange it was to me now, to miss Mr. Barkis out of the kitchen!

"This is very kind of you, Mas'r Davy," said Mr. Peggotty.

"It's on common kind," said Ham.

"Emily, my dear," cried Mr. Peggotty. "See here! Here's Mas'r Davy come! What, cheer up, pretty! Not a waked to Mas'r Davy?"

There was a trembling upon her, that I can see now. The coldness of her hand when I touched it, I can feel yet. Its only sign of animation was to shrink from mine; and then she glided from the chair, and, creeping to the other side of her uncle, bowed herself, silently and trembling still, upon his breast.

"It's such a loving art," said Mr. Peggotty, smoothing her rich hair with his great hand, "that it can't be the sorcer of this. It's nat'ral in young folk. Mas'r Davy, when they're now to these here trials, and timid, like my little bird, —it's nat'ral."

She clung the closer to him, but neither lifted up her face, nor spoke a word.

"It's getting late, my dear," said Mr. Peggotty, "and here's Ham come fur to take you home. Therc! Go along with t'other loving art! What, Emily? Eh, my pretty?"

The sound of her voice had not reached me, but he bent his head as if he listened to her, and then said:

"Let you stay with your uncle? Why, you don't mean to ask me that! Stay with your uncle, Moppet? When your husband that'll be so soon, is here fur to take you home? Now a person wouldn't think it, fur to see this little thing alongside a rough-weather chap like me," said Mr. Peggotty, looking round at both of us, with infinite pride; "but her ain't no more salt in it than she has goodness in her for her uncle—a foolish little Emily!"

"Emily's in the right in that, Mas'r Davy!" said Ham. "Look here! As Emily wishes of it, and as she's hurried and frightened, like, besides, I'll leave her till morning. Let me stay too!"

"No, no," said Mr. Peggotty. "You don't ought—a married man like you—or what's as good—to take and haul away a day's work. And you don't ought to watch and work both. That won't do. You go home and turn in. You ain't afraid of Emily not being took good care on, I know."

Ham yielded to this persuasion, and took his hat to go. Even when he kissed her,—and I never saw him approach her, but I felt that nature had given him the soul of a gentleman,—she seemed to cling closer to her uncle, even to the avoidance of her chosen husband. I stood after him, that it might cause no disturbance of the quiet that prevailed; and when I did so—Oh, Mr. Peggotty! still talking to me.

"Now, I'm a going up-stairs to tell you as Mas'r Davy's here, and that I'll cheer bit," he said. "Sit ye down by the while, my dear, and warm these me hands. You don't need to be so fast to take on so much. What? You'll go a bit?—Well! I come along with me—come.

Ham was turned out of house and he forced to lay down in a dyke, Mas'r Davy, with no less pride than before, my belief she'd go along with him, no there'll be some one else, soon,—some- soon, Emily!"

Afterwards, when I went up-stairs, as the door of my little chamber, which was an indistinct impression of her being there, cast down upon the floor. But, whether really she, or whether it was a confused shadow in the room, I don't know now.

I had leisure to think, before the kip of pretty little Emily's curl of death, added to what Mr. Omor had told me, to the cause of her being so unlike herself, had leisure, before Peggotty came down, think more leniently of the weakness of woman, counting the ticking of the clock, and seeing my sense of the solemn hour. Peggotty took me in her arms, and she thanked me over and over again for being comfortable to her (that was what she said) in her. She then entreated me to come and sobbing that Mr. Barkis had always liked admired me; that he had often talked of the more of it, and fell into a stupor; and that she, in case of him coming to himself again, I should brighten up at sight of me, if he could come to any earthly thing.

The probability of ever doing so, as to me, when I saw him, to be very small. Lying with his head and shoulders out of an uncomfortable attitude, half resting or the other, he had been on his back. His arm lay on his mouth and the world were slipping from him, but the box was there; and the husk had uttered in an exclamation for clothes!"

"Barclay, my dear!" said Peggotty cheerfully; bending over him, while her and I stood at the bed's foot. "Here's boy—my boy, Master Davy, who's together, Barclay! That you sent me here, you know! Won't you speak to Master!"

He was as mute and senseless as
DEATH OF MR. BARKIS.

his form derived the only expression

"going out with the tide," said Mr.

were dim, and so were Mr. Peggotty's;

in a whisper, "With the tide?"

can't die, along the coast," said Mr.

'except when the tide's pretty nigh
can't be born, unless its pretty nigh
ly born, till flood. He's a going out
de. It's ebb at half-after three, slack
an-hour. If he lives 'til it turns, he'll
a till past the flood, and go out with

fined there, watching him, a long time
that mysterious influence my presence
in in that state of his senses, I shall
. to say; but when he at last began to
ly, it is certain he was muttering about

ring to himself," said Peggotty.

touched me, and whispered with
nd reverence, "They are both a going

my dear!" said Peggotty.

arkis," he cried faintly. "No better
where!"

Here's Master Davy!" said Peggotty.
opened his eyes.

the point of asking him if he knew
ried to stretch out his arm, and said
ctly, with a pleasant smile:

is willin'!"

being low water, he went out with the

CHAPTER XXXI.

A GREATER LOSS.

ot difficult for me, on Peggotty's so-

resolve to stay where I was, until
mains of the poor carrier should have
ast last journey to Blunderstone. She
ought, out of her own savings, a

ground in our old churchyard near
her sweet girl," as she always called
; and there they were to rest.

ning Peggotty company, and doing all I
or (little enough at the utmost), I was
rejoice to think, as even now I could
nt to have been. But I am afraid I had
atisfaction, of a personal and pro-
ture, in taking charge of Mr. Barkis's
ounding its contents.

is the merit of having originated the
that the will should be looked for in
fter some search, it was found in the
ottom of a horse's nose-bag; wherein
there was discovered an old gold
chain and seals, which Mr. Barkis
in his wedding-day, and which had
been before or since; a silver tobacco-
form of a leg; an imitation lemon,
to cups and saucers, which I have

some idea Mr. Barkis must have purchased to
present to me when I was a child, and afterwards
found himself unable to part with; eighty-seven
guineas and a half, in guineas and half guineas;
two hundred and ten pounds, in perfectly clean
Bank notes; certain receipts for Bank of England
stock; an old horse-shoe, a bad shilling, a piece
of camphor, and an oyster-shell. From the cir-
cumstance of the latter article having been much
polished, and displaying prismatic colors on the
inside, I conclude that Mr. Barkis had some gen-
eral ideas about pearls, which never resolved
themselves into anything definite.

For years and years, Mr. Barkis had carried
this box, on all his journeys, every day. That it
might the better escape notice, he had invented a
fiction that it belonged to "Mr. Blackboy," and
was "to be left with Barkis till called for;" a
fable he had elaborately written on the lid, in
characters now scarcely legible.

He had hoarded, all these years, I found, to
good purpose. His property in money amounted
to nearly three thousand pounds. Of this he be-
queathed the interest of one thousand to Mr. Pegg-
otty for his life; on his decease, the principal to
be equally divided between Peggotty, little Emily,
and me, or the survivor or survivors of us, share
and share alike. All the rest he did possessed
of, he bequeathed to Peggotty; whom he left re-
siduary legatee, and sole executrix of that his last
will and testament.

I felt myself quite a proucer when I read this
document along with all possible ceremony, and
set forth its provisions, any number of times, to
those whom they concerned. I began to think
there was more in the Commons than I had sup-
posed. I examined the will with the deepest at-
tention, pronounced it perfectly formal in all re-
spects, made a pencil-mark or so in the margin,
and thought it rather extraordinary that I knew
so much.

In this abstruse pursuit; in making an ac-
count for Peggotty, of all the property into which
she had come; in arranging all the affairs in an
orderly manner; and in being her referee and
adviser on every point, to our joint delight; I
passed the week before the funeral. I did not
see little Emily in that interval, but they told me
she was to be quietly married in a fortnight.

I did not attend the funeral in character, if I
could venture to say so. I mean I was not dressed
up in a black cloak and a streamer, to frighten
the birds; but I walked over to Blunderstone
early in the morning, and was in the churchyard
when it came, attended only by Peggotty and her
brother. The mad gentleman looked on, out of
my little window; Mr. Chillip's baby wagged its
heavy head, and rolled its goggle eyes, at the
clergyman, over its nurse's shoulder; Mr. Omer
breathed short in the background; no one else
was there; and it was very quiet. We walked
about the churchyard for an hour, after all was
over; and pulled some young leaves from the
tree above my mother's grave.
A dread fell on me here. A cloud is lowering on the distant town, towards which I retraced my solitary steps. I fear to approach it. I cannot bear to think of what might come, upon that memorable night; of what must come again, if I go on.

It is no worse because I write of it. It would be no better, if I stopped my most unwilling hand. It is done. Nothing can undo it; nothing can make it otherwise than it was.

My old nurse was to go to London with me next day, on the business of the will. Little Emily was passing that day at Mr. Omer’s. We were all to meet in the old bouchouse that night. Ham would bring Emily at the usual hour. I would walk back at my leisure. The brother and sister would return as they had come, and be expecting us, when the day closed in, at the fireside.

I parted from them at the wicket-gate, where visionary scraps had rested with Rochester Random’s knapsack in the days of yore; and, instead of going straight back, walked a little distance on the road to Lowestoft. Then I turned, and walked back towards Yarmouth. I stayed to dine at a decent alehouse, some mile or two from the Ferry I have mentioned before; and thus the day was away, and It was evening when I reached it. Rains was falling heavily by that time, and it was a wild night; but there was a moon behind the clouds, and it was not dark.

I was soon within sight of Mr. Peggotty’s house, and of the light within it shining through the window. A little slovenly across the sand, which was heavy, brought me to the door, and I went in.

It looked very comfortable indeed. Mr. Peggotty had smoked his evening pipe, and there were preparations for some supper by-and-by. The fire was bright, the ashes were thrown up, the locker was ready for little Emily in her old place. In her own old place sat Peggotty, once more, looking (but for her dress) as if she had never left it. She had fallen back, already, on the society of the work-box with Saint Paul’s upon the lid, the yard-measure in the cottage, and the bit of wax-candle: and there they all were, just as if they had never been disturbed. Mrs. Gummidge appeared to be fretting a little, in her old corner; and consequently looked quite natural, too.

“You’re first of the lot, Mas’r Davy!” said Mr. Peggotty, with a happy face. “Don’t keep in that coat, sir, if it’s wet.”

“Thank you, Mr. Peggotty,” said I, giving him my outer coat to hang up. “It’s quite dry.”

“So ’tis!” said Mr. Peggotty, feeling my shoulders. “As a chip! Sit ye down, sir. It ain’t o’ no use saying welcome to you, but you’re welcome, kind and hearty.”

“Thank you, Mr. Peggotty, I am sure of that. Well, Peggotty!” said I, giving her a kiss. “And how are you, old woman?”

“Ha, ha!” laughed Mr. Peggotty, sitting down beside me, and rubbing his hands in his sense of relief from recent trouble, and genuine heartiness of his nature: “there woman in the world, sir—as I tell is need to feel more easy in her mind the. She done her dooty by the departed, and parted know’d it; and the departed done was right by her, as she done what was the departed—and—and—and it’s all the.

Mrs. Gummidge groaned.

“Cheer up, my pretty nawather!” said Peggotty. (But he shook his head as evidently sensible of the tendency of occurrences to recall the memory of the.)

“Don’t be down! Cheer up, for your’s only a little ill, and see if a good deal don’t come natural!”

“Not to me, Dan’l,” returned Mrs. Gummidge. “Not at all natural to me but to be lone.”

“No, no,” said Mr. Peggotty, sobs.

“Yes, yes, Dan’l!” said Mrs. Gummidge. “I ain’t a person to live with as I have left. Thinks go too contrary with me better be a riddle.”

“Why, how should I ever spend it on you?” said Mr. Peggotty, with an air of remonstrance. “What are you a talkin’ about? Don’t I want you more now than ever?”

“I know’d I was never wanted before Mrs. Gummidge, with a pitiable whim. Now I’m told so! How could I expect to be treated, being so lone and lorn, and socontrived, by me, as a piece you me.

Mr. Peggotty seemed very much at himself for having made a speech capable unfeeling construction, but was prevan replying, by Peggotty’s pulling his shawl on Mrs. Gummidge, and the Dutch clock, rose to the window.

“Theer!” said Mr. Peggotty, cheerfully, “we rest, Missis Gumidge!” Mrs. Gummidge slightly groaned. “Lighted up, according to your wish. You’re a wonderin’ what that’s for, Missis Gummidge! You see, ain’t over light or cheerful after dark; and I’m here at the hour as she’s a comin’ and puts the light in the winter. That’s what I said Mr. Peggotty, bending over me with glee, “meets two objects. She says, says ‘Theer’s home!’ she says. And like Emily, ‘My uncle’s theer!’ For I am, Missis Gummidge, I never have no light showed.”

“You’re a baby!” said Peggotty; “yes, him for it, if she thought so.

“Well,” returned Mr. Peggotty, standing his legs pretty wide apart, and rubbing his hands up and down in his comfortable seat, as he looked alternately at us and at the dark, “I don’t know but I am. Not, you see, to know.”

“Not at all,” observed Peggotty.

“No,” laughed Mr. Peggotty, “not to know. But to—the matter, you know. I don’t bless you! Now I tell you. What’s a
EMILY EXPECTED

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"My love, Mas'r Davy—the pride and hope of my art—her that I'd have died for, and would die for now—she's gone!"

"Gone!"

"Emily's run away! Oh, Mas'r Davy, think how she's run away, when I pray my good and gracious God to kill her (her that is so dear above all things) sooner than let her come to ruin and disgrace!"

The face he turned up to the troubled sky, the quivering of his clasped hands, the agony of his figure, remain associated with that lonely waste, in my remembrance, to this hour. It is always night there, and he is the only object in the scene.

"You're a scholar," he said, hurriedly, "and know what's right and best. What am I to say, indoors? How am I ever to break it to him, Mas'r Davy?"

I saw the door move, and instinctively tried to hold the latch on the outside, to gain a moment's time. It was too late. Mr. Peggotty thrust forth his face; and never could I forget the change that came upon it when he saw us, if I were to live five hundred years.

I remember a great wall and cry, and the women hanging about him, and we all standing in the room; I with a paper in my hand, which Ham had given me; Mr. Peggotty, with his vest torn open, his hair wild, his face and lips quite white, and blood trickling down his bosom (it had sprung from his mouth, I think), looking fixedly at me.

"Read it, sir," he said, in a low shivering voice. "Slow, please. I don't know as I can understand."

In the midst of the silence of death, I read thus, from a blotted letter:

"'When you, who love me so much better than I ever have deserved, even when my mind was innocent, see this, I shall be far away.'"

"'I shall be far away,' he repeated slowly. "'Stop! Emily fur away. Well!'"

'When I leave my dear home—my dear home—oh, my dear home!—in the morning.'

the letter bore date on the previous night:

—It will be never to come back, unless he brings me back a lady. This will be found at night, many hours after, instead of me. Oh, if you knew how my heart is torn. If even you, that I have wronged so much, that never can forgive me, could only know what I suffer! I am too wicked to write about myself. Oh, take comfort in thinking that I am so bad. Oh, for mercy's sake, tell uncle that I never loved him half so dear as now. Oh, don't remember how affectionate and kind you have all been to me—don't remember we were ever to be married—but try to think as if I died when I was little, and was buried somewhere.

Pray Heaven that I am going away from, have compassion on my uncle! Tell him that I never loved him half so dear. Be his comfort. Love some good girl, that will be what I was once to uncle, and be true to you, and worthy of you, and know no shame but me. God bless all! I'll pray for all, often, on my knees. If he don't bring me back a lady, and I don't pray for my own self, I'll pray for all. My parting love to uncle. My last tears, and my last thanks, for uncle!"

That was all.

He stood, long after I had ceased to read, still looking at me. At length I ventured to take his hand, and to entreat him, as well as I could.
endeavor to get some command of himself. He replied, "I thanke, sir, I thanke!" without moving.

Ham spoke to him. Mr. Peggotty was so far sensible of his affliction that he wrung his hand; but, otherwise, he remained in the same state, and no one dared to disturb him.

Slowly, at last, he moved his eyes from my face, as if he were waking from a vision, and cast them round the room. Then he said, in a low voice:

"Who's the man? I want to know his name."

Ham glanced at me, and suddenly I felt a shock that struck me back.

"There's a man suspected," said Mr. Peggotty. "Who is it?"

"Mas'r Davy!" imploded Ham. "Go out a bit, and let me tell him what I must. You don't ought to hear it, sir."

I felt the shock again. I sunk down in a chair, and tried to utter some reply; but my tongue was fettered, and my sight was weak.

"I want to know his name!" I heard said, once more.

"For some time past," Ham faltered, "there's been a servant about here, at odd times. There's been a gen'man in too. Both of 'em belonged to one another."

Mr. Peggotty stood fixed as before, but now looking at him.

"The servant," pursued Ham, "was seen along with—our poor girl—last night. He's been in hiding about here, this week or ever. He was thought to have gone, but he was hiding. Don't stay, Mas'r Davy, don't!"

I felt Peggotty's arm round my neck, but I could not have moved if the horse had been about to fall upon me.

A strange shay and horses was inside town, this morning, on the Norwich road, a'most afore the day broke." Ham went on. "The servant went to it, and come from it, and went to it again. When he went to it again, Emily was alig him. The fother was inside. He's the man."

"For the Lord's love," said Mr. Peggotty, falling back, and putting out his hand, as if to keep off what he dreaded. "Don't tell me his name's Steerforth!"

"Mas'r Davy," exclaimed Ham, in a broken voice, "it ain't no fault of yours—and I am far from laying of it to you—but his name is Steerforth, and he's a damned villain!"

Mr. Peggotty uttered no cry, and shed no tear, and moved no more, until he seemed to wake again, all at once, and pulled down his rough coat from its peg in the corner.

"Bear a hand with this! I'm struck of a heap, and can't do it," he said, impatiently. "Bear a hand and help me. Well!" when somebody had done so, "Now give me that leet but!"

Ham asked him whither he was going.

"I'm a going to seek my niece. I'm a going to seek my Em'ly. I'm a going first, to that there boat, and sink it where I won't drown her, as I'm a livin' soul, if I had thought of what was in him! As he said, he said, wildy, holding out his right hand, "as he sat afore me, he said, strike me down dead, I'd have drowned and thought it right—I'm a going to seek my niece!"

"Where?" cried Ham, interposing before the door.

"Anywhere! I'm a going to seek my niece through the world. I'm a going to find her, and I want to know her shame, and bring her back. Stop me! I tell you I'm a going to seek my niece!"

"No, no!" cried Mrs. Gummidge, between them in a fit of crying. "No, no! not as you are now.软 seek her in a little my long born Dan'l, and that'll be but right not as you are now. Sit yo down, and get your forgiveness for having ever been a wor to you, Dan'l—what have my contrivies to do to this!—and let us speak a word about times when she was first an orphan, and Ham was too, and when I was a poor woman, and you took me in. I'll soft, poor heart, Dan'l, laying her head up shoulder, "and you'll bear your sorrow for you know the promise, Dan'l. 'As yo done it unto one of the least of these, you ha it unto me;' and that can never fail under that's been our shelter for so many, many years."

He was quite passive now; and when him crying, the impulse that had been up to go down upon my knees, and ask their for the desolation I had caused, and curse forth, yielded to a better feeling. My over heart found the same relief, and I cried too.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE BEGINNING OF A LONG JOURNEY.

What is natural in me, is natural in other men, I infer, so I am not afraid a that I never had loved Steerforth better the the tie that bound me to him were broke the keen distress of the discovery of his unness, I thought more of all that was brilliant I softened more towards all that was good. I did more justice to the qualities that his made him a man of a noble nature and name, than ever I had done in the height devotion to him. Deeply as felt my own acious part in his pollution of an honest believe that if I had been brought face with him, I could not have uttered one word I should have loved him so well still—the fascinated me no longer—I should have let much tenderness the memory of my affect him, that I should have been as we spirit-wounded child, in all but the enter of a thought that we could ever be reunio
never had. I felt, as he had felt, that all
end between us. What his remem-
bered me was, I have never known—they
ten times, perhaps, and easily dismissed
of him were as the remembrance of a
friend, who was dead.

severely, long removed from the scenes
or history! My sorrow may bear invol-
unmannerly against you at the Judgment
but my angry thoughts or reproaches
I, I know!

ews of what had happened soon spread
the town; insomuch that as I passed
streets next morning, I overheard the
casting of it at their doors. Many were
her, some few were hard upon him; but
her second father and her lover there was
sentiment. Among all kinds of people a
them in their distress prevailed, which
gentleness and delicacy. The seafaring
apart, when those two were seen early,
with slow steps on the beach; and stood
and talking compassionately among them-

on the beach, close down by the sea,
and them. It would have been easy to
that they had not slept all last night,
piggotty had failed to tell me of their still
it as I left them, when it was broad day,
red worn; and I thought Mr. Peggotty's
bowed in one night more than in all the
old known him. But they were both as
steady as the sea itself: then lying be-
ark sky, waveless—yet with a heavy roll
if it breathed in its rest—and touched,
zenon, with a strip of silvery light from

save had a mort of talk, sir," said Mr.
to me, when we had all three walked a
in silence, "of what we ought and
right to do. But we see our course now."
scended to glance at Ham, then looking out
son the distant light, and a frightful
same into my mind—not that his face
r, for it was not; I recall nothing but
son of stern determination in it—that
encountered Steerforth, he would kill

ooty here, sir," said Mr. Peggotty, "is
a going to seek me—" he stopped, and
a firmer voice: "I'm a going to seek
't's not my dooty evermore."
ook his head when I asked him where
seek her, and inquired if I were going
morrow? I told him I had not
, fearing to lose the chance of being
vice to him; but that I was ready to
would.

a long with you, sir," he rejoined, "If
able, to-morrow."" I
liked again, for a while, in silence.

," he presently resumed, "he'll hold to
it work, and go and live along with my
my old boat yonder—"

"Will you desert the old boat, Mr. Peggotty?"
I gently interposed.

"My station, Mas'r Davy," he returned, "ain't
there no longer; and if ever a boat foundered,
since there was darkness on the face of the deep,
that one's gone down. But, no, sir, no; I
don't mean as it should be deserted. Fur from
that."

We walked again for a while, as before, until
he explained:

"My wishes is, sir, as it shall look, day and
night, winter and summer, as it has always looked,
since she fast know'd it. If ever she should
come a wandering back, I wouldn't have the old
place seem to cast her off, you understand, but
seem to tempt her to draw nigher to 't, and to
peep in, maybe, like a ghost, out of the wind and
rain, through the old winder, at the old seat by
the fire. Then, maybe, Mas'r Davy, seen' none
but Missis Gummidge there, she might take heart
to creep in, trembling; and might come to be
laid down in her old bed, and rest her weary head
where it was once so gay."

I could not speak to him in reply, though I
tried.

"Every night," said Mr. Peggotty, "as reg'lar
as the night comes, the candle must be stood in
its old pane of glass, that if ever she should see it,
It may seem to say 'Come back, my child, come
back!'. If ever there's a knock, Ham (partic'ler
a soft knock), arter dark, at your aunt's door,
don't you go nigh it. Let it be her—not you—
that sees my fallen child!"

He walked a little in front of us, and kept be-
fore us for some minutes. During this interval,
I glanced at Ham again, and observing the same
expression on his face, and his eye, still directed
to the distant light, I touched his arm.

Twice I called him by his name, in the tone
in which I might have tried to rouse a sleeper,
before he heeded me. When I at last inquired on
what his thoughts were so bent, he replied:

"On what's afore me, Mas'r Davy; and over
you."

"On the life before you, do you mean?" He
had pointed confusedly out to sea.

"Ay, Mas'r Davy. I don't rightly know how
'ts, but from ever you there seemed to me to
come—the end of it like;" looking at me as if he
were waking, but with the same determined
face.

"What end?" I asked, possessed by my
former fear.

"I don't know," he said, thoughtfully; "I
was calling to mind that the beginning of it all
did take place here—and then the end come. But
it's gone! Mas'r Davy," he added; answering,
as I think, my look: "you had no call to be
afraid of me: but I'm kender muddled; I don't
fare to feel no matters,"—which was as much as
to say that he was not himself, and quite con-

Mr. Peggotty stopping for us to join him: we
did so, and said no more. The remembrance of
this, in connexion with my former thought, however, haunted me at intervals, even until the inexorable end came at its appointed time.

We insensibly approached the old boat, and entered. Mrs. Gummidge, no longer moping in her especial corner, was busily preparing breakfast. She took Mr. Peggotty's hat, and placed his seat for him, and spoke so comfortably and softly, that I hardly knew her.

"Dan'l, my good man," said she, "you must eat and drink, and keep up your strength, for without it, you'll do now. Try, that's a dear soul! And if I disturb you with my cackletunc," she meant her chattering, "tell me so, Dan'l, and I won't."

When she had served us all, she withdrew to the window, where she sedulously employed herself in repairing some skirts and other clothes belonging to Mr. Peggotty, and neatly folding and packing them in an old oilskin bag, such as sailors carry. Meanwhile, she continued talking, in the same quiet manner:

"All times and seasons, you know, Dan'l," said Mrs. Gummidge, "I shall be aforesaid here, and ev'rything will look accordin' to your wishes. I'm a poor scholar, but I shall write to you, odd times, when you're away, and send my letters to Mas'r Davy. Maybe you'll write to me too, Dan'l!, odd times, and tell me how you fare to feel upon your lone korn journeys."

"You'll be a solitary woman here, I'm afraid!" said Mr. Peggotty.

"No, no, Dan'l," she returned, "I shan't be that. Don't you mind me. I shall have enough to do to keep up a Bein' for you" (Mrs. Gummidge meant a home), "again you come back—again you come back—to keep a Bein' here for any that may hap to come back, Dan'l. In the fine time, I shall set aside the door as I used to do. If any should come nigh, they shall see the old widdier woman true to 'em, a long way off."

What a change in Mrs. Gummidge in a little time! She was another woman. She was so devoted, she had such a quick perception of what it would be well to say, and what it would be well to leave unsaid; she was so forgetful of herself, and so regardful of the sorrow about her, that I held her in a sort of veneration. The work she did that day! There were many things to be brought up from the beach and stored in the outhouse—sacks of apples, net bags, cordage, spars, lobster pots, bags of balesst, and the like; and though there was abundance of assistance rendered, there being not a pair of working hands on all that shore but would have labored hard for Mr. Peggotty, and been well paid in being asked to do it, yet she persisted, all day long, in toiling under weights that she was quite unequal to, and lagging and droning on all sorts of unnecessary errands. As to deploiring her misfortunes, she appeared to have entirely lost the recollection of ever having had any. She preserved an equable cheerfulness in the midst of her sympathy, which was not the least astonishing part of the change that had come over her. Quercumness of the question. I did not even observe to falter, or to fear to escape from her whole day through, 'till twilight; when I and Mr. Peggotty being alone together, having fallen asleep in perfect exhaustion, broke into a half-suppressed fit of sobbing, and crying, and taking me to the door, said bless you, Mas'r Davy, be a friend to it dear!" Then, she immediately ran out to the house to wash her face, in order that she should sit quietly beside him, and be found there, when he should awake. In short, when I went away at night, the p sist of Mr. Peggotty's afflection; and I meditated enough upon the lesson that I and Mrs. Gummidge, and the new experience folded to me.

It was between nine and ten o'clock strolling in a melancholy manner through town, I stopped at Mr. Omer's door. I had taken it so much to heart, his thing me, that I had been very low and poorly, and had gone to bed without his pipe.

"A deceitful, bad-hearted girl," said I, "ran. "There was no good in her, ever!"

"Don't say so," I returned. "To think so.

"Yes, I do!" cried Mrs. Joram, angrily.

"No, no," said I.

Mrs. Joram tossed her head, endeavored very stern and cross; but she could not her sober self, and began to cry. I was to be sure; but I thought much the better for this sympathy, and fancied it became a virtuous wife and mother, very well indeed.

"What will she ever do!" sobbed

"Where will she get! What will become
Oh, how could she be so cruel, to herself him!"

I remembered the time when Minnie young and pretty girl; and I was glad I remembered it too, so feelingly.

"My little Minnie," said Mrs. Joran only just now been got to sleep. Even sleep she is sobbing for Em'ly. All day little Minnie has cried for her, and asked s and over again, whether Em'ly was w What can I say to her, when Em'ly tied off her own neck round little Minnie's neck; and asked s and over again, whether Em'ly was w What can I say to her, when Em'ly tied off her own neck round little Minnie's neck; and asked s and over again, whether Em'ly was w What can I say to her, when Em'ly tied off her own neck round little Minnie's neck; and asked s and over again, whether Em'ly was w What can I say to her, when Em'ly tied off her own neck round little Minnie's neck; and asked s and over again, whether Em'ly was w
“I am surprised,” I began, “to see you so distressed and serious”—when she interrupted me.

“Yes, it’s always so!” she said. “They are all surprised, these inconsiderate young people, fairly and full grown, to see any natural feeling in a little thing like me! They make a plaything of me, use me for their amusement, throw me away when they are tired, and wonder that I feel more than a toy horse or a wooden soldier! Yes, yes, that’s the way. The old way!”

“It may be, with others,” I returned, “but I do assure you it is not with me. Perhaps I ought not to be at all surprised to see you as you are now: I know so little of you. I said, without consideration, what I thought.”

“What can I do?” returned the little woman, standing up, and holding out her arms to show herself. “See! What I am, my father was; and my sister is; and my brother is. I have worked for sister and brother these many years—hard, Mr. Copperfield—all day. I must live. I do no harm. If there are people so unreflecting or so cruel, as to make a jest of me, what is left for me to do but to make a jest of myself, them, and every thing? If I do so, for the time, whose fault is that? Mine?”

No. Not Miss Mowcher’s, I perceived.

“If I had shown myself a sensitive dwarf to your false friend,” pursued the little woman, shaking her head at me, with reproachful earnestness, “how much of his help or good-will do you think I should ever have had? If little Mowcher (who had no hand, young gentleman, in the making of herself) addressed herself to him, or the like of him, because of her misfortunes, when do you suppose her small voice would have been heard? Little Mowcher would have as much need to live, if she was the bitterest and dullest of playmates; but she couldn’t do it. No. She might whistle for her bread and butter till she died of Air.”

Miss Mowcher sat down on the fender again, and took out her handkerchief, and wiped her eyes.

“Be thankful for me, if you have a kind heart, as I think you have,” she said, “that while I know well what I am, I can be cheerful and endure it all. I am thankful for myself, at any rate, that I can find my tiny way through the world, without being beholden to any one; and that in return for all that is thrown at me, in folly or vanity, as I go along, I can throw bubbles back. If I don’t brood over all I want, it is the better for me, and not the worse for any one. If I am a plaything for you giants, be gentle with me.”

Miss Mowcher replaced her handkerchief in her pocket, looking at me with very intent expression all the while, and pursued:

“I saw you in the street just now. You may suppose I am not able to walk as fast as you, with my short legs and short breath, and I couldn’t overtake you; but I guessed where you came, and came after you. I have been here before, in May—but the good woman wasn’t at home.”
"Do you know her?" I demanded.

"I know of her, and about her," she replied, "from Omer and Jonam. I was there at seven o'clock this morning. Do you remember what Steerforth said to me about this unfortunate girl, that time when I saw you both at the inn?"

The great bonnet on Miss Mowcher's head, and the greater bonnet on the wall, began to go backwards and forwards again when she asked this question.

I remembered very well what she referred to, having had it in my thoughts many times that day. I told her so.

"May the Father of all Evil confound him," said the little woman, holding up her forefinger between me and her sparkling eyes; "and ten times more confound that wicked servant; but I believed it was you who had a boyish passion for her!"

"I!" I repeated.

"Child, child! In the name of blind ill-fortune," cried Miss Mowcher, wringing her hands impatiently, as she went to and fro again upon the fender, "why did you praise her so, and blush, and look disturbed?"

I could not conceal from myself that I had done this, though for a reason very different from her supposition.

"What did I know?" said Miss Mowcher, taking out her handkerchief again, and giving one little stamp on the ground whenever, at short intervals, she applied it to her eyes with both hands at once. "He was crossing you, and whispering you, I saw; and you were soft wax in his hands, I saw. Had I left the room a minute, when his man told me that 'Young Innocence' (so he called you, and you may call him 'Old Guilt'—all the days of your life) had set his heart upon her, and she was gladly and liked him, but his master was resolved that no harm should come of it—more for your sake than for her—and that that was their business here? How could I but believe him? I saw Steerforth soothe and please you by his praise of her! You were the first to mention her name. You owned to an old admiration of her. You were hot and cold, and red and white, all at once when I spoke to you of her. What could I think—what did I think—that you were a young libertine in everything but experience, and had fallen into hands that had experience enough, and could manage you (having the fancy for your own good)? Oh! oh! oh! They were afraid of my finding out the truth," exclaimed Miss Mowcher, getting off the fender, and trotting up and down the kitchen with her two short arms distressfully lifted up, "because I am a sharp little thing—I need be, to get through the world at all!—and they deceived me altogether, and I gave the poor unfortunate girl a letter, which I fully believe was the beginning of her ever speaking to Littimer, who was left behind on purpose!"

I stood amazed at the revelation of all this, padding, looking at Miss Mowcher as she walked up and down the kitchen until she was out of breath; when she sat upon the fender again, drying her face with her handkerchief, as she had for a long time, without otherwise and without breaking silence.

"My country rounds," she added, "brought me to Norwich, Mr. Copperfield, the night before last. What I happened to there, about their secret way of coming, without you—which was strange—I suspecting something wrong. I got a coach from London last night, as it came. Norwich, and was here this morning, oh! too late!"

Poor little Mowcher turned so chilly her crying and fretting, that she turned to the fender, putting her poor little we among the ashes to warm them, and sat at the fire, like a large doll. I sat in a chair another side of the hearth, lost in unappetitions, and looking at the fire too, and so at her.

"I must go," she said at last, rising up. "It's late. You don't mistrust me, Meeting her sharp glance, which was as sharp as ever when she asked me, I could not short challenge answer no, quite firmly.

"Come!" said she, accepting the offer of hand to help her over the fender, and with her head up into my face, "you know you couldn't mistrust me, if I was a full man!"

I felt that there was much truth in this, and rather ashamed of myself.

"You are a young man," she said, with a word of advice even from the nothing. Try not to associate bodily dull mental, my good friend, except for a solid.

She had got over the fender now, and over my suspicion. I told her that I had given her a faithful account of her that we had both been helpless instruments, signing hands. She thanked me, and asked a good fellow.

"Now, mind!" she exclaimed, turning on her way to the door, and looking at me, with her forefinger up again. "I have a reason to suspect, from what I have heard, that ours are always open; I can't afford to say powers I have—that they are gone above if ever they return, if ever any one of turns, while I am alive, I am more like to another, going about as I do, to find it. Whatever I know, you shall know. If ever I do anything to serve the poor betrayed girl, I do it faithfully, please Heaven! And I had better have a bloodhound at his be little Mowcher!"

I placed implicit faith in this last statement, when I marked the look with which it was accompanied.

"Trust me no more, but trust me no less, you would trust a full-sized woman," a little creature, touching me appealingly by the wrist. "If ever you see me again, tell
and like what I was when you first saw me, what company I am in. Call to mind a very helpless and defenceless little Think of me at home with my brother and sister like myself when my day's done. Perhaps you won't, then, be very on me, or surprised if I can be distressed you. Good-night!"

a Miss Mowcher my hand, with a very opinion of her from that which I had entertained, and opened the door to let It was not a trifling business to get the thrills up, and properly balanced in her but at last I successfully accomplished I saw it go bobbing down the street the rain, without the least appearance of anybody underneath it, except when a fell than usual from some overcharged cart sent it toppling over, on one side, and ed Miss Mowcher struggling violently to ht. After making one or two sallies to t., which were rendered futile by the umbrellas on again, like an immense bird, could reach it, I came in, went to bed, till morning.

morning I was joined by Mr. Peggotty my old nurse, and we went at an early the coach office, where Mrs. Gummidge was waiting to take leave of us.

't Davy," Ham whispered, drawing me hile Mr. Peggotty was stowing his bag be luggage, "his life is quite broke up, i't know wheer he's going; he doesn't that's afore him; he's bound upon a hat'll last, on and off, all the rest of his ce my wjured for't, unless he finds what eking of. I am sure you'll be a friend to st Davy?"

me, I will indeed," said I, shaking th Ham earnestly.

mkee. Thankee, very kind, sir. One order. I'm in good employ, you know, avy, and hasn't no way now of spending etc. Money's of no use to me no more, 3 live. If you can lay it out for him, my work with a better art. Though as sirs," and he spoke very steadily and mild re not to think but I shall work at all ke a man, and act the best that lays in my " him I was well convinced of it; and I hat I hoped the time might even come, w would cease to lead the lonely life he contemplated now.

sir," he said, shaking his head, "all that's over with me, sir. No one can never fill e that's empty. But you'll bear in mind e money, as there's at all times some layw him?"

adding him of the fact, that Mr. Peggotty a steady, though certainly a very modern see from the bequest of his late brother promised to do so. We then took leave other. I cannot leave him even now, without remembering with a pang, at once his modest fortitude and his great sorrow.

As to Mrs. Gummidge, if I were to endeavor to describe how she ran down the street by the side of the coach, seeing nothing but Mr. Peggotty on the roof, through the tears she tried to repress, and dashing herself against the people who were coming in the opposite direction, I should enter on a task of some difficulty. Therefore I had better leave her sitting on a baker's door-step, out of breath, with no shape at all remaining in her bonnet, and one of her shoes off, lying on the pavement at a considerable distance.

When we got to our journey's end, our first pursuit was to look about for a little lodging for Peggotty, where her brother could have a bed. We were so fortunate as to find one, of a very clean and cheap description, over a Chandler's shop, only two streets removed from me. When we had engaged this domicile, I bought some cold meat at an eating-house, and took my fellow-travellers home to tea; a proceeding, I regret to state, which did not meet with Mrs. Crupp's approval, but quite the contrary. I ought to observe, however, in explanation of that lady's state of mind, that she was much offended by Peggotty's tucking up her widow's gown before she had been ten minutes in the place, and setting to work to dust my bed-room. This Mrs. Crupp regarded in the light of a liberty, and a liberty, she said, was a thing she never allowed.

Mr. Peggotty had made a communication to me on the way to London for which I was not unprepared. It was, that he purposed first seeing Mrs. Steerforth. As I felt bound to assist him in this, and also to mediate between them; with the view of sparing the mother's feelings as much as possible, I wrote to her that night. I told her as mildly as I could what his wrong was, and what my own share in his injury. I said he was a man in very common life, but of a most gentle and upright character; and that I ventured to express a hope that she would not refuse to see him in his heavy trouble. I mentioned two o'clock in the afternoon as the hour of our coming, and sent the letter myself by the first coach in the morning.

At the appointed time, we stood at the door—the door of that house where I had been, a few days since, so happy, where my youthful confidence and warmth of heart had been yielded up so freely: which was closed against me henceforth: which was now a waste, a ruin.

No Littimer appeared. The pleasant face which had replaced his, on the occasion of my last visit, answered to our summons, and went before us to the drawing-room. Mrs. Steerforth was sitting there. Rosa Dartle gilded, as we went in, from another part of the room, and stood behind her chair.

I saw, directly, in his mother's face, that she knew from himself what he had done. It was very pale, and bore the traces of deeper emotion than my letter alone, weakened by the news her fondness would have raised upon it, would have
been likely to create. I thought her more like him than ever I had thought her; and I felt, rather than saw, that the resemblance was not lost on my companion.

She sat upright in her arm-chair, with a stately, immovable, passionless air, that it seemed as if nothing could disturb. She looked very steadfastly at Mr. Peggotty when he stood before her; and he looked, quite as steadfastly at her. Rosa Dartle’s keen glance comprehended all of us. For some moments not a word was spoken. She motioned to Mr. Peggotty to be seated. He said in a low voice, “I shouldn’t feel it natural, ma’am, to sit down in this house, I’d sooner stand.” And this was succeeded by another silence, which she broke thus:

“I know, with deep regret, what has brought you here. What do you want of me? What do you ask me to do?”

He put his hat under his arm, and feeling in his breast for Emily’s letter, took it out, unfolded it, and gave it to her.

“Please to read that, ma’am. That’s my niece’s hand!”

She read it, in the same stately and impassive way,—untouched by its contents as far as I could see,—and returned it to him.

“Unless he brings me back a lady,” said Mr. Peggotty, tracing out that part with his finger. “I come to know, ma’am, whether he will keep his word!”

“No,” she returned.

“Why not?” said Mr. Peggotty.

“It is impossible. He would disgrace himself. You cannot fail to know that she is far below him.”

“Raise her up!” said Mr. Peggotty.

“She is uneducated and ignorant.”

“May be she’s not; may be she is,” said Mr. Peggotty. “I think not, ma’am; but I’m no judge of them things. Teach her better!”

“Since you oblige me to speak more plainly, which I am very unwilling to do, her humble conceptions would render such a thing impossible, if nothing else did.”

“Hark to this, ma’am,” he returned, slowly and quietly. “You know what it is to love your child. So do I. If she was a hundred times my child, I couldn’t love her more. You don’t know what it is to lose your child. I do. All the heaps of riches in the world would be nought to me if they were mine to buy her back! But save her from this disgrace, and she shall never be disgraced by us. Not one of us that she’s grown up among, not one of us that’s lived along with her, and had her for their all in all, these many years, will ever look upon her pritty face again. We’ll be content to let her be; we’ll be content to think of her, far off, as if she was another sun and sky; we’ll be content to trust her to her husband,—to her little children, p’tunes,—and hide the same when all of us shall be alike in quality above our God!”

The rugged eloquence with which he spoke, was not devoid of all effect. She still preserved her proud manner, but there was a tenderness in her voice, as she answered:

“I justify nothing. I make no exception. But I am sorry to repeat, it is impossible. Such a marriage would irretrievably ruin my son’s career, and ruin his prospects. It is more certain that that it never can and never will. If there is any other—”

“I am looking at the likeness of the interrupted Mr. Peggotty, with a steady, stringing eye, ‘that has looked at me, in my fireside, in my boat—where not so tender and friendly, when it was so tender go half wild when I think of it. If the face of that face don’t turn to burning fire thought of offering money to me for bright and ruin, it’s as bad. I don’t know a lady’s, but what it’s worse.”

She changed now, in a moment, her head; a flash overspread her features; and she intoned in an int Minister manner, grasping the arm-chairs with her hands:

“What compensation can you make opening such a pit between me and you? What is your love to mine? What is a ration to ours?”

Miss Dartle softly touched her, and put her head to whisper but she would not hear.

“No, Rosa, not a word! I am what I am, what I say! My son, who has been the life of my life, to whom I’ve given every thought he’s ever had, whom I’ve gratified from childhood wish, from whom I have had no separation since his birth,—to take up in with a miserable girl, and avoid me! my confidence with systematic deceit, and quite me for her! To set this fancy against his mother’s claims upon my love, respect, gratitude—claims that every hour of his life should have strengthened that nothing could be proof against! No injury!”

Again Rosa Dartle tried to soothe her ineffectually.

“I say, Rosa, not a word! If he’s all upon the lightest object, I am upon a greater purpose. Let him go and with the means that my love has him! Does he think to reduce me to that? He knows his mother very well. He does. Let him put away his whim now and come back. Let him not put her again, and he never shall come near me, living. While I can raise his hand to make a sign to it, unless, being rid of her for ever, humbly to me, and beg of my forgiveness is my right. This is the acknowledgment have. This is the separation that there is! And this,” she added, looking up softly through the window, with the proud joistent air with which she had begun, “is for injury?”

While I looked, and saw the mother in those words...
EM. All that I had ever seen in him of ing, wilful spirit, I saw in her. All the ling that I had now of his misdirected came an understanding of her character perception that it was, in its strongest same.

I observed to me, aloud, resuming her truant, that it was useless to hear more, core, and that she begged to put an end review. She rose with an air of dignity the room, when Mr. Peggotty signified s needless.

"I fear me being any hindrance to you, more to say, ma'am," he remarked as towards the door. "I come hear with and I take away no hope. I have done owe should be done, but I never looked ed to come of my stan'ning where I do been too evil a house for me and mine, be in my right senses and expect it."

his, we departed; leaving her standing ow-chair, a picture of a noble presence doome face.

d, on our way out, to cross a paved hall, a sides and roof, over which a vine was its leaves and shoots were green then, hay being sunny, a pair of glass doors o the garden were thrown open. Rosa) sterring this way with a noiseless step, were close to them, addressed herself to

"do well," she said, "indeed, to bring where!"

a concentration of rage and scorn as her face, and flashed in her jet-black and not have thought comprehensible even face. The scar made by the hammer usual in this excited state of her features, marked. When the throbbing I had seen em into it as I looked at her, she absobed up her hand and struck it.

is a fellow," she said, "to champion here, is he not? You are a true man!"

Dartle," I returned, "you are surely just as to condemn me!"

"do you bring division between these creatures?" she returned. "Don't you at they are both mad with their own self-pride?"

my doing?" I returned.

your doing!" she retorted. "Why do this man here?"

a deeply injured man, Miss Dartle," I "You may not know it."

now that James Steerforth," she said, hand on her bosom, as if to prevent the st was raging there, from being loud, use, corrupt heart, and is a traitor. But od I know or care about this fellow and son niece?"

Dartle," I returned, "you deepen the It is sufficient already. I will only say, that you do him a great wrong." him no wrong," she returned. "They are a depraved, worthless set. I would have her whipped."

Mr. Peggotty passed on without a word, and went out at the door.

"Oh, shame, Miss Dartle! shame!" I said indignantly. "How can you bear to trample on his undeserved affliction?"

"I would trample on them all," she answered. "I would have his house pulled down. I would have her branded on the face, dressed in rags, and cast out in the streets to starve. If I had the power to sit in judgment on her, I would see it done. See it done? I would do it. I detest her. If I ever could reproach her with her infamous condition, I would go anywhere to do so. If I could hunt her to her grave, I would. If there was any word of comfort that would be a solace to her in her dying hour, and only I pos- sessed it, I wouldn't part with it for Life itself."

The mere vehemence of her words can convey, I am sensible, but a weak impression of the pas- sion by which she was possessed, and which made itself articulate in her whole figure, though her voice, instead of being raised, was lower than usual. No description I could give of her would do justice to my recollection of her, or to her entire deliverance of herself to her anger. I have seen passelion in many forms, but I have never seen it in such a form as that.

When I joined Mr. Peggotty, he was walking slowly and thoughtfully down the hill. He told me, as soon as I came up with him, that having now discharged his mind of what he had proposed doing in London, he meant "to set out on his travels," that night. I asked him where he meant to go? He only answered, "I'm a going, sir, to seek my niece."

We went back to the little lodging over the chandler's shop, and there I found an opportunity of repeating to Peggotty what he had said to me. She informed me, in return, that he had said the same to her that morning. She knew no more than I did, where he was going, but she thought he had some project out of his mind.

I did not like to leave him under such circum- stances, and we all three dined together off a beefsteak pie—which was one of the many good things for which Peggotty was famous—and which was curiously flavored on this occasion, I recollect well, by a miscellaneous taste of tea, coffee, but- ter, bacon, cheese, new loaves, firewood, candles, and walnut ketchup, continually ascending from the shop. After dinner we sat for an hour or so near the window, without talking much; and then Mr. Peggotty got up, and brought his oilskin bag and his stout stick, and laid them on the table.

He accepted, from his sister's stock of ready money, a small sum on account of his legacy; barely enough, I should have thought, to keep him for a month. He promised to communicate with me, when anything befell him; and he slung his bag about him, took his hat and stick, and bade us both "Good-bye!"

"All good attend you, dear old woman," he
saw, embracing Peggotty, "and you too, Mas'rn Davy!" shaking hands with me. "I'm a going to seek her, far and wide. If she should come home while I'm away,—but ah, that ain't like to be;—or if I shouldn't bring her back, my meaning is, that she and me shall live and die where no one can't reproach her. If any hurt should come to me, remember that the last words I left for her was, 'My unchanged love is with my darling child, and I forgive her!'"

He said this solemnly, bare-headed; then, putting on his hat, he went down the stairs, and away. We followed to the door. It was a warm, dusty evening, just the time when, in the great main thoroughfare out of which that bye-way turned, there was a temporary halt in the eternal tread of feet upon the pavement, and a strong red sunshine. He turned, alone, at the corner of our shady street, into a glow of light, in which we lost him.

Rarely did that hour of the evening come, rarely did I wake at night, rarely did I look up at the moon, or stars, or watch the falling rain, or hear the wind, but I thought of his solitary figure toiling on, poor pilgrim, and recalled the words:

"I'm a going to seek her, far and wide. If any hurt should come to me, remember that the last words I left for her was, 'My unchanged love is with my darling child, and I forgive her!'"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

BLUES.

All this time, I had gone on loving Dora, harder than ever. Her idea was my refuge in disappointment and distress, and made some amends to me, even for the loss of my friend. The more I pitied myself, or pitied others, the more I sought for consolation in the image of Dora. The greater the accumulation of deceit and trouble in the world, the brighter and the purer shone the star of Dora high above the world. I don't think I had any definite idea where Dora came from, or in what degree she was related to a higher order of beings; but I am quite sure I should have scouted the notion of her being simply human, like any other young lady, with indignation and contempt.

If I may so express it, I was steeped in Dora. I was not merely over head and ears in love with her, but I was saturated through and through. Enough love might have been wrung out of me, metaphorically speaking, to drown anybody in; and yet there would have remained enough within me, and all over me, to pervade my entire existence.

The first thing I did, on my own account, when I came back, was to take a night-walk to Norwood, and, like the subject of a venerable riddle of my childhood, to go "round and round the house, without ever touching the house," thinking about Dora. I believe the theme of this incomprehensible conundrum was the moon. No matter what it was, I, the moon-struck one, and Dora, perambulated round and round the house and garden for two hours, looking through the roses in the paling, getting my chin by dint of a little exertion above the rusty nails on the trees blowing kisies at the lights in the windows, and romantically calling on the night, at intervals, to shield my Dora—though I don't exactly know whether I suppose from fire, perhaps from mice, to which she had a great objection.

My love was so much on my mind, and it was so natural to me to confide in Peggotty, who found her again by my side of an evening, in the old set of industrial implements, busily mending the tour of my wardrobe, that I imparted to her, in a sufficiently roundabout way, my secret. Peggotty was strongly interested, but I could not get her into my view of the case. She was audaciously prejudiced in my favor, quite unable to understand why I should have any misgivings, or be low-spirited about it. "The young lady might think herself well off," she observed, "to have such a beaux. And as for Pa," she said, "what did the gentleman lack, for gracious sakes!"

I observed, however, that Mr. Spenlow's pastoral gown and stiff cravat took Peggotty down a little, and inspired her with a greater reverence for the man who was gradually becoming more and more etherealized in my eyes every day, and about whom a reflected radiance seemed to me to beam when he sat erect in Court among his papers, like a little lighthouse in a sea of shadow. And by the bye, it used to be uncomonomically strange to me to consider, I remember, as I sat in Court too, how those dim old judges and doctors wouldn't have cared for Dora, if they had known her; how they wouldn't have gone out of their senses with rapture, if marriage with Dora had been proposed to them; how Dora might have sung and played upon that glorified guitar, and she led me to the verge of madness, yet not have tempted one of those slow-givers an inch out of the road!

I despaired then, to a man. Frozen-in of gardeners in the flower-beds of the heart, I took a personal offence against them all. The Bar had no more tenderness or poetry in it than the Bar of a public-house.

Taking the management of Peggotty's affairs into my own hands, with no little pride, I procured the will, and came to a settlement with the Legcy Duty-office, and took her to the Bank, and so got everything into an orderly train. We wrote the legal character of those proceedings by pen to see some perspiring Wax-work, in Fleet Street (melted, I should hope, these twenty years); by visiting Miss Linwood's Exhibition, which I remember as a Mausoleum of needlework, able to self-examination and repentance; and by inspecting the Tower of London; and going to the top of St. Paul's. All these wonders afforded Peggotty as much pleasure as she was able.
A Glimpse of Mr. Murdstone.

or existing circumstances: except, I Paul's, which, from her long attach-er work-box, became a rival of the the lid, and was, in some particu-larized, she considered, by that work y's business, which was what we used common-form business in the Com-very light and lucrative the commonness was), being settled, I took her e office one morning to pay her bill. w had stepped out, old Tiffey said, to leman sworn for a marriage licence; now he would be back directly, our close to the Surrogates's, and to the sal's office too, I told Peggotty to a little like undertakers, in the Com-regarded Probate transactions; gener-al it a rule to look more or less cut up, id to deal with clients in mourning: r feeling of delicacy, we were always light-hearted with the licence clients. I hinted to Peggotty that she would enlow much recovered from the shock de's decease; and indeed he came in sroom. ther Peggotty nor I had eyes for him, hw, in company with him, Mr. Murd-was very little changed. His hair thick, and was certainly as black, as his glance was as little to be trusted upperfield?" said Mr. Spenlow. "You gentleman, I believe?" my gentleman a distant bow, and Peg-gly recognized him. He was, at first, disconcerted to meet us two together; decided what to do, and came up to es," he said, "that you are doing hardly be interesting to you," said I. wish to know." asked at each other, and he addressed Peggotty. ou," said he. "I am sorry to observe we lost your husband." the first loss I have had in my life, one," replied Peggotty, trembling from ot. "I am glad to hope that there is blame for this one,—nobody to answer said he; "that's a comfortable reflect-have done your duty?" not worn anybody's life away," said "I am thankful to think! No, Mr. I have not worried and frightened rector to an early grave!" her gloomily—morosefully I thought ist; and said, turning his head tow-m looking at my feet instead of my u not likely to encounter soon again;

a source of satisfaction to us both, no doubt, for such meetings as this can never be agreeable. I do not expect that you, who always rebelled against my just authority, exerted for your benefit and reformation, should owe me any good-will now. There is an antipathy between us——" "An old one, I believe?" said I, interrupting him. He smiled, and shot as evil a glance at me as could come from his dark eyes. "It rankled in your baby breast," he said. "It embittered the life of your poor mother. You are right. I hope you may do better, yet; I hope you may correct yourself." Here he ended the dialogue, which had been carried on in a low voice, in a corner of the outer office, by passing into Mr. Spenlow's room, and saying aloud, in his smoothest manner: "Gentlemen of Mr. Spenlow's profession are accustomed to family differences, and know how complicated and difficult they always are!" With that, he paid the money for his licence; and, receiving it neatly folded from Mr. Spenlow, together with a shaker of the hand, and a polite wish for his happiness and the lady's, went out of the office.

I might have had more difficulty in constraining myself to be silent under his words, if I had had less difficulty in impressing upon Peggotty (who was only angry on my account, good creature!) that we were not in a place for recrimination, and that I besought her to hold her peace. She was so unusually roused, that I was glad to compound for an affectationate hug, elicited by this revival in her mind of our old injuries, and to make the best I could of it, before Mr. Spenlow and the clerks.

Mr. Spenlow did not appear to know what the connexion between Mr. Murdstone and myself was; which I was glad of, for I could not bear to acknowledge him, even in my own breast, re-membering what I did of the history of my poor mother. Mr. Spenlow seemed to think, if he thought anything about the matter, that my aunt was the leader of the state party in our family, and that there was a rebel party commanded by somebody else—so I gathered at least from what he said, while we were waiting for Mr. Tiffey to make out Peggotty's bill of costs.

"Miss Trotwood," he remarked, "is very firm, no doubt, and not likely to give way to opposition. I have an admiration for her character, and I may congratulate you, Copperfield, on being on the right side. Differences between relations are much to be deplored—but they are extremely general—and the great thing is, to be on the right side;" meaning, I take it, on the side of the moneyed interest.

"Rather a good marriage this, I believe?" said Mr. Spenlow.

I explained that I knew nothing about it. "Indeed!" he said. "Speaking from the few words Mr. Murdstone dropped—as a man fre-quent does on these occasions—and from what
Miss Murdstone let fall, I should say it was rather a good marriage."

"Do you mean that there is money, sir?" I asked.

"Yes," said Mr. Spenlow, "I understand there's money. Beauty too, I am told."

"Indeed! Is his new wife young?"

"Just of age," said Mr. Spenlow. "So lately, that I should think they had been waiting for that."

"Lord deliver her!" said Peggotty. So very emphatically and unexpectedly, that we were all three discomposed; until Tiffey came in with the bill.

Old Tiffey soon appeared, however, and handed it to Mr. Spenlow, to look over. Mr. Spenlow, settling his chin in his cravat and rubbing it softly, went over the name with a deprecatory air—as if it were all Jorkins's doing—and handed it back to Tiffey with a bland sign.

"Yes," he said. "That's right. Quite right. I should have been extremely happy, Copperfield, to have limited these charges to the actual expenditure out of pocket, but it is an irksome incident in my professional life, that I am not at liberty to consult my own wishes. I have a partner—Mr. Jorkins."

As he said this with a gentle melancholy, which was the next thing to making no charge at all, I expressed my acknowledgments on Peggotty's behalf, and paid Tiffey in bank notes. Peggotty then retired to her lodging, and Mr. Spenlow and I went into Court, where we had a divorce-suit coming on, under an ingenious little statute (repealed now, I believe, but in virtue of which I have seen several marriages annulled), of which the merits were these. The husband, whose name was Thomas Benjamin, had taken out his marriage licence as Thomas only; suppressing the Benjamin, in case he should not find himself as comfortable as he expected. Not finding himself as comfortable as he expected, or being a little fatigued with his wife, poor fellow, he now came forward, by a friend, after being married a year or two, and declared that his name was Thomas Benjamin, and therefore he was not married at all. Which the Court confirmed, to his great satisfaction.

I must say that I had my doubts about the strict justice of this, and was not even frightened out of them by the bushel of wheat which reconciles all small quarrels.

But Mr. Spenlow argued the matter with me. He said, Look at the world, there was good and evil in that; look at the ecclesiastical law, there was good and evil in that. It was all part of a system. Very good. There you are!

I had not the hard knocks to suggest to Dora's father that possibly we might even improve the world a little, if we got up early in the morning, and took off our coats to the work; but I confessed that I thought we might improve the Commons.

Mr. Spenlow replied that he would particularly advise me to dismiss that idea from my mind, as not being worthy of my gentlemanly origin, but that he would be glad to hear from what improvement I thought the Commons capable?

Taking that part of the Commons to be nearest to us—for our marriage by this time, and we were out and strolling past the Prerogative Office, re-admitted that I thought the Prerogative Office a queerly managed institution. Mr. Jorkins inquired in what respect? I replied, with deference to his experience (but with more, I am afraid, to his being Dora's father) that perhaps it was a little nonsensical that the entry of that Court, containing the origin of all persons leaving effects within the province of Canterbury, for three whole, should be an accidental building, never used for the purpose, leased by the registrars as their own private emolument, unsafe, not sustained to be fire-proof, chocked with the tired documents it held, and positively, from the basement, a mercenary speculative registrars, who took great fees from the, and crammed the public's wills away and anywhere, having no other object than the profit of them cheaply. That, perhaps, it was unreasonable that these registries should present to the public an account of profits amounting to eight or nine hundred pounds a year (to say nothing of those of the deputy registrars, and clerks, who were not obliged to spend a little money, in finding a reasonably safe place to keep important documents which all classes were compelled to hand over to them as they would or no. That, perhaps, it was unjust that all the great offices in this great city should be magnificent sinners, while fortunate working-clerks in the cold doing up-stairs were the worst rewarded, and considered men, doing important service in London. That perhaps it was a little unjust that the principal registrar of all, who was to find the public, constantly round about this place, all needful accommodation, an enormous sincurist in virtue of that, who might be, besides, a clergyman, a putter holder of a stall in a cathedral, and whose while the public was put to the inconvenience which we had a specimen every afternoon, the office was busy, and which we knew quite monstrous. That, perhaps, it was unreasonable that the Prerogative Office of the diocese of Canterbury, was altogether such a pestilent job, an impossible absurdity, that but for it, was squeezed away into a corner of St. Paul's yard, which few people knew, it must have turned completely inside out, and upset long ago.

Mr. Spenlow smiled as I became more on the subject, and then argued the same as he had argued the other. It was a question of the public feeling that their wishes were in
I AM INVITED TO A PIC-NIC.

I thought it for granted that the office was not the better, who was the worse for it? Who was the better for it? All the more. Very well. Then the good predominated, it might not be a perfect system; nothing perfect; but what he objected to, was, in the opinion of the wedge. Under the Prerogatives, the country had been glorious. In wedged into the Prerogative Office, and try would cease to be glorious. He contended, the principle of a gentleman to take what he found them; and he had no doubt, the Prerogative Office would last our time. I do not think, though I had great doubts of it, I found he was right, however, for I only last to the present moment, but so in the teeth of a great parliamentary grade (not too willingly) eighteen years in all these objections of mine were set aside, and then the existing stowage for a described as equal to the accumulation two years and a half more. What they were with them since; whether they have why, or whether they sell any, and whether the butter-shops; I don’t know. I am not there, and I hope it may not go at all.

I set all this down, in my present blissful because here it comes into its natural Mr. Spenlow and I falling into this corner, we plugged it and our corner and from diverged into general topics. And so it out, in the end, that Mr. Spenlow told day week was Dora’s birthday, and he glad if I would come down and join a special on the occasion. I went out of my immediately; became a mere driveller on receipt of a little lace-edged sheet of paper, “Favoured by papa. To remind;” and the intervening period in a state of

I committed every possible absurdity, say of preparation for this blessed event. ot when I remember the convey I bought, might be placed in any collection of Inns of Torture. I provided, and sent down of coach the night before, a delicate manner, amounting in itself, I thought, a declaration. There were crackers in tenderness mottos that could be got for. At six in the morning, I was in Covent Market, buying a bouquet for Dora. At was on horseback (I hired a gallant the occasion), with the bouquet in to keep it fresh, trotting down to Nor

pose that when I saw Dora in the garden ended not to see her, and rode past the intending to be anxiously looking for it, I cd two small foolish which other young men in my circumstances might have com, because they came so very natural to me. when I did find the house, and did dis the garden gate, and drag those stony-
and Dora went to him, saying, "Look, papa, what beautiful flowers!") And Miss Mills smiled thoughtfully, as who should say, "Ye May-flies, enjoy your brief existence in the bright morning of life!" And we all walked from the lawn towards the carriage, which was getting ready.

I shall never have such a ride again. I have never had such another. There were only those three, their hamper, my hamper, and the guitar-case, in the phaeton; and, of course, the phaeton was open; and I rode behind it, and Dora sat with her back to the horse, looking towards me. She kept the bouquet close to her on the cushion, and wouldn't allow Jip to sit on that side of her at all, for fear he would crush it. She often carried it in her hand, often refreshed herself with the fragrance. Our eyes at those times often met; and my great astonishment is that I didn't go over the head of my gallant grey into the carriage. There was dust, I believe. There was a good deal of dust, I believe. I have a faint impression that Mr. Spenlow remonstrated with me for riding in it; but I knew of none. I was sensible of a mist of love and beauty about Dora, but of nothing else. He stood up sometimes, and asked me what I thought of the prospect. I said it was delightful, and I daresay it was; but it was all Dora to me. The sun shone Dora, and the birds sang Dora. The south wind blew Dora, and the wild flowers in the hedges were all Doras, to a bud. My comfort is, Miss Mills understood me. Miss Mills alone could enter into my feelings thoroughly.

I don't know how long we were going, and to this hour I know as little where we went. Perhaps it was near Guildford. Perhaps some Arabian-night magician opened up the place for the day, and shut it up for ever when we came away. It was a green spot, on a hill, carpeted with soft turf. There were shaly trees, and heather, and, as far as the eye could see, a rich landscape.

It was a trying thing to find people here, waiting for us; and my jealousy, even of the ladies, knew no bounds. But all of my own sex—especially one impostor, three or four years my elder, with a red whisker, on which he established an amount of presumption not to be endured—were my mortal foes.

We all unpacked our baskets, and employed ourselves in getting dinner ready. Red Whisker pretended he could make a salad (which I don't believe), and obstructed himself on public notice. Some of the young ladies washed the lettuces for him, and sliced them under his directions. Dora was among these. I felt that fate had pitted me against this man, and one of us must fall.

Red Whisker made his salad (I wondered how they could eat it. Nothing should have induced me to touch it!) and voted himself into the charge of the wine-cellar, which he constructed, being an ingenious beast, in the hollow trunk of a tree.

By-and-bye, I saw him, with the majority of a lobster on his plate, eating his dinner at the feet of Dora!
I HAVE A GLORIFIED RIDE.

I drank in every note of her dear
she sang to me who loved her, and all
might applaud as much as they liked,
and nothing to do with it!

I was afraid to be real, and that I should wake
Dora sang, and others sang, and Miss
Memory; as if she were a hundred
and the evening came on; and we had
boiling gipsy-fashion; and I

applied than ever when the party broke
to other people, defeated Red Whisker
sent their several ways, and we went
up the still evening and the dying
sweet scents rising up around us. Mr.
being a little drowsy after the cham-
nor to the soil that grew the grape, to
that made the wine to the sun that
and to the merchant who adulterated
fast asleep in a corner of the car-
de by the side and talked to Dora. She
horse and patted him—oh, what a
hand it looked upon a horse!—and her
Id not keep right, and now and then I
and her with my arm; and I even fan-
lipped began to see how it was, and to un-
that he must make up his mind to be

gracious Miss Mills, too; that amiable,
its used-up recluse; that little patriarch
less than twenty, who had done
word, and mustn't on any account have
ring echoes in the caverns of Memory
what a kind thing she did!
Copperfield,” said Miss Mills, “come to
of the carriage a moment—if you can
I want to speak to you.”
me, on my gallant grey, bending at the
as Mills, with my hand upon the car-
I was coming to stay with me. She is
me with the day after to-morrow,
did like to call, I am sure papa would
to see you.”
ould I do but invoke a silent blessing
ills’s head, and store Miss Mills’s ad-
securest corner of my memory! What
but tell Miss Mills, with grateful looks
it words, how much I appreciated her
, and what an inestimable value I set
Handship!
Miss Mills benignantly dismissed me,
back to Dora!” and I went; and
out of the carriage to talk to me, and
all the rest of the way; and I rode my
so close to the wheel that I grazed
ore leg against it, and “took the bark
owner told me, “to the tune of three
”—which I paid, and thought extrem-
so much joy. What time Miss Mills
sat looking at the moon, murmuring verses, and
recalling, I suppose, the ancient days when she
and earth had anything in common.
Norwood was many miles too near, and we
reached it many hours too soon; but Mr. Spenlow
came to himself a little short of it, and said, “You
must come in, Copperfield, and rest!” and I con-
senting, we had sandwiches and wine-and-water.
In the light room, Dora blushing looked so lovely,
that I could not tear myself away, but sat there
staring, in a dream, until the snoring of Mr. Spen-
low inspired me with sufficient consciousness to
take my leave. So we parted; I riding all the
way to London with the farewell touch of Dora’s
hand still light on mine, recalling every incident
and word ten thousand times; lying down in my
own bed at last, as enraptured a young noodle as
ever was carried out of his five wits by love.

When I awoke the next morning, I was resolute
to declare my passion to Dora, and know my fate.
Happiness or misery was now the question.
There was no other question that I knew of in
the world, and only Dora could give the answer
to it. I passed three days in a luxury of wretched-
ness, torturing myself by putting every conceiva-
ble variety of discouraging construction on all
that ever had taken place between Dora and me.
At last, arrayed for the purpose at a vast expense,
I went to Miss Mills’s, fraught with a declaration.

How many times I went up and down the
street, and round the square—painfully aware of
being a much better answer to the old riddle than
the original one—before I could persuade myself
to go up the steps and knock, is no matter now.
Even when, at last, I had knocked, and was wait-
ing at the door, I had some flurried thought of
asking if that were Mr. Blackey’s (in imitation of
poor Barkis), begging pardon, and retreat ing.
But I kept my ground.

Mr. Mills was not at home. I did not expect
he would be. Nobody wanted him. Miss Mills
was at home. Miss Mills would do.

I was shown into a room up-stairs, where Miss
Mills and Dora were. Jip was there. Miss Mills
was copying music (I recollect, it was a new song,
called Affection’s Dirge), and Dora was painting
flowers. What were my feelings when I recog-
nised my own flowers; the identical Covent Gar-
den Market purchase! I cannot say that they
were very like, or that they particularly resembled
any flowers that have ever come under my ob-
ervation; but I knew from the paper round
them, which was accurately copied, what the
composition was.

Miss Mills was very glad to see me, and very
sorry her Papa was not at home; though I thought
we all bore that with fortitude. Miss Mills was
conversational for a few minutes, and then, lay-
ing down her pen upon Affection’s Dirge, got up,
and left the room.

I began to think I would put it off till to-mor-
row.

“I hope your poor horse was not tired, when
he got home at night," said Dora, lifting up her beautiful eyes. "It was a long way for him.

I began to think I would do it to-day.

"It was a long way for him," said I, "for he had nothing to uphold him on the journey."

"Wasn't he fed, poor thing?" asked Dora.

I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.

"Ye—yes," I said, "he was well taken care of. I mean he had not the unutterable happiness that I had in being so near you."

Dora bent her head over her drawing, and said, after a little while—I had sat, in the interval, in a burning fever, and with my legs in a very rigid state—

"You didn't seem to be sensible of that happiness yourself, at one time of the day."

I saw now that I was in for it, and it must be done on the spot.

"You didn't care for that happiness in the least," said Dora, slightly raising her eyebrows, and shaking her head, "when you were sitting by Miss Kitt."

Kitt, I should observe, was the name of the creature in pink, with the little eyes.

"Though certainly I don't know why you should," said Dora, "or why you should call it a happiness at all. But of course you don't mean what you say. And I assure you no one doubts your being at liberty to do whatever you like. Jip, you naughty boy, come here!"

I don't know how I did it. I did it in a moment. I intercepted Jip. I had Dora in my arms. I was full of eloquence. I never stopped for a word. I told her how I loved her. I told her I didn't care without her. I told her that I loathed and worshipped her. Jip barked madly all the time.

When Dora hung her head and cried, and trembled, my eloquence increased so much the more. If she would like me to die for her, she had but to say the word, and I was ready. Life without Dora's love was not a thing to have on any terms. I couldn't bear it, and I wouldn't. I had loved her every minute, day and night, since I first saw her. I loved her at that minute to distraction. I should always love her, every minute, to distraction. Lovers had loved before, and lovers would love again; but no lover had ever loved, might, could, would, or should ever love, as I loved Dora. The more I raved, the more Jip barked. Each of us, in his own way, got more mad every moment.

Well, well! Dora and I were sitting on the sofa by-and-by, quiet enough, and Jip was lying in her lap, winking peacefully at me. It was off my mind. I was in a state of perfect rapture.

Dora and I were engaged.

I suppose we had some notion that this was to end in marriage. We must have had some, because Dora stipulated that we were never to be married without her papa's consent. But, in our youthful ecstasy, I don't think that we really looked before us or behind us; or had any aspiration beyond the ignorant present. We keep our secret from Mr. Spenlow; but the idea never entered my head, then, that there was anything dishonorable in that

Miss Mills was more than usually when Dora, going to find her, brought her tales—I apprehend, because there was a tale what had passed to awaken the slumbering Voice in the Caverns of Memory. She gave a blessing, and the assurance of her last ship, and spoke to us, generally, as to a Voice from the Cloister.

What an idle time it was! What an idler, happy, foolish time it was!

When I measured Dora's finger for a ring, I was to be made of Forget-me-not, and a jewel, to whom I took the measure, &c., &c. I thought anything he liked for the pretty lock, with its blue stones—so associated in my mind with Dora's hand, that yesterday, saw such another, by chance, on the fag-end own daughter, there was a momentary stab to me, like pain.

When I walked about, excited with my love, and full of my own interest, and felt the of loving Dora, and of being beloved, so that if I had walked the air, I could not be more above the people not so situated, we creeping on the earth.

When we had those meetings in the go the square, and sat within the dingy house, so happy, that I love the London to this hour, for nothing else, and see the tropics in their smoky feathers.

When we had our first great quarrel (week of our betrothal), and when Dora came back the ring, enclosed in a despairing note, wherein she used the terrible exclamation "our love have begun in folly, and madness!" which dreadful words occasion to tear my hair, and cry that all was over.

When, under cover of the night, I few Mills, whom I saw by stealth in a back where there was a mangle, and implore Mills to interpose between us and save us.

When Miss Mills undertook the office and with Dora, exhorting us, from the pure own bitter youth, to mutual concession, avoidance of the desert of Sahara.

When we cried, and made up, and blustered against, that the back-kitchen, mangle changed to cube's own temple, where we as a plan of correspondence through Miss 3 ways to comprehend at least one letter a side every day.

What an idle time! What an unhappy, happy, foolish time! Of all the times of that Time has in his grip, there is none one retrospection I can smile at half so tenderly.
CHAPTER XXXIV.

MY AUNT ASTONISHES ME.

I wrote to Agnes as soon as Dora and I were engaged. I wrote her a long letter, in which I set out to make her comprehend how blest I was, at what a darling Dora was. I entreated Agnes to regard this as a thoughtless passion which had ever yielded to any other, or had had least resistance to the boyish fancies that we used to entertain. I assured her that its profundity was unapprehensible, and expressed my belief that feeling like it had ever been known.

Somehow, as I wrote to Agnes on a fine evening, through my open window, and the remembrance of dear calm eyes and gentle face came stealing to me, it shed such a peaceful influence upon my heart and agitation in which I had been living, and of which my very happiness partook in a degree, that it soothed me into tears. I recollected that I sat resting my head upon my hand, the letter was half done, cherishing a dispensation as if Agnes were one of the elements of natural home. As if, in the retirement of the sea, made almost sacred to me by her presence, I found its refuge and best friend.

Of Steerforth, I said nothing. I only told her I had been sad grief at Yarmouth, on account of the flight; and that on me it made a double keeping, by reason of the circumstances attending.

I knew how quick she was always to divine truth, and that she would never be the first to delude her name. To this letter, I received an answer by return mail. As I read it, I seemed to hear Agnes speaking to me. It was like her cordial voice in ears. What can I say more?

While I had been away from home lately, Traddles had talked twice or thrice. Finding Pegotty and being informed by Pegotty (who always volunteered that information to whomsoever she did receive it), that she was my old nurse, he established a good-humored acquaintance with and had stayed to have a little chat with her. So Pegotty said; but I am afraid she was all on her own side, and of immediate use, as she was very difficult indeed to stop, and I bless her when she had me for her name.

This reminds me, not only that I expected oddities on a certain afternoon of his own appointing, which was now come, but that Mrs. Crupp had resigned everything appertaining to office (the salary excepted) until Pegotty could cease to present herself. Mrs. Crupp, after being divers conversations respecting Pegotty, a very high-pitched voice, on the staircase—a somewhat familiar familiar it would appear, for otherwise speaking she was quite alone at those times—addressed a letter to me, developing her theme. Beginning it with that statement of universal application, which fitted every occurrence of her life, namely, that she was a mother herself, she went on to inform me that she had once seen very different days, but that at all periods of her existence she had had a constitutional objection to spies, intruders, and informers. She named no names; she said; let them the cap fitted, wear it; but spies, intruders, and informers, especially in widowers' weeds (this clause was underlined), she had ever accustomed herself to look down upon.

If a gentleman was the victim of spies, intruders, and informers (but still naming no names), that was his own pleasure. He had a right to please himself; so let him do. All that she, Mrs. Crupp, stipulated for, was, that she should not be "brought in contract" with such persons. Therefore she begged to be excused from any further attendance on the top set, until things were as they formerly was, and as they could be wished to be; and further mentioned that her little book would be found upon the breakfast-table every Saturday morning, when she requested an immediate settlement of the same, with the benevolent view of saving trouble, "and an ill-convenience" to all parties.

After this, Mrs. Crupp confined herself to making pitfalls on the stairs, principally with pitchers, and endeavoring to delude Pegotty into breaking her legs. I found it rather harassing to live in this state of siege, but was too much afraid of Mrs. Crupp to see any way out of it.

"My dear Copperfield," cried Traddles, punctually appearing at my door, in spite of all these obstacles, "how do you do?"

"My dear Traddles," said I, "I am delighted to see you at last, and very sorry I have not been at home before. But I have been so engaged—"

"Yes, yes, I know," said Traddles, "of course. Yours lives in London, I think."

"What did you say?"

"She—excuse me—Miss D., you know," said Traddles, coloring in his great delicacy, "lives in London, I believe?"

"Oh yes. Near London."

"MINE, perhaps you recollect," said Traddles, with a serious look, "lives down in Devonshire—one of ten. Consequently, I am not so much engaged as you—in that sense."

"I wonder you can bear," I returned, "to see her so seldom."

"Hah!" said Traddles, thoughtfully. "It does seem a wonder. I suppose it is, Copperfield, because there's no help for it?"

"I suppose so," I replied with a smile, and not without a blush. "And because you have so much constancy and patience, Traddles."

"Dear me!" said Traddles, considering about it, "do I strike you in that way, Copperfield? Really I didn't know that I had. But she is such an extraordinarily dear girl herself, that it's possible she may imparted something of these virtues to me. Now you mention it, Copperfield, I shouldn't wonder at all. I assure you too..."
always forgetting herself, and taking care of the other nine."

"Is she the eldest?" I inquired.

"Oh, dear, no," said Traddles. "The eldest is a Beauty."

He saw, I suppose, that I could not help smiling at the simplicity of this reply; and added, with a smile upon his own ingenuous face:

"Not, of course, but that my Sophy—pretty name, Copperfield, I always think?"

"Very pretty!" said I.

"Not, of course, but that Sophy is beautiful. Oh, dear, no!" said Traddles, steeping his chin. "The two younger are only nine and ten. Sophy educates 'em."

"The second daughter, perhaps?" I hazarded.

"No," said Traddles. "Sarah's the second. Sarah has something the matter with her spine, poor girl. The malady will wear out by and by, the doctors say, but in the meantime she has to lie down for a twelfth month. Sophy nurses her. Sophy's the fourth."

"Is the mother living?" I inquired.

"Oh, yes," said Traddles. "She is alive. She is a very superior woman indeed, but the damp country is not adapted to her constitution, and—in fact, she has lost the use of her limbs."

"Dear me!" said I.

"Very sad, is it not?" returned Traddles.

"But in a merely domestic view it is not so bad as it might be, because Sophy takes her place. She is quite as much a mother to her mother, as she is to the other nine."

I felt the greatest admiration for the virtues of this young lady; and, honestly with the view of doing my best to prevent the good nature of Traddles from being imposed upon, to the detriment of their joint prospects in life, inquired how Mr. Micawber was?

"He is quite well, Copperfield, thank you," said Traddles. "I am not living with him at present."

"No?"

"No. You see the truth is," said Traddles, in a whisper, "he has changed his name to Mortimer; in consequence of his temporary embarrassments; and he don't come out till after dark—and then in spectacles. There was an execution put into our house, for rent. Mrs. Micawber was in such a dreadful state that I really couldn't reason, giving my name to that second bill we spoke of there. You may imagine how delightful it was to my feelings, Copperfield, to see the money settled with it, and Mrs. Micawber recover her spirits."

"Hum!" said I.

"Not that her happiness was of long duration," pursued Traddles, "for, unfortunately, within a week another execution came in and broke up the establishment. I have been living in a furnished apartment since then, and the mortimers have been very private indeed. However, we won't think of it, Copperfield, if I must say that the broker carried off my little round idea with the marble top, and Sophy's flower-stand?"

"What a hard thing!" I exclaimed indignantly.

"It was a—a pull," said Traddles, with his usual wince at that expression. "I don't mention it reproachfully, however, but with a motive. The fact is, Copperfield, I was unable to repurchase them at the time of their seizure at the first place, because the broker, having sold that I wanted them, ran the price up to an exorbitant extent; and, in the second place, because—I hadn't any money. Now, I have kept my word, upon the broker's shop," said Traddles with a great enjoyment of his mysteries, "wholly up at the top of Tottenham Court Road, end of last, to-day I find them put out for sale. I have only noticed them from over the way, because the broker saw me bless you, he'd ask my price for them! What has occurred to me, hitherto the money, is, that perhaps you wouldn't object to ask that good nurse of yours to come with me to the shop—I can show it her from round the corner of the next street—and make the best bargain for them, as if they were for herself, that she can!"

The delight with which Traddles proposed this plan to me, and the sense he had of its uncommon attractiveness, are among the freshest things in my remembrance.

I told him that my old nurse would be delighted to assist him, and that we would all three take the shop together, but on one condition. That condition was, that he should make a solemn remonstrance to grant no more loans of his name, or anything else, to Mr. Micawber.

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, "there has already done so, because I begin to feel that I have not only been inconsiderate, but that I have been positively unjust to Sophy. My own mind is turned to myself, there is no longer any ambition; but I pledge it to you, too, with greatest readiness. That first unlucky obligation I have paid. I have no doubt Mr. Micawber would have paid it if he could, but he couldn't. One thing I ought to mention, which I like the much in Mr. Micawber. Copperfield. It rests the second obligation, which is not yet.
MY AUNT FORGIVES MY NURSE.

I me that it is provided for, but he says it... unwilling to damp my good friend's con... and therefore assented. After a little... to enlil Pegottay; Traddles declining the... evening with me, both because he... liveliest apprehensions that his... would be bought by somebody else be... could re-purchase it, and because it was... ing he always devoted to writing to the... or shall forget him peeping round the cor... ne street in Tottenham Court Road, while... was bargaining for the precious articles;... itation when she came slowly towards us... ully offering a price, and was hailed by the... broker, and went back again. The end... negation was, that she bought the prop... tolerably easy terms, and Traddles was... ted with pleasure.

very much obliged to you, Indeed," said... ing it was to be sent to where that night... "If I might ask one other hope you would not think it absurd, Copp... beforehand, certain not.

n if you would be good enough," said... to Pegottay, "to get the flower-pot now, I should like (it being Sophy's, Copper... tty was glad to get it for him, and he... lined her with thanks, and went his way... mham Court Road, carrying the flower... tionately in his arms, with one of the... lighted expressions of countenance I ever... then turned back towards my chambers. Sh... shops had charms for Pegottay which I... them to possess in the same degree... dly else, I sauntered easily along, amused... aing in at the windows, and waiting for... then as she chose. We were thus a good... getting to the Adelphi.

way up-stairs, I called her attention to... en disappearance of Mrs. Crupp's pitfalls, to the prints of recent footsteps. We h... very much surprised, coming higher up... y outer door standing open (which I had... d to hear voices inside.

ooked at one-another, without knowing make of this, and went into the sitting. What was my amazement to find, of all... on earth, my aunt there, and Mr. Dick!... sitting on a quantity of luggage, with her... is before her, and her cat on her knee, nale Robinson Crusoe drinking tea. Mr. s... ting thoughtfully on a great kite, such as... acting been out together to fly, with more... pised about him!" cried I. "Why, what an... rately embraced; and Mr. Dick and I... cordially shook hands; and Mrs. Crupp, who was... busy making tea, and could not be too attentive, cordially said she had knowed well as Mr. Copper... full would have his heart in his mouth, when he see his dear relations.

"Halloa!" said my aunt to Pegottay, who quaked before her awful presence. "How are you?"

"You remember my aunt, Pegottay?" said I. "For the love of goodness, child," exclaimed my aunt, "don't call the woman by that South Sea Island name! If she married and got rid of it, which was the best thing she could do, why don't you give her the benefit of the change? What's your name now.—P?" said my aunt, as a compromise for the obnoxious appellation.

"Barkis, ma'am," said Pegottay, with a curt... sey.

"Well! That's human," said my aunt. "It sounds less as if you wanted a Missionary. How d'ye do, Barkis? I hope you're well?"

Encouraged by these gracious words, and by my aunt's extending her hand, Barkis came forward, and took the hand, and curtsied her acknowledgments.

"We are older than we were, I see," said my aunt. "We have only met each other once before, you know. A nice business we made of it then! Trot, my dear, another cup."

I handed it dutifully to my aunt, who was in her usual inflexible state of figure; and ventured a remonstrance with her on the subject of her sitting on a box.

"Let me draw the sofa here, or the easy-chair, aunt," said I. "Why should you be so uncom... fortate?"

"Thank you, Trot," replied my aunt, "I pre... er to sit upon my property." Here my aunt... looked hard at Mrs. Crupp, and observed, "We needn't trouble you to wait, ma'am."

"Shall I put a little more tea in the pot afore I go, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp.

"No, I thank you, ma'am," replied my aunt. "Would you let me fetch another pat of butter, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp. "Or would you be persuaded to try a new-laid egg? or should I brile a rasher? Ain't there nothing I could do for your dear aunt, Mr. Copperfull?"

"Nothing, ma'am," returned my aunt. "I... shall do very well, I thank you."

Mrs. Crupp, who had been incessantly smiling to express sweet temper, and incessantly holding her head on one side, to express a general feebleness of constitution, and incessantly rubbing her hands, to express a desire to be of service to all deserving objects, gradually smiled herself, one-eyed herself, and rubbed herself, out of the room.

"Dick!" said my aunt. "You know what I told you about time-servers and wealth-worship..." Mr. Dick—with rather a scared look, as if he had forgotten it—returned a hasty answer in the affirmative.

"Mrs. Crupp is one of them," said my aunt.
"Barkis, I'll trouble you to look after the tea, and let me have another cup, for I don't fancy that woman's porring-out!"

I knew my aunt sufficiently well to know that she had something of importance on her mind, and that there was far more matter in this arrival than a stranger might have supposed. I noticed how her eye lighted on me, when she thought my attention otherwise occupied; and what a curious process of hesitation appeared to be going on within her, while she preserved her outward stiffness and composure. I began to reflect whether I had done anything to offend her; and my conscience whispered me that I had not yet told her about Dora. Could it by any means be that, I wondered?

As I knew she would only speak in her own good time, I sat down near her, and spoke to the birds, and played with the cat, and was as easy as I could be. But I was very far from being really easy; and I should still have been so, even if Mr. Dick, leaning over the great kite behind my aunt, had not taken every secret opportunity of shaking his head darkly at me, and pointing at her.

"Trot," said my aunt at last, when she had finished her tea, and carefully smoothed down her dress, and wiped her lips—"you needn't go, Barkis!—Trot, have you got to be firm, and self-reliant?"

"I hope so, aunt."

"What do you think?" inquired Miss Betsey.

"I think so, aunt."

"Then why, my love," said my aunt, looking earnestly at me, "why do you think I prefer to sit upon this property of mine to-night?"

I shook my head, unable to guess.

"Because," said my aunt, "it's all I have. Because I'm ruined, my dear!"

If the house, and every one of us, had tumbled out into the river together, I could hardly have received a greater shock.

"Dick knows it," said my aunt, laying her hand calmly on my shoulder. "I am ruined, my dear Trot! All I have in the world is in this room, except the cottage; and that I have left Janet to let. Barkis, I want to get a bed for this gentleman to-night. To save expense, perhaps you can make up something here for myself. Anything will do. It's only for to-night. We'll talk about this, more, to-morrow."

I was roused from my amazement, and concern for her—I am sure, for her—by her falling on my neck for a moment, and crying that she only grieved for me. In another moment she suppressed this emotion; and said with an aspect more triumphant than dejected:

"We must meet reverses boldly, and not suffer them to frighten us, my dear. We must learn to act the play out. We must live misfortune down, Trot!"

CHAPTER XXXV.
DEPRESSION.

As soon as I could recover my present of mind, which quite deserted me in the first overpowering shock of my aunt's intelligence, I presented Mr. Dick to come round to the candle shop, and take possession of the bed which Peggotty had lately vacated. The chamber was being in Hungerford Market, and Hungerford Market being a very different place in that rain, there was a low wooden colonnade before the door (not very unlike that before the house where the little man and woman used to live in the old weather-glass), which pleased Mr. Dick mightily. The glory of lodging in the structure would have compensated him, I may say, for many inconveniences; but, as there were really few to bear, beyond the compound at horror I have already mentioned, and perhaps the want of a little more elbow-room, he was perfectly charmed with his accommodation. Mr. Guppy indignantly assured him that there wasn't room to swing a cat there; but, as Mr. Dick judiciously observed to me, sitting down on the foot of the bed, nursing his leg, "You know, Trotwood, I don't want to swing a cat. I never do swing a cat. Therefore, what does that signify to me?"

I tried to ascertain whether Mr. Dick had had my understanding of the causes of this sudden and great change in my aunt's affairs. As I might have expected, he had none at all. The only count he could give of it, was, that my aunt had said to him, the day before yesterday, "Yes, Dick, are you really and truly the philosopher to take you for?" That then he had said, was the only count he could give of it. That then my aunt had said, "Dick, I am ruined." That then he had said "Oh, be deuced!" That then my aunt had praised him highly, which he was very glad of. And that then they had come to me, and had had bottled porter and sandwiches on the road.

Mr. Dick was so very complacent, sitting on the foot of the bed, nursing his leg, and telling me this, with his eyes wide open and a surprised smile, that I am sorry to say I was provoked into explaining to him that ruin meant distress, want, and starvation; but, I was soon bitterly repented for this harshness, by seeing his face turn pale, and tears course down his lengthened cheeks, while he fixed upon me a look of such unutterable woe, that it might have softened a far harder heart than mine. I took infinitely greater pains to cheer him up again than I had taken to depress him; and I soon understood (as I thought I had known at first) that he had been so content, merely because of his faith in the wisest and most wonderful of women, and his unbounded reliance on my intellectual resources. The latter, I believe, he considered a match for any kind of disaster not absolutely mortal.

"What can we do, Trotwood?" said Mr. Dick. "There's the Memorial—"

"To be sure there is," said I. "But why—"
MY AUNT'S GENTILENESS.

I suppose I looked doubtful, for she added:
"Tut, tut, child. If nothing worse than Ale happens to us, we are well off."
"I should think so myself, aunt, I am sure," said I.
"Well, then, why don't you think so?" said my aunt.
"Because you and I are very different people," I returned.
"Stuff and nonsense, Trot!" replied my aunt.
My aunt went on with a quiet enjoyment, in which there was very little affection, if any; drinking the warm ale with a teaspoon, and soaking her strips of toast in it.
"Trot," said she, "I don't care for strange faces in general, but I rather like that Barkis of yours, do you know?"
"It's better than a hundred pounds to hear you say so!" said I.
"It's a most extraordinary world," observed my aunt, rubbing her nose; "how that woman ever got into it with that name, is unaccountable to me. It would be much more easy to be born a Jackson, or something of that sort, one would think."
"Perhaps she thinks so, too; it's not her fault," said I.
"I suppose not," returned my aunt, rather grudging the admission; "but it's very aggravating. However, she's Barkis now. That's some comfort. Barkis is uncommonly fond of you, Trot."
"There is nothing she would leave undone to prove it," said I.
"Nothing, I believe," returned my aunt.
"Here, the poor fool has been begging and praying about handing over some of her money—because she has got too much of it! A simpleton!"
My aunt's tears of pleasure were positively trickling down into the warm ale.
"She's the most ridiculous creature that ever was born," said my aunt. "I know, from the first moment when I saw her with that poor dear blessed baby of a mother of yours, that she was the most ridiculous of mortals. But there are good points in Barkis!"
Affecting to laugh, she got an opportunity of putting her hand to her eyes. Having availed herself of it, she resumed her toast and her discourse together.
"Ah! Mercy upon us!" sighed my aunt.
"I know all about it, Trot! Barkis and myself had quite a gossip while you were out with Dick. I know all about it. I don't know where those wretched girls expect to go to, for my part. I wonder they don't knock out their brains against—against mantelpieces," said my aunt; an idea which was probably suggested to her by her contemplation of mine.
"Poor Em'ly!" said I.
"Oh, don't talk to me about poor," returned my aunt. "She should have thought of that, before she caused so much misery! Give me a kiss, Trot. I am sorry for your early experience."

I now, Mr. Dick, is to keep a cheerful face, and not let my aunt see that we are Covent it."

I was walking up and down the room, crimping the borders of her with her fingers. I warmed the ale and hot on the usual infallible principles. as ready for her, she was ready for it, right cap on, and the skirt of her gown on her knees,

"Trot," said my aunt, after taking a spoon.
It's a great deal better than wine. Not us."

...
"As I bent forward, she put her tumbler on my knee to detain me, and said:

"Oh, Trot, Trot! And so you fancy yourself in love! Do you?"

"Fancy, aunt!" I exclaimed, as red as I could be. "I adore her with my whole soul!"

"Dora, indeed!" returned my aunt. "And you mean to say the little thing is very fascinating, I suppose?"

"My dear aunt," I replied, "no one can form the least idea what she is!"

"Ah! And not silly?" said my aunt.

"Silly, aunt!"

I seriously believe it had never once entered my head for a single moment, to consider whether she was or not. I recited the idea, of course; but I was in a manner struck by it, as a new one altogether.

"Not light-headed?" said my aunt.

"Light-headed, aunt!" I could only repeat this daring speculation with the same kind of feeling with which I had repeated the preceding question.

"Well! well!" said my aunt. "I only ask, I don't depreciate her. Poor little couple! And so you think you were formed for another, and are to go through a party supper-table kind of life, like two pretty pieces of confectionery, do you, Trot?"

She asked me this so kindly, and with such a gentle air, half playful and half sorrowful, that I was quite touched.

"We are young and inexperienced, aunt, I know," I replied; "and I dare say we say and think a good deal that is rather foolish. But we love one another truly, I am sure. If I thought Dora could ever love anybody else, or cease to love me; or that I could ever love anybody else, or cease to love her; I don't know what I should do—go out of my mind, I think!"

"Ah, Trot!" said my aunt, shaking her head, and smiling gravely, "blind, blind, blind!"

"Some one that I know, Trot," my aunt pursued, after a pause, "though of a very plaintive disposition, has an earnestness of affection in him that reminds me of poor Baby. Earnestness is what that Somebody must look for, to sustain him and improve him, Trot. Deep, downright, faithful earnestness."

"If you only knew the earnestness of Dora, aunt!" I cried.

"Oh, Trot!" she said again; "blind, blind!" and without knowing why, I felt a vague unhappy loss or want of something overshadow me like a cloud.

"However," said my aunt, "I don't want to put two young creatures out of conceit with themselves, or to make them unhappy; so, though it is a girl and boy attachment, and girl and boy attachments very often—mind! I don't say always!—come to nothing, still we'll be serious about it, and hope for a prosperous issue one of these days. There's time enough for it to come to anything!"

This was not upon the whole very easy to a rapturous lover; but I was glad to have my aunt in my confidence, and I was mingled with being taffeged. So I thanked her and this mark of her affection, and for all kindnesses towards me; and after a few nights, she took her nightcap into a room.

How miserable I was, when I lay down and thought and thought about my being Mr. Spennel's eyes; about my not being thought I was, when I proposed to Dora, the clairvoyant necessity of telling Dora my worldly condition was, and releasing her engagement if she thought it; about how contrive to live, during the long term articles, when I was earning nothing doing something to assist my aunt, and a way of doing anything; about coming home, having no money in my pocket, and to shabby coat, and to be able to carry Dora presents, and to ride no gallant grey, show myself in no agreeable light! So selfish as I knew it was, and as I tortured by knowing that it was, to let my mind my own distress so much, I was so dear Dora that I could not help it. I knew the base in me not to think more of my aunt; myself; but, so far, selfishness was just from Dora, and I could not put Dora on for any mortal creature. How exquisitely miserable I was, that night!

As to sleep, I had dreams of poverty sorts and shapes, but I seemed to dream the previous ceremony of going to sleep, was raged, wanting to sell Dora match bundles for a halfpenny; now I was at the inn in a nightgown and boots, remonstrated by Mr. Spennel on appearing before the court that day; that I was hungry and the crumbs that fell from old Tiffany's delicacy, regularly eaten when St. Paul's struck; and now I was hopelessly endeavoring to get up to marry Dora, having nothing but one pair of Heep's gloves to show in exchange, which the whole Commons rejected; and still more conscious of my own room, I was always about like a distressed ship in a sea of clothes.

My aunt was restless, too, for I heard her walking to and fro. Two or three times in the course of the night, stirred my cork plume wrapper in which she looked so 100 high, she appeared, like a disturbed ghost in my room, and came to the side of the sofa I lay. On the first occasion I started up to learn that she inferred from a particular the sky, that Westminster Abbey was closed and to be consulted in reference to the precise fire of its igniting Buckingham Street, in the wind changed. Lying still, after that, that she sat down near me, whispering to

"Poor boy!" And then it made me time more wretched, to know how a
was of me, and how selfishly mindful self.

difficult to believe that a night so long be short to anybody else. This con-
st me thinking and thinking of an art where people were dancing the
until that became a dream too, and I
wee incessantly playing one tune, or incessantly dancing one dance, ng the least notice of me. The man
playing the harp all night, was try-
to cover it with an ordinary-sized
en I awoke; or I should rather say, ff trying to go to sleep, and saw the
in through the window at last.

an old Roman bath in those days at
one of the streets out of the Strand
here still—in which I had been many
e. Dressing myself as quietly as I
can having Peggotty to look after my
led head foremost into it, and then
walk to Harpendest. I had a hope
k treatment might freshen my wits a
think it did them good, for I soon
conclusion that the first step I ought
to try if my articles could be can-
se premium recovered. I got some
the Heath, and walked back to
mons, along the watered roads and
pleasant smell of summer flowers, gardens and carried into town on
ads, intent on this first effort to meet
urences.

at the office so soon, after all, that I
our's loitering about the Commons
sey, who was always first, appeared

Then I sat down in my shady cor-
aput at the sunlight on the opposte
, and thinking about Dora; until
came in, crisp and curly.

: you, Copperfield?" said he. "Fine
morning, sir," said I. "Could I
you before you go into Court?" he
meant," said he. "Come into my
him into his room, and he began
 gown, and touching himself up be-
less he had, hanging inside a closet

to say," said I, "that I have some
rning Intelligence from my aunt." he.
"Dear me! Not paralysis,
ference to her health, sir," I re-
has met with some large losses. In
very little left, indeed."
ound me, Copperfield!" cried Mr.
y head. "Indeed, sir," said I, "her
changed, that I wish to ask you
would be possible—at a sacrifice on
some portion of the premium, of
in this on the spur of the moment,
warned by the blank expression of his face—"to
cancel my articles?"

What it cost me to make this proposal, nobody
knows. It was like asking, as a favor, to be sen-
tenced to transportation from Dora.

"To cancel your articles, Copperfield. Can-
cel?"

I explained with tolerable firmness, that I
really did not know where my means of subsis-
tence were to come from, unless I could earn
them for myself. I had no fear for the future, I
said—and I laid great emphasis on that, as I to
imply that I should still be decidedly eligible for a
son-in-law one of these days—but, for the pres-
ent, I was thrown upon my own resources.

"I am extremely sorry to hear this, Copper-
field," said Mr. Spenlow. "Extremely sorry. It
is not usual to cancel articles for any such reason.
It is not a professional course of proceeding. It
is not a convenient precedent at all. Far from
it. At the same time—"

"You are very good, sir," I murmured, antici-
pating a concession.

"Not at all. Don't mention it," said Mr.
Spenlow. "At the same time, I was going to
say, If it had been my lot to have my hands un-
fettered—if I had not a partner—Mr. Jorkins—"

My hopes were dashed in a moment, but I
made another effort.

"Do you think, sir," said I, "if I were to
mention it to Mr. Jorkins—"

Mr. Spenlow shook his head discouragingly.

"Heaven forbid, Copperfield," he replied, "that
I should do any man an injustice; still less, Mr.
Jorkins. But I know my partner, Copperfield.
Mr. Jorkins is not a man to respond to a pro-
position of this peculiar nature. Mr. Jorkins is very
difficult to move from the beaten track. You
know what he is!"

I am sure I knew nothing about him, except
that he had originally been alone in the business,
and now lived by himself in a house near Montagn
Square, which was fearfully in want of painting;
that he came very late at a day, and went away
very early; that he never appeared to be consult-
ed about anything; and that he had a dingy little
black-hole of his own up-stairs, where no busi-
ness was ever done, and where there was a yellow
old cartridge-paper pad upon his desk, unsOiled
by ink, and reported to be twenty years of age.

"Would you object to my mentioning it to
him, sir?" I asked.

"By no means," said Mr. Spenlow. "But I
have some experience of Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield.
I wish it were otherwise, for I should be happy
to meet your views in any respect. I cannot
have the least objection to your mentioning it to
Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield, if you think it worth
while."

Arriving myself of this permission, which was
given with a warm shake of the hand, I sat think-
ing about Dora, and looking at the sunlight weak-
ning from the chimney-pots down the wall of the
opposite house, until Mr. Jorkins came. I then.
and Dora went to him, saying, "Look, papa, what beautiful flowers!" And Miss Mills smiled thoughtfully, as who should say, "Ye May-flies, enjoy your brief existence in the bright morning of life!" And we all walked from the lawn towards the carriage, which was getting ready.

I shall never have such a ride again. I have never had such another. There were only those three, their hamper, my bänner, and the guitar-case, in the phaeton; and, of course, the phaeton was open; and I rode behind it, and Dora sat with her back to the horse, looking towards me. She kept the bouquet close to her on the cushion, and wouldn't allow Jip to sit on that side of her at all, for fear he would crush it. She often carried it in her hand, often refreshed herself with its fragrance. Our eyes at those times often met; and my greatest astonishment is that I didn't go over the head of my gallant grey into the carriage.

There was dust, I believe. There was a good deal of dust, I believe. I have a faint impression that Mr. Spenlow demonstrated with me for riding in it; but I knew of none. I was sensible of a mist of love and beauty about Dora, but of nothing else. He stood up sometimes, and asked me what I thought of the prospect. I said it was delightful, and I daresay it was; but it was all Dora to me. The sun shone Dora, and the birds sang Dora. The south wind blew Dora, and the wild flowers in the hedges were all Dora, to a bud. My comfort is, Miss Mills understood me. Miss Mills alone could enter into my feelings thoroughly.

I don't know how long we were going, and to this hour I know as little where we went. Perhaps it was near Guildford. Perhaps some Arabian-night magician opened up the place for the day, and shut it up for ever when we came away. It was a green spot, on a hill, carpeted with soft turf. There were shady trees, and heather, and, as far as the eye could see, a rich landscape.

It was a trying thing to find people here, walking for us; and my jealousy, even of the ladies, knew no bounds. But all of my own sex—especially one impostor, three or four years my elder, with a red whisker, on which he established an amount of presumption not to be endured—were my mortal foes.

We all unpacked our baskets, and employed ourselves in getting dinner ready. Red Whisker pretended he could make a salad (which I don't believe), and omitted himself on public notice. Some of the young ladies washed the lettuce for him, and sliced them under his direction. Dora was among these. I felt that fate had pitied me against this man, and one of us must fall.

Red Whisker made his salad (I wondered how they could eat it. Nothing should have induced me to touch it!) and voted himself into the charge of the wine-cellar, which he constructed, being an ingenious beast, in the hollow trunk of a tree.

By-and-by, I saw him, with the majority of a lobster on his plate, eating his dinner at the feet of Dora!

I have but an indistinct idea of what I saw for some time after this baleful object presented itself to my view. I was very merry, but it was hollow merriment. I attached myself to a young creature in pink, with little flirted with her desperately. She received my attentions with favor, but whether on my own sole or because she had any designs. Whisker, I can't say. Dora's health was When I drank it, I affected to interrupt my sation for that purpose, and to resume distantly afterwards. I caught Dora's eye, and thought it looked at me, but it looked at me over the head of Red Whisker and I was adament.

The young creature in pink had a most green; and I rather think the latter was motives of policy. Howbeit, the general breaking up of the party, while we nants of the dinner were being put away strolled off by myself among the trees, in and remorseful state. I was debating whether I should pretend that I was not well, and don't know where—upon my gallant guest Dora and Miss Mills met me.

"Mr. Copperfield," said Miss Mills, "dull."

"I begged her pardon, not at all."

"And Dora," said Miss Mills, "dull."

"Oh dear no! Not in the least."

"Mr. Copperfield and Dora," said Miss Mills, with an almost venerable air, "Enough! Do not allow a trivial misunderstanding the blossoms of spring, which, once put to the blade, cannot be renewed. I speak," said Miss Mills, "from experience of the past—the irrevocable past. The gushing fountain sparkle in the sun, must not be stopped at the caprice; the oasis in the desert of Saba not be plucked up idly."

I hardly knew what I did, I was too over to that extraordinary extent; but Dora's little hand and kissed it—and she kissed Miss Mills's hand; and we all saw my thinking, to go straight up to the heaven.

We did not come down again. We were there all the evening. At first we strayed fro among the trees: I with Dora's drawn through mine: and Heaven knew as it all was, it would have been a happy have been struck immortal with those feelings, and have strayed among the ever!

But, much too soon, we heard the laughing and talking, and calling "Dora." So we went back, and they Dora to sing. Red Whisker would have guitar-case out of the carriage, but Dora nobody know where it was, but I. Whisker was done for in a moment; and I unlocked it, and took the guitars I set by her, and I held her hand.
seas, and I drank in every note of her dear voice, and she sang to me who loved her, and all others might applaud as much as they liked, they had nothing to do with it!

I was intoxicated with joy. I was afraid it was too happy to be real, and that I should wake Buckingham Street presently, and hear Mrs. Tapp clinking the teacups in getting breakfast out. But Dora sang, and others sang, and Miss Mills sang—about the slumbering echoes in the vats of Memory; as if she were a hundred years old—and the evening came on; and we had, with the kettle boiling gipsy-fashion; and I was still as happy as ever.

I was happier than ever when the party broke up, and the other people, defeated Red Whisker I all, went their several ways, and we went through the still evening and the dying light, with sweet scents rising up around us. Mr. Bloor being a little drowsy after the champagne—honour to the soil that grew the grape, to the grape that made the wine, to the sun that heated it, and to the merchant who adulterated—was fast asleep in a corner of the carriage, I rode by the side and talked to Dora. She mistook my horse and patted him—oh, what a little hand it looked upon a horse!—and her swl would not keep right, and now and then I saw her round with my arm; and I even fancied that Jip began to see how it was, and to understand that he must make up his mind to be made with me.

That sagacious Miss Mills, too; that amiable, high-sounding, highly-usual recluse; that little patriarch—sounding less than twenty, who had done the world, and mustn't on any account have slumbering echoes in the caverns of Memory inserted; what a kind thing she did!

"Mr. Copperfield," said Miss Mills, "come to the side of the carriage a moment—if you can spare a moment. I want to speak to you."

"Behold me, on my gallant grey, bending at the head of Miss Mills, with my hand upon the carriage door!

"Dora is coming to stay with me. She is coming home with me the day after to-morrow, you would like to call, I am sure papa would be happy to see you."

"What could I do but invoke a silent blessing to Miss Mills's head, and store Miss Mills's advice in the surest corner of my memory! What did I do but tell Miss Mills, with grateful looks for ever to come, how much I appreciated her advice, and what an inestimable value I set on her friendship!

Then Miss Mills benignly dismissed me.

"Go back to Dora!" and I went; and missed out of the carriage to talk to me, and ad all the rest of the way; and I rode my grey so close to the wheel that I grazed at fore leg against it, and "took the bark at his owner told me, to the tune of three lira"—which I paid, and thought extreme—"what time Miss Mills sat looking at the moon, murmuring verses, and recalling, I suppose, the ancient days when she and earth had anything in common.

Norwood was many miles too near, and we reached it many hours too soon; but Mr. Spenlow came to himself a little short of it, and said, "You must come in, Copperfield, and rest!" and I consenting, we had sandwiches and wine-and-water.

In the light room, Dora blushing looked so lovely, that I could not tear myself away, but sat there staring, in a dream, until the snoring of Mr. Spenlow inspired me with sufficient consciousness to take my leave. So we parted; I riding all the way to London with the farewell touch of Dora's hand still light on mine, recalling every incident and word ten thousand times; lying down in my own bed at last, as enraptured a young noodle as ever was carried out of his five wits by love.

When I awoke next morning, I was resolute to declare my passion to Dora, and know my fate. Happiness or misery was now the question. There was no other question that I knew of in the world, and only Dora could give the answer to it. I passed three days in a luxury of wretchedness, torturing myself by putting every conceivable variety of discouraging construction on all that ever had taken place between Dora and me. At last, arrayed for the purpose at a vast expense, I went to Miss Mills's, fraught with a declaration.

"How many times I went up and down the street, and round the square—painfully aware of being a much better answer to the old riddle than the original one—before I could persuade myself to go up the steps and knock, is no matter now. Even when, at last, I had knocked, and was waiting at the door, I had some furled thought of asking if that were Mr. Blackboy (in imitation of poor Barkis), begging pardon, and retreating. But I kept my ground.

Mr. Mills was not at home. I did not expect he would be. Nobody wanted him. Miss Mills was at home. Miss Mills would do.

I was shown into a room up-stairs, where Miss Mills and Dora were. Jip was there. Miss Mills was copying music (I recollect, it was a new song, called Affection's Dirge), and Dora was painting flowers. What were my feelings when I recognised my own flowers; the identical Covent Garden purchase! I cannot say that they were very like, or that they particularly resembled any flowers that have ever come under my observation; but I knew from the paper round them, which was accurately copied, what the composition was.

Miss Mills was very glad to see me, and very sorry her Papa was not at home; though I thought we all bore that with fortitude. Miss Mills was conversational for a few minutes, and then, laying down her pen upon Affection's Dirge, got up, and left the room.

I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.

"I hope your poor horse was not tired, when
he got home at night," said Dora, lifting up her beautiful eyes. "It was a long way for him.
I began to think I would do it to-day.
"It was a long way for him," said I, "for he had nothing to uphold him on the journey."
"Wasn't he fed, poor thing?" asked Dora.
I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.
"Ye—yes," I said, "he was well taken care of. I mean he had not the unutterable happiness that I had in being so near you.
Dora bent her head over her drawing, and said, after a little while—"I had sat, in the interval, in a burning fever, and with my leg in a very rigid slit."
"You didn't seem to be sensible of that happiness yourself, at one time of the day," I saw now that I was in for it, and it must be done on the spot.
"You didn't care for that happiness in the least," said Dora, slightly raising her eyebrows, and shaking her head, "when you were sitting by Miss Kitt."
Kitt, I should observe, was the name of the creature in pink, with the little eyes.
"Though certainly I don't know why you should," said Dora, "or why you should call it a happiness at all. But of course you don't mean what you say. And I am sure no one doubts your being at liberty to do whatever you like. Jip, you naughty boy, come here!"
I don't know how I did it. I did it in a moment. I intercepted Jip. I had Dora in my arms. I was full of eloquence. I never stopped for a word. I told her how I loved her. I told her I should die without her. I told her that I idolised and worshipped her. Jip barked madly all the time.
When Dora hung her head and cried, and trembled, my eloquence increased so much the more. If she would like me to die for her, she had but to say the word, and I was ready. Life without Dora's love was not a thing to have on any terms. I couldn't bear it, and I wouldn't. I had loved her every minute, day and night, since I first saw her. I loved her at that minute to distraction. I should always love her, every minute, to distraction. Lovers had loved before, and lovers would love again; but no lover had ever loved, might, could, would, or should ever love, as I loved Dora. The more I raved, the more Jip barked. Each of us, in his own way, got more mad every moment.
Well, well! Dora and I were sitting on the sofa by-and-by, quiet enough, and Jip was lying in her lap, winking peacefully at me. It was off my mind. I was in a state of perfect rapture, Dora and I were engaged.
I suppose we had some notion that this was to end in marriage. We must have had some, because Dora stipulated that we were never to be married without her papa's consent. But, in our youthful ecstasy, I don't think that we really looked before us or behind us; or had any aspira-
tion beyond the ignorant present. We keep our secret from Mr. Spenlow; but I the idea never entered my head, then, it was anything dishonorable in that.
Miss Mills was more than usually when Dora, going to find her, brought her—"I apprehend, because there was a ten what had passed to awaken the slumber in the caverns of Memory. But she gave blessing, and the assurance of her lasting ship, and spoke to us, generally, as be Voice from the Cloister.
What an idle time it was! What a shallow, happy, foolish time it was! When I measured Dora's finger for a was to be made of Forget-me-nots, and a jeweller, to whom I took the measure, it out, and laughed over his order-book, and me anything he liked for the pretty it with its blue stones—the associated in my breast with Dora's hand, that yesterday, saw much another, by chance, on the own daughter, there was a momentary sit my heart, like pain!
When I walked about, exalted with my full of my own interest, and felt the of loving Dora, and of being beloved, if I had walked the air, I could not be more above the people not so situated, we creeping on the earth!
When we had those meetings in the garden square, and sat within the dingy house, so happy, that I love the London to this hour, for nothing else, and see the of the trophyes in their smoky feathers!
When we had our first great quarrel, week of our betrothal, and when Dora back the ring, enclosed in a despatching a note, wherein she used the terrible ex that "our love had begun in folly, and madness!" which dreadful words occasion to tear my hair, and cry that all was over.
When, under cover of the night, I flew Mills, whom I saw by stealth in a back where there was a mangle, and imploied Mills to interpose between us and avert! When Miss Mills undertook the office ed with Dora, exhorting us, from the own bitter youth, to mutual concession, avoidance of the desert of Sahara!
When we cried, and made it up, and set again, that the back-kitchen, mangle changed to Love's own temple, where was a plan of correspondence through Miss's ways to comprehend at least one letter side every day!
What an idle time! What an useless happy, foolish time! Of all the times that Time has in his grip, there is none one retrospect I can smile at half so think of half so tenderly.
CHAPTER XXXIV.
MY AUNT ASTONISHES ME.

I WRITE TO AGNES AS SOON AS DORA AND I WERE

I wrote her a long letter, in which I

make her comprehend how blest I was,

that a darling Dora was. I entreated Agnes

guard this as a thoughtless passion which

er yield to any other, or had the least re-

sponse to the boyish fancies that we used to

out. I assured her that its profoundity was

fathomable, and expressed my belief that

like it had ever been known.

how, as I wrote to Agnes on a fine even-

ing open window, and the remembrance of

calm eyes and gentle face came stealing

it shed such a peaceful influence upon

and agitation in which I had been living

of which my very happiness partook in

peace, that it soothe me into tears. I re-

that I sat resting my head upon my hand,

letter was half done, cherishing a gen-

erally as if Agnes were one of the elements of

al home. As if, in the retirement of the

we is almost sacred to me by her presence,

must be happier than anywhere. As

e, joy, sorrow, hope, or disappointment;

otions; my heart turned naturally there,

d its refuge and best friend.

eerforth, I said nothing. I only told her

been sad grief at Yarmouth, on account

a flight; and that on me it made a double

reason of the circumstances attending

how quick she always was to divine

and that she would never be the first to

dis name.

is letter, I received an answer by return

As I read it, I seemed to hear Agnes' to me. It was like her cordial voice in

What can I say more!

I had been away from home lately, Trad-

called twice or thrice. Finding Peggy

and being informed by Pegotty (who al-

moteed that information to whomsoever

ceive it), that she was my old nurse, he

ished a good-humored acquaintance with

had stayed to have a little chat with her.

So Pegotty said; but I am afraid

all on her own side, and of immediate

she was very difficult indeed to stop,

her! when she had me for her

reminds me, not only that I expected

on a certain afternoon of his own ap-

which was now come, but that Mrs.

and resigned everything appertaining to

the salary excepted) until Pegotty

see to present herself. Mrs. Crupp, after

ivers conversations respecting Pegotty,

high-pitched voice, on the staircase—

in invisible. Familiar it would appear, for

y speaking she was quite alone at those
dressed a letter to me, developing her

aginstein it with that statement of uni-

versal application, which fitted every occurrence of

her life, namely, that she was a mother herself,

she went on to inform me that she had once seen

very different days, but that at all periods of her

existence she had had a constitutional objection

to spies, intruders, and informers. She named no

names, she said; let them the cap fitted, wear it;

but spies, intruders, and informers, especially in

widder's weeds (this clause was underlifed), she

had ever accustomed herself to look down upon.

If a gentleman was the victim of spies, intruders,

and informers (but still naming no names), that

was his own pleasure. He had a right to please

himself; so let him do. All that she, Mrs. Crupp,

stipulated for, was, that she should not be

"brought in contract" with such persons.

Therefore she begged to be excused from any

further attendance on the top set, until things

were as they formerly was, and as they could be

wished to be; and further mentioned that her lit-

tle book would be found upon the breakfast-table

every Saturday morning, when she requested an

immediate settlement of the same, with the be-

nevolent view of saving trouble, "and an ill-con-

venience" to all parties.

After this, Mrs. Crupp confined herself to mak-

ing pitfalls on the stairs, principally with pitchers,

and endeavoring to deinduce Pegotty into breaking

her legs. I found it rather harassing to live in this

state of siege, but was too much afraid of Mrs.

Cripp to see any way out of it.

"My dear Copperfield," cried Traddles, punct-

ually appearing at my door, in spite of all these

obstacles, "how do you do?"

"My dear Traddles," said I, "I am delighted to

see you at last, and very sorry I have not been

at home before. But I have been so much en-

gaged—"

"Yes, yes, I know," said Traddles, "of course.

Yours lives in London, I think."

"What did you say?"

"She—excuse me—Miss D., you know," said

Traddles, coloring in his great delicacy, "lives

in London, I believe?"

"Oh yes. Near London.""Mine, perhaps you recollect," said Traddles,

with a serious look, "lives down in Devonshire—
one of ten. Consequently, I am not so much en-
gaged as you—in that sense."

"I wonder you can bear," I returned, "to see

her so seldom."

"Hah!" said Traddles, thoughtfully. "It does

seem a wonder. I suppose it is, Copperfield, be-

cause there's no help for it?"

"I suppose so," I replied with a smile, and not

without a blush. "And because you have so

much constancy and patience, Traddles."

"Dear me!" said Traddles, considering about

it, "do I strike you in that way, Copperfield?"

Really I didn't know that I had. But she is such

an extraordinarily dear girl herself, that it's pos-

sible she may have imparted something of those

virtues to me. Now you mention it. Copperfield,

I shouldn't wonder at all. I assure you she—"
always forgetting herself, and taking care of the other nine."
"Is she the eldest?" I inquired.
"Oh dear, no," said Traddles. "The eldest is a Beauty."
He saw, I suppose, that I could not help smiling at the simplicity of this reply; and added, with a smile upon his own ingenuous face:
"Not, of course, but that my Sophy—pretty name, Copperfield! I always think?"
"Very pretty!" said I.
"Not, of course, but that Sophy is beautiful too in my eyes, and would be one of the dearest girls that ever was, in anybody's eyes (I should think). But when I say the eldest is a Beauty, I mean she really is—a—" he seemed to be describing clouds about himself, with both hands: "Splendid, you know," said Traddles, energetically.
"Indeed!" said I.
"Oh, I assure you," said Traddles, "something very uncommon, indeed! Then, you know, being formed for society and admiration, and not being able to enjoy much of it in consequence of their limited means, she naturally gets a little irritable and exacting, sometimes. Sophy puts her in good humor!"
"Is Sophy the youngest?" I hazarded.
"Oh dear, no!" said Traddles, stroking his chin. "The two youngest are only nine and ten. Sophy educates 'em."
"The second daughter, perhaps?" I hazarded.
"No," said Traddles. "Sarah's the second. Sarah has something the matter with her spine, poor girl. The malady will wear out by-and-by, the doctors say, but in the meantime she has to lie down for a twelvemonth. Sophy nurses her. Sophy's the fourth."
"Is the mother living?" I inquired.
"Oh yes," said Traddles, "she is alive. She is a very superior woman indeed, but the damp country is not adapted to her constitution, and—in fact, she loses the use of her limbs."
"Dear me!" said I.
"Very sad, is it not?" returned Traddles.
"But in a merely domestic view it is not so bad as it might be, because Sophy takes her place. She is quite as much a mother to her mother, as she is to the other nine."
I felt the greatest admiration for the virtues of this young lady; and, honestly with the view of doing my best to prevent the good-nature of Traddles from being imposed upon, to the detriment of their joint prospects in life, inquired how Mr. Micawber was.
"He is quite well, Copperfield, thank you," said Traddles. "I am not living with him at present."
"No?"
"No. You see the truth is," said Traddles, in a whisper, "he has changed his name to Mortimer, in consequence of his temporary embarrassments; and he don't come out till after dark—and then in spectacles. There was an execution put into our house, for rent. Mrs. Micawber is in such a dreadful state that I really could not think of giving my name to that second bill we are here. You may imagine how delightful to my feelings, Copperfield; to see him settled with it, and Mrs. Micawber more spirits."
"Hum!" said I.
"Not that her happiness was in question," pursued Traddles, "for, within a week another execution can break up the establishment. I have bought a furnished apartment since then, and the timbers have been very private indeed. I won't think it selfish, Copperfield, if I say that the broker carried off my little rent with the marble top, and Sophy's flowers stand?"
"What a hard thing!" I exclaimed.
"It was a—was a pull," said Traddles, with his usual wine; at that expression, mention it reproachfully, however, but without any money. Now, I have kept, since upon the broker's shop," said Traddles, with a great enjoyment of his mystery, up at the top of Tottenham Court Road last, to-day. I find them out for sale. I only noticed them from over the way, but the broker saw me, bless you, he'd ask a fiver! What has occurred to me, is, that perhaps you would be kind enough of yours to come to the shop—I can show if her from the corner of the next street—and make the gain for them, as if they were for herself!"
The delight with which Traddles pounced upon this plan to me, and the sense he had of common artfulness, are among the freshest in my remembrance.
I told him that my old nurse would be pleased to assist him, and that we would all three go together, but on one condition. That condition was, that he should make a solemn promise to grant no more loans of his name, or any money, to Mr. Micawber.
"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, "I have already done so, because I begin to feel that it was not only been inconsiderate, but that I had positively unjust to Sophy. My wife passed to myself, there is no longer any need of it; but I pledge it to you, too, as greatest readiness. That first unkindness I have paid. I have no doubt Mr. Micawber will have paid it if he could, but he could not. One thing I ought to mention, which I will much in Mr. Micawber; Copperfield. It is the second obligation, which is not
MY AUNT FORGIVES MY NURSE.

cordially shook hands; and Mrs. Crupp, who was busy making tea, and could not be too attentive, cordially said she had known well as Mr. Copper full would have his heart in his mouth, when he see his dear relations.

"Halloa!" said my aunt to Peggoty, who natted before her awful presence. "How are you?"

"You remember my aunt, Peggoty?" said I. "For the love of goodness, child," exclaimed my aunt, "don't call the woman by that South Sea Island name! If she married and got rid of it, which was the best thing she could do, why don't you give her the benefit of the change? What's your name now.—P?" said my aunt, as a compromise for the obnoxious appellation.

"Barkis, ma'am," said Peggoty, with a curtsey.

"Well! That's human," said my aunt. "It sounds less as if you wanted a Missionary. How d'ye do, Barkis? I hope you're well?"

Encouraged by these gracious words, and by my aunt's extending her hand, Barkis came forward, and took the hand, and curtsied her acknowledgments.

"We are older than we were, I see," said my aunt. "We have only met each other once before, you know. A nice business we made of it then! Trot, my dear, another cup."

I handed it dutifully to my aunt, who was in her usual inflexible state of figure; and ventured a remonstrance with her on the subject of her sitting on a box.

"Let me draw the sofa here, or the easy-chair, aunt," said I. "Why should you be so uncomfortable?"

"Thank you, Trot," replied my aunt, "I prefer to sit upon my property." Here my aunt looked hard at Mrs. Crupp, and observed, "We needn't trouble you to wait, ma'am."

"Shall I put a little more tea in the pot afore I go, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp.

"No, I thank you, ma'am," replied my aunt.

"Would you let me fetch another pat of butter, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp. "Or would you be persuaded to try a new-laid hegg? or should I brile a rasher? Ain't there nothing I could do for your dear aunt, Mr. Copperfull?"

"Nothing, ma'am," returned my aunt. "I shall do very well, I thank you."

Mrs. Crupp, who had been incessantly smiling to express sweet temper, and incessantly holding her head on one side, to express a general feebleness of constitution, and incessantly rubbing her hands, to express a desire to be of service to all deserving objects, gradually smiled herself, one-sided herself, and rubbed herself, out of the room.

"Dick!" said my aunt. "You know what I told you about time-servers and wealth-worshippers?"

Mr. Dick—with rather a scared look, as if he had forgotten it—returned a hasty answer in the affirmative.

"Mrs. Crupp is one of them," said my aunt.
"Barkis, I'll trouble you to look after the tea, and let me have another cup, for I don't fancy that woman's pouring-out!"

I knew my aunt sufficiently well to know that she had something of importance on her mind, and that there was far more matter in this arrival than a stranger might have supposed. I noticed how her eye lighted on me, when she thought my attention otherwise occupied; and what a curious process of hesitation appeared to be going on within her, while she preserved her outward stiffness and compose. I began to reflect whether I had done anything to offend her; and my conscience whispered me that I had not yet told her about Dom. Could it by any means be, that I wondered!

As I knew she would only speak in her own good time, I sat down near her, and spoke to the birds, and played with the cat, and was as easy as I could be. But I was very far from being really easy; and I should still have been so, even if Mr. Dick, leaning over the great kite behind my aunt, had not taken every secret opportunity of shaking his head darkly at me, and pointing at her.

"Trot," said my aunt at last, when she had finished her tea, and carefully smoothed down her dress, and wiped her lips—"you needn't go, Barkis!—Trot, have you got to be firm, and self-reliant?"

"I hope so, aunt."

"What do you think?" inquired Miss Betsey. "I think so, aunt."

"Then why, my love," said my aunt, looking earnestly at me, "why do you think I prefer to sit upon this property of mine to-night?"

I shook my head, unable to guess.

"Because," said my aunt, "it's all I have. Because I want you, my child!"

If the house, and every one of us, had tumbled out into the river together, I could hardly have received a greater shock.

"Dick knows it," said my aunt, laying her hand calmly on my shoulder. "I am ruined, my dear Trot! All I have in the world is in this room, except the cottage; and that I have left Janet to let. Barkis, I want to get a bed for this gentleman to-night. To save expense, perhaps you can make up something here for myself. Anything will do. It's only for to-night. We'll talk about this, more, to-morrow."

I was roused from my amazement, and concern for her—I am sure, for her—by her falling on my neck for a moment, and crying that she only grieved for me. In another moment she suppressed this emotion; and said with an aspect more triumphant than dejected:

"We must meet reverses boldly, and not suffer them to frighten us, my dear. We must learn to act the play out. We must live misfortune down, Trot!"

CHAPTER XXXV.

DEPRESSION.

As soon as I could recover my presence of mind, which quite deserted me in the overpowering shock of my aunt's intelligence, I rose to go to the shop, and take possession of the bed that Peggotty had lately vacated. The chamber being in Hungerford Market, and in Market being a very different place in which there was a low wooden colonnade before the door (not very unlike that before the little man and woman used in the old weather-glass), which pleased Dick mightily. The glory of lodgings, structure would have compensated his say, for many inconveniences; but, as it was, I had scarcely waded beyond the carpet when I have already mentioned, and pressing want of a little more elbow-room, he was charmed with his accommodation. My aunt indignantly assured him that the room to swing a cat there; but, as Mr. I had observed to me, sitting down on the bed, nursing his leg, "You know, Trot, don't want to swing a cat. I never do.

I tried to ascertain whether Mr. Dick's understanding of the causes of this great change in my aunt's affairs. As have expected, he had no idea at all. The count he could give of it, was, that they had come to him, the day before yesterday, Dick, are you really and truly the physician that you for? That then he had said so. That then my aunt had said, "I am ruined." That then he had said, "Miserable!" That then my aunt had said, "I am ruined," and tears course down his lengthened while he fixed upon me a look of such woe, that it might have softened a heart than mine. I took infinitely good to cheer him up again than had taken to him; and I soon understood (as I ought known at first) that he had been so by purely because of his faith in the most wonderful of women, and his unbounded on my intellectual resources. The little have, he considered a match for any king aster not absolutely mortal.

"What can we do, Trotwood?"

Dick. "There's the Memorial."

"To be sure there is," said I.
ow, Mr. Dick, is to keep a cheerful and not let my aunt see that we are t it."

d to this in the most earnest man-
nered me, if I should see him wan-
1 out of the right course, to recall of those superior methods which
at my command. But I regret to fright I had given him proved too
best attempts at concealment. All
s eyes wandered to my aunt's face, see-
son of the most dismal apprehen-
saw her growing thin on the spot.
tions of this, and put a constraint
but his keeping that immovable, illing his eyes like a piece of ma-
ot mend the matter at all. I saw
he loaf at supper (which happened
one), as if nothing else stood be-
amine; and when my aunt insisted
his customary repast, I detected
of pocketing fragments of his bread
have no doubt for the purpose of
those savings, when we should
advanced stage of attenuation.

the other hand, was in a composed
which was a lesson to all of us—
re. She was extremely gracious to
pt when I inadvertently called her
and, strange as I knew she felt in
ared quite at home. She was to
and I was to lie in the sitting-room,
on her. She made a great point
ar the river, in case of a confuga-
pose really did find some satisfac-
circumstance.
dear," said my aunt, when she saw
reparations for compounding her
ught, "No!" my aunt.
nt," my dear. Ale."
t is wine here, aunt. And you al-
ade of wine."
at, in case of sickness," said my
atn't use it carelessly, Trot. Ale
a pint."
fick would have fallen, insensi-
being resolute, I went out and got
As it was growing late, Peggotty
ook that opportunity of repairing
r's shop together. I parted from
w, at the corner of the street, with
his back, a very monument of

as walking up and down the room
ed, crimping the borders of her
h fingers. I warmed the ale and
on the usual infallible principles.
ready for her, she was ready for it,
t mop on, and the skirt of her gown
a her knees."
said my aunt, after taking a spoon-

a great deal better than wine. Not

I suppose I looked doubtful, for she added:
"Tut, tut, child. If nothing worse than Ale
happens to us, we are well off."
"I should think so myself, aunt, I am sure," said I.
"Well, then, why don't you think so?" said
my aunt.
"Because you and I are very different people," I
returned.
"Stuff and nonsense, Trot!" replied my aunt.
My aunt went on with a quiet enjoyment, in
which there was very little affectation, if any;
drinking the warm ale with a teaspoon, and soak-
ing her strips of toast in it.

"Trot," she said, "I don't care for strange
faces in general, but I rather like that Barkis of
yours, do you know!"
"It's better than a hundred pounds to hear
you say so!" said I.
"It's a most extraordinary world," observed
my aunt, rubbing her nose; "how that woman
ever got into it with that name, is unaccountable
to me. It would be much more easy to be born a
Jackson, or something of that sort, one would
think."
"Perhaps she thinks so, too; it's not her
fault," said I.
"I suppose not," returned my aunt, rather
grudging the admission; "but it's very aggravat-
ing. However, she's Barkis now. That's some
comfort. Barkis is uncommonly fond of you,
Trot."
"There is nothing she would leave undone to
prove it," said I.

"Nothing, I believe," returned my aunt.
"Here, the poor fool has been begging and 
praying about handing over some of her money—because
she has got too much of it! A simpleton!"

My aunt's tears of pleasure were positively
trickling down into the warm ale.

"She's the most ridiculous creature that ever
was born," said my aunt. "I knew, from the
first moment when I saw her with that poor dear
blessed baby of a mother of yours, that she was
the most ridiculous of mortals. But there are
good points in Barkis!"

Affecting to laugh, she got an opportunity of
putting her hand to her eyes. Having availed
herself of it, she resumed her toast and her
discourse together.

"Ah! Mercy upon us!" sighed my aunt.

"I know all about it, Trot! Barkis and myself
had quite a gossip while you were out with Dick.
I know all about it. I don't know where these
wretched girls expect to go to, for my part. I
wonder they don't knock out their brains against
—against mantelpieces," said my aunt; an idea
which was probably suggested to her by her con-
templation of mine.

"Poor Emily!" said I.

"Oh, don't talk to me about poor," returned
my aunt. "She should have thought of that, be-
fore she caused so much misery! Give me a kiss,
Trot. I am sorry for your early experience."
I don't know how he should have had, for it was new enough to me. I passed that off, and brought Mr. Dick on the carpet.

"You see," said Mr. Dick, wistfully, "if I could exert myself, Mr. Traddles—if I could beat a drum—or blow anything!"

Poor fellow! I have little doubt he would have preferred such an employment in his heart to all others. Traddles, who would not have smiled for the world, replied composedly:

"But you are a very good penman, sir. You told me so, Copperfield?"

"Excellent!" said I. And indeed he was. He wrote with extraordinary neatness.

"Don't you think," said Traddles, "you could copy writings, sir, if I got them for you?"

Mr. Dick looked doubtfully at me. "Eh, Trotwood?"

I shook my head. Mr. Dick shook his, and sighed. "Tell him about the Memorial," said Mr. Dick.

I explained to Traddles that there was a difficulty in keeping King Charles the First out of Mr. Dick's manuscripts; Mr. Dick in the meanwhile looking very differentially and seriously at Traddles, and striking his thumb.

"But these writings, you know, that I speak of, are already drawn up and finished," said Traddles after a little consideration. "Mr. Dick has nothing to do with them. Wouldn't that make a difference, Copperfield? At all events, wouldn't it be well to try?"

This gave us new hopes. Traddles and I laying our heads together apart, while Mr. Dick anxiously watched us from his chair, we concocted a scheme in virtue of which we got him to work next day with triumphant success.

On a table by the window in Buckingham Street, we set out the work Traddles procured for him—which was to make, I forget how many copies of a legal document, some sort of a way—and on another table we spread the last unfinished original of the great Memorial. Our instructions to Mr. Dick were that he should copy exactly what he had before him, without the least departure from the original; and then when he felt it necessary to make the slightest allusion to King Charles the First, he should fly to the Memorial. We exhorted him to be resolute in this, and left my aunt to observe him. My aunt reported to us, afterwards, that, at first, he was like a man playing the kettle-drums, and constantly divided his attentions between the two; but that, finding this confuse and fatigue him, and having his copy there, plainly before his eyes, he soon sat at it in an orderly business-like manner, and postponed the Memorial to a more convenient time. In a word, although we took great care that he should have no more to do than was good for him, and although he did not begin with the beginning of the week, he earned by the following Saturday night ten shillings and nine pence; and never, whilst I live, shall I forget his going about to all the shops in the neighborhood to change this treasure into sixpences, or his bringing them to my aunt, ranged in the form of a heart upon a wall, with tears of joy and pride in his eyes. He made one under the propitious influence of a star, from the moment of his being usefully employed and if there were a happy man in the world on Saturday night, it was the grateful creature I thought my aunt the most wonderful woman in existence, and me the most wonderful man.

"No starting now, Trotwood," said Mr. Micawber shaking hands with me in a corner. "I'll provide for her, sir!" and he flourished his fingers in the air, as if they were ten banknotes.

I hardly knew which was the better pleased Traddles or I. "It really," said Traddles, suddenly, taking a letter out of his pocket, and giving it to me, "put Mr. Micawber quite out of my head!"

The letter (Mr. Micawber never missed an opportunity of writing a letter) was addressed to me, "By the kindness of T. Traddles, Esquire, of the Inner Temple." It ran thus:

"My dear Copperfield,

"You may possibly not be unprepared to receive the intimation that something has turned up. I may have mentioned to you on a former occasion that I was in expectation of such an event.

"I am about to establish myself in one of the provincial towns of our favored island (where the society may be described a happy admixture of the agricultural and the clerical), in immediate connection with one of the learned professions. Mrs. Micawber and our offspring will accompany me. Our ashes, at a future period, will probably be found conglutinated in the cemetery stuck to a venerable pile, for which the spot to which I refer, has acquired a reputation, shall I say from China to Peru?

"In bidding adieu to the modern Babylon, where we have undergone some vicissitudes, I trust not ignobly, Mrs. Micawber and myself cannot disfigure from our minds that we part, it may be for years and it may be for ever, with an individual linked by strong associations to the after of our domestic life. If, on the eve of such a departure, you will accompany our mutual friend, Mr. Thomas Traddles, to our present abode, and there reciprocate the wishes natural to the occasion, you will confer a boon.

"On

"One,

"Who

"Is

"Ever yours,

"Wilkins Micawber."

I was glad to find that Mr. Micawber had rid of his dust and ashes, and that somewhat really had turned up at last. Learning from Traddles that the invitation referred to the evening then wearing away, I suppressed my tendencies to do honor to it; and we went off together..."
took it for granted that the office was not the better, who was the worse for it?  
Who was the better for it? All the ta. Very well. Then the good predomin-t might not be a perfect system; not-perfect; but what he objected to, was, tion of the wedge. Under the Preroga-vie, the country had been glorious. In-wedge into the Prerogative Office, and try would cease to be glorious. He con- it the principle of a gentleman to take 4; he found them; and he had no doubt negative Office would last our time. I de- his opinion, though I had great doubts self. I find he was right, however; for t only lasted to the present moment, but so in the teeth of a great parliamentary made (not too willingly) eighteen years n all these objections of mine were set letail, and when the existing stowage for a described as equal to the accumulation two years and a half more. What they re with them since; whether they have a, or whether they sell any, now and the butter-shops; I don’t know. I am e is not there, and I hope it may not go t awhile.  
set all this down, in my present blissful because here it comes into its natural fr. Spenlow and I falling into this con, prolonged it and satanner to and fro, divided into general topics. And so it put, in the end, that Mr. Spenlow told day week was Dora’s birthday, and he a glad if I would come down and join a -nic on the occasion. I went out of my immediately; became a mere drivel, on receipt of a little lace-edged sheet of her, “Favored by papa. To remind;” ed the intervening period in a state of h I committed every possible absurdity, of preparation for this blessed event. w when I remember the craving I bought. I might be placed in any collection of in of torture. I provided, and sent down orwood coach the night before, a delicate mper, amounting in itself, I thought, a declaration. There were crackers in el tenderest motto that could be got for At six in the morning, I was in Covent Market, buying a bouquet for Dora. At was on horseback (I hired a gallant c: the occasion), with the bouquet in to keep it fresh, trotting down to Nor- pose that when I saw Dora in the garden ended not to see her, and rode past the standing to be anxiously looking for it, I ed two small fooleries which other young m in my circumstances might have com-because they came so very natural to me. when I did find the house, and did dis: the garden gate, and drug those stony-
and Dora went to him, saying, "Look, papa, what beautiful flowers!" And Miss Mills smiled thoughtfully, as who should say, "Ye may-flies, enjoy your brief existence in the bright morning of life!" And we all walked from the lawn towards the carriage, which was getting ready.

I shall never have such a ride again. I have never had such another. There were only those three, their hamper, my hamper, and the guitar-case, in the phaeton; and, of course, the phaeton was open; and I rode behind it, and Dora sat with her back to the horse, looking towards me. She kept the bouquet close to her on the cushion, and wouldn't allow Jip to sit on that side of her at all, for fear he would crush it. She often carried it in her hand, often refreshed herself with its fragrance. Our eyes at those times often met; and my great astonishment is that I didn't go over the head of my gallant grey into the carriage.

There was dust, I believe. There was a good deal of dust, I believe. I have a faint impression that Mr. Spenlow remonstrated with me for riding in it; but I knew of none. I was sensible of a mist of love and beauty about Dora, but of nothing else. He stood up sometimes, and asked me what I thought of the prospect. I said it was delightful, and I daren't say it was; but it was all Dora to me. The sun shone Dora, and the birds sang Dora. The south wind blew Dora, and the wild flowers in the hedges were all Dora, to a bud. My comfort is, Miss Mills understood me. Miss Mills alone could enter into my feelings thoroughly.

I don't know how long we were going, and to this hour I know as little where we went. Perhaps it was near Guildford. Perhaps some Arabian-night magician opened up the place for the day, and shut it up for ever when we came away. It was a green spot, on a hill, carpeted with soft turf. There were shady trees, and hedges, and, as far as the eye could see, a rich landscape.

It was a trying thing to find people here, waiting for us; and my jealousy, even of the ladies, knew no bounds. But all of my own sex—especially one impostor, three or four years my elder, with a red whisker, on which he established an amount of presumption not to be endured—were my mortal foes.

We all unpacked our baskets, and employed ourselves in getting dinner ready. Red Whisker pretended he could make a salad (which I don't believe), and obtruded himself on public notice. Some of the young ladies washed the lettuce for him, and sliced them under his direction. Dora was among these. I felt that fate had pitted me against this man, and one of us must fall.

Red Whisker made his salad (I wondered how they could eat it). Nothing should have induced me to touch it! and voted himself into the charge of the wine-cellar, which he constructed, being an ingenious beast, in the hollow trunk of a tree.

By-and-bye, I saw him, with the majority of a lobster on his plate, eating his dinner at the feet of Dora!

I have but an indistinct idea of what happened for some time after this baleful object presented itself to my view. I was very merry, but it was hollow merriment. I attached myself to a young creature in pink, with little flattered with her desperately. She received attentions with favor; but whether on my account, or because she had any designs upon me, I can't say. Dora's health was broken.

When I drank it, I expected to interrupt my pleasurable walk, and to resume it later, after a little time. I caught Dora's eyes, and she bowed to me, and I thought I looked at her. But I looked at me over the head of Red Whisker, and I was abashed.

The young creature in pink had a green dress, and I rather think the latter suited her from motives of policy. Howbeit, the general breaking up of the party, when the last remnants of the dinner were being put away, and the sun started off by itself among the trees, in desolation and remorseful state, I was debating whether I should pretend that I was not well, and not know where—I upon my gallant grey. Dora and Miss Mills met me.

"Mr. Copperfield," said Miss Mills, "dull!"

I begged her pardon. Not at all. "And Dora," said Miss Mills, "dull, too!"

Oh dear no! Not in the least. "Mr. Copperfield and Dora," said Miss Mills, with an almost venerable air, "Enough! Do not allow a trivial misunderstanding to blur the blossoms of spring, which, once put in bloom, cannot be renewed. I speak,"

Miss Mills, "from experience of the past—the inevitable. The gushing fountain of caprice, the oasis of the desert of Samson, will not be plucked up idly!"

I hardly knew what I did, I was too over to that extraordinary extent; but Dora's little hand and I kissed it—and she kissed Miss Mills's hand; and we all went to my thinking, to go straight up to the heaven.

We did not come down again. We were there all the evening. At first we stayed among the trees; I with Dora's drawn through mine; and Heaven knew how as it was, it would have been a happy hour, if we had been struck immortal with those feelings, and have stayed among the trees.

But, much too soon, we heard the laughing and talking, and calling "Dora?" So we went back, and the Dora to sing. Red Whisker would have the guitar-case out of the carriage, but Dora nobody knew where it was, but I.

Whisker was done for a moment; and and I unlocked it, and took the code. I sat by her, and I held her hand..."
I HAVE A GLORIFIED RIDE.

The three notes of her dear song to me who loved her, and all night awoke as much as they liked, nothing to do with it! Excited with joy. I was afraid it was too real, and that I should wake up in another place. Yet there I was, in the teacups in getting breakfast. Dora sang, and others sang, and Miss Mills about the slumbering echoes in the memory; as if she were a hundred miles away. The evening came on; and we had a kettle of boiling gipsy-fashion; and I was happy as ever. After the party broke up, they went their several ways, and we went into the still evening and the dying scents rising up around us. Mr. Spenslow came to me, and said, "You must come in, Copperfield, and rest!" and I consented, we had sandwiches and wine and water. In the light room, Dora blushing looked so lovely, that I could not bear to see myself, but sat there staring, in a dream, until the snoring of Mr. Spenslow inspired me with sufficient consciousness to take my leave. So we parted; I riding all the way to London with the farewell touch of Dora's hand still light on mine, recalling everything incident and word ten thousand times; lying down in my own bed at last, as enraptured a young noodle as ever was carried out of his five wits by love.

When I awoke next morning, I was resolute to declare my passion to Dora, and know my fate. Happiness or misery was now the question. There was no other question that I knew of in the world, and only Dora could give the answer to it. I passed three days in a luxury of wretchedness, torturing myself by putting every conceivable variety of discouraging construction on all that ever had taken place between Dora and me. At last, arrayed for the purpose at a vast expense, I went to Miss Mills's, fraught with a declaration.

How many times I went up and down the street and round the square—painfully aware of being a much better answer to the old riddle than the original one—before I could persuade myself to go up the steps and knock, is no matter now. Even when, at last, I had knocked, and was waiting at the door, I had some flurried thought of asking if that was Mr. Blackboy's (in imitation of poor Barkis), begging pardon, and retreating. But I kept my ground.

Mr. Mills was not at home. I did not expect he would be. Nobody wanted him. Miss Mills was at home. Miss Mills would do.

I was shown into a room up-stairs, where Miss Mills and Dora were. Jip was there. Miss Mills was copying music (I recollect, it was a new song, called Affection's Dirge), and Dora was painting flowers. What were my feelings when I recognised my own flowers; the identical Covent Garden Market purchase! I cannot say that they were very like, or that they particularly resembled any flowers that have ever come under my observation; but I knew from the paper round them, which was accurately copied, what the composition was.

Miss Mills was very glad to see me, and very sorry her Papa was not at home; though I thought we all bore that with fortitude. Miss Mills was conversational for a few minutes, and then, laying down her pen upon Affection's Dirge, got up, and left the room.

I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.

"I hope your poor horse was not tired, when..."
and Dora went to him, saying, "Look, papa, what beautiful flowers!" And Miss Mills smiled thoughtfully, as who should say, "Ye May-flies, enjoy your brief existence in the bright morning of life!" And we all walked from the lawn towards the carriage, which was getting ready.

I shall never have such a ride again. I have now had such another. There were only those three, their hamper, my hamper, and the guitar-case, in the phaeton; and, of course, the phaeton was open; and I rode behind it, and Dora sat with her back to the horse, looking towards me. She kept the bouquet close to her on the cushion, and wouldn't allow Jip to sit on that side of her at all, for fear he would crush it. She often carried it in her hand, often refreshed herself with its fragrance. Often, at those times, I often met; and my great astonishment is that I didn't go over the head of my gallant grey into the carriage.

There was dust, I believe. There was a good deal of dust, I believe. I have a faint impression that Mr. Spenclow demonstrated with me for riding in it; but I knew of none. I was sensible of a mist of love and beauty about Dora, but of nothing else. He stood up sometimes, and asked me what I thought of the prospect. I said it was delightful, and I daresay it was; but it was all Dora to me. The sun shone Dora, and the birds sang Dora. The south wind blew Dora, and the wild flowers in the hedges were all Doras, to a bud. My comfort is, Miss Mills understood me. Miss Mills alone could enter into my feelings thoroughly.

I don't know how long we were going, and to this hour I know as little where we went. Perhaps it was near Guildford. Perhaps some Arabian night magician opened up the place for the day, and shut it up for ever when we came away. It was a green spot, on a hill, carpeted with soft turf. There were shady trees, and heather, and, as far as the eye could see, a rich landscape.

It was a trying thing to find people here, waiting for us; and my jealousy, even of the ladies, knew no bounds. But all of my own sex—especially one impostor, three or four years my elder, with a red whisker, on which he established an amount of presumption not to be endured—were my mortal foes.

We all unpacked our baskets, and employed ourselves in getting dinner ready. Red Whisker pretended he could make a salad (which I don't believe), and obtruded himself on public notice. Some of the young lads washed the lettuces for him, and sliced them under his directions. Dora was among these. I felt that fate had pitted me against little man, and one of us must fall.

Red Whisker made his salad (I wondered how they could eat it). Nothing should have induced me to touch it! and voted himself into the charge of the wine-cellar, which he constructed, being an ingenious beast, in the hollow trunk of a tree.

By-and-by, I saw him, with the majority of a lobster on his plate, eating his dinner at the feet of Dora!

I have but an indistinct idea of what for some time after this bauble object itself to my view. I was very merry, but it was hollow merriment. I attached to a young creature in pink, with little flirted with her desperately. She received intimations with favor; but whether on my solely, or because she had any designs Whisker, I can't say. Dora's health was well. When I drank it, I affected to interrupt my sation for that purpose, and to resume diately afterwards. I caught Dora's bowed to her, and I thought I looked at But it looked at me over the head of Red and I was abashed.

The young creature in pink had a green; and I rather think the latter sep from motives of policy. Howbeit, the general breaking up of the party, white nants of the dinner were being put away strolled off by myself among the trees, an remorseful state. I was debating whether I should pretend that I was not well, as don't know where—upon my gallant grace, Dora and Miss Mills met me.

"Mr. Copperfield," said Miss Mills, "dull."

I begged her pardon. Not at all.

"And Dora," said Miss Mills, "dull."

Oh dear no! Not in the least.

"Mr. Copperfield and Dora," said M with an almost venerable air, "Enough. Do not allow a trivial misunderstanding the blossoms of spring, which, once put biligated, cannot be renewed. I speak," Mills, "from experience of the past—the irrevocable past. The glorious fountain sparkle in the sun, must not be stepped caprice; the oases in the desert of Salt not be plucked up idly."

I hardly knew what I did, I was but over to that extraordinary extent; but Dora's little hand and kissed it—and she kissed Miss Mills's hand; and we all so my thinking, to go straight up to the heaven.

We did not come down again. We were there all the evening. At first we strap, among the trees: I with Dora's drawn through mine; and Heaven knew as it all was, it would have been a happy have been struck immortal with those feelings, and have strayed among the ever.

But, much too soon, we heard the laughing and talking, and calling "Dora? So we went back, and they Dora to sing. Red Whisker would have guitar-case out of the carriage, but Dora nobody knew where it was, but I. Whisker was done for in a moment; and and I unlocked it, and I took the waiter I sat by her, and I held her hands.
I HAVE A GLORIFIED RIDE.

ad I drank in every note of her dear 
she sang to me, who loved her, and all 
golden text as much as they liked, 
and nothing to do with it!

intoxicated with joy. I was afraid it 
sappy to be real, and that I should wake 
gham Street presently, and hear Mrs. 
naking the teacups in getting breakfast 
at Dora sang, and others sang, and Miss 
about the slumbering echoes in the 
Memory; as if she were a hundred 
and the evening came on; and we had 
the kettle boiling gipsy-fashion; and I 
is happy as ever.

nappier than ever when the party broke 
e other people, defeated Red Whisker 
rent their several ways, and we went 
ugh the still evening and the dying 
t sweet scents rising up around us. Mr. 
being a little drowsy after the cham-
mon to the soil that grew the grape, to 
that rose the wine, to the sun that 
, and to the merchant who adulterated 
ding fast asleep in a corner of the 
car-
de by the side and talked to Dora. She 
my horse and patted him—oh, what a 
hand it looked upon a horse!—and her 
old not keep right, and now and then I 
und her with my arm; and I even fan-
liop began to see how it was, and to un-
that he must make up his mind to be 
that me.

gacious Miss Mills, too; that amiable, 
ise used-up recluse; that little patriarch 
ing less than twenty, who had done 
world, and mustn't on any account have 
ering echoes in the caverns of Memory 
; what a kind thing she did!

Copperfield,' said Miss Mills, "come to 
of the carriage a moment—if you can 
xcept. I want to speak to you."

me, on my gallant grey, bending at the 
iss Mills, with my hand upon the car-
!

is coming to stay with me. She is 
me with the day after to-morrow. 
uld like to call, I am sure papa would 
t to see you."

ould I do but invoke a silent blessing 
illa's head, and store Miss Mills's ad-
se securest corner of my memory! What 
, but tell Miss Mills, with grateful looks 
at words, how much I appreciated her 
, and what an intangible value I set 
friendship!

Miss Mills benignantly dismissed me, 
Go back to Dora!" and I went; and 
ad out of the carriage to talk to me, and 
all the rest of the way; and I rode my 
my so close to the wheel that I grazed 
ere leg against it, and "took the bark 
's owner told me, "to the tune of three 
—which I paid, and thought extrem-
so much joy. What time Miss Mills 
sat looking at the moon, mnrnming verses, and 
recalling, I suppose, the ancient days when she 
and earth had anything in common.

Norwood was many miles too near, and we 
reached it many hours too soon; but Mr. Spen-
low came to himself a little short of it, and said, "You 
must come in, Copperfield, and rest!" and I con-
senting, we had sandwiches and wine-and-water.

In the light room, Dora blushing looked so lovely, 
that I could not tear myself away, but sat there 
starving, in a dream, until the snoring of Mr. Spen-
low inspired me with sufficient consciousness to 
take my leave. So we parted; I riding all the 
way to London with the farewell touch of Dora's 
hand still light on mine, recalling every incident 
and word ten thousand times; lying down in my 
own bed at last, as enraptured a young noodle as 
ever was carried out of his five wits by love.

When I awoke next morning, I was resolute to 
decide my passion to Dora, and know my fate. 
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There was no other question that I knew of in 
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ness, torturing myself by putting every conceiv-
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sorry her Papa was not at home; though I thought 
we all bore that with fortitude. Miss Mills was 
conversational for a few minutes, and then, lay-
ing down her pen upon Affection's Dirge, got up, 
and left the room.

I began to think I would put it off till to-mor-
row."

"I hope your poor horse was not tired, when
he got home at night," said Dora, lifting up her beautiful eyes. "It was a long way for him."

I began to think I would do it to-day.

"It was a long way for him," said I, "for he had nothing to uphold him on the journey."

"Wasn't he red, poor thing?" asked Dora.

I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.

"Yes—yes," I said, "he was well taken care of. I mean he had not the uttermost happiness that I had in being so near you."

Dora bent her head over her drawing, and said, after a little while—"I had sat, in the interval, in a burning fever, and with my legs in a very rigid state."

"You didn't seem to be sensible of that happiness yourself, at one time of the day," I saw now that I was in for it, and it must be done on the spot.

"You didn't care for that happiness in the least," said Dora, slightly raising her eyebrows, and shaking her head, "when you were sitting by Miss Kitt."

Kitt, I should observe, was the name of the creature in pink, with the little eyes.

"Though certainly I don't know why you should," said Dora, "or why you should call it happiness at all. But of course you don't mean what you say. And I am sure no one doubts your being at liberty to do whatever you like. Jip, you naughty boy, come here!"

I don't know how I did it. I did it in a moment. I intercepted Jip. I had Dora in my arms. I was full of eloquence. I never stopped for a word. I told her how I loved her. I told her I should die without her. I told her that I idolised and worshipped her. Jip barked madly all the time.

When Dora hung her head and cried, and trembled, my eloquence increased so much the more. If she would like me to die for her, she had but to say the word, and I was ready. Life without Dora's love was not a thing to have on any terms. I couldn't bear it, and I wouldn't. I had loved her every minute, day and night, since I first saw her. I loved her at that minute to distraction. I should always love her, every minute, to distraction. Lovers had loved before, and lovers would love again; but no lover had ever loved, might, could, would, or should ever love, as I loved Dora. The more I raved, the more Jip barked. Each of us, in his own way, got more mad every moment.

Well, well! Dora and I were sitting on the sofa by-and-by, quiet enough, and Jip was lying in her lap, winking peacefully at me. It was off my mind. I was in a state of perfect rapture, Dora and I were engaged.

I suppose we had some notion that this was to end in marriage. We must have had some, because Dora stipulated that we were never to be married without her papa's consent. But, in our youthful ecstasy, I don't think that we really looked before us or behind us; or had any aspiration beyond the ignorant present. We keep our secret from Mr. Spenlow; but I think I never entered my head, then, that it was anything dishonorable in that.

Miss Mills was more than usually kind when Dora, going to find her, brought her back—I apprehend, because there was a ten what had passed to awaken the slumber in the caverns of Memory. But she gave blessing, and the assurance of her lasting friendship, and spoke to us, generally, as the Voice from the Cloister.

What an idle time it was! What a stultitious, happy, foolish time it was!

When I measured Dora's finger for a ring, I was to be made of forget-me-nots, and a jeweller, to whom I took the measure, it out, and laughed over his order-book, and me anything he liked for the pretty thing with its blue stones—so associated in my phrase with Dora's hand, that yesterday, saw such another, by chance, on the French daughter, there was a moment of my heart, like pain!

When I walked about, exalted with my patience and full of my own interest, and felt the beauty of loving Dora, and of being beloved, I should think that if I had walked the air, I could not have been more above the people not so situated, or creeping on the earth!

When we had those meetings in the gardens, in the square, and sat within the dingy house, so happy, that I love the London of this hour, for nothing else, and see the flowers of the tropics in their smoky feathers!

When we had our first great quarrel, a week of our betrothal, and when Dora had taken back the ring, enclosed in a despairing note, wherein she used the terrible exclamation of our love had begun in folly, and ended in madness! which dreadful words occasioned tears to part the hair, and cry that all was over!

When, under cover of the night, I flew to Mills, whom I saw by stealth in a back where there was a mangle, and implored Mills to interpose between us and avert it! When Miss Mills undertook the office, and, with Dora, exhorting us, from the pulpits, own bitter youth, to mutual concession, avoidance of the desert of Sahara!

When we cried and made it up, and burst again, that the back-kitchen, mangle changed to Love's own temple, where there was a plan of correspondence through Mills always to comprehend at least one letter side every day!

What an idle time! What an unhappy, happy, foolish time! Of all the times that Time has in his grip, there is none more retrospective. I can smile at half so much tenderly.
CHAPTER XXXIV.

MY AUNT ASTONISHES ME.

I write to Agnes as soon as Dora and I were
I wrote her a long letter, in which I
make her comprehend how blest I was,
a darling Dora was. I entreated Agnes
and this as a thoughtless passion which
yield to any other, or had the least re-
to the boyish fancies which we used to-
I assured her that its profundity was
stimulous, and expressed my belief that
ke it had ever been known.

ow, as I wrote to Agnes on a fine even-
open window, and the remembrance of
alm eyes and gentle face came stealing
it shed such a peaceful influence upon
and agitation in which I had been living
of which my very happiness partook in
so, that it soothed me into tears. I
out I sat resting my head upon my hand,
letter was half done, cherishing a gen-
as if Agnes were one of the elements of
ome. As if, in the retirement of the
le almost sacred to me by her presence,
I must be happier than anywhere. As
joy, sorrow, hope, or disappointment;
done; my heart turned naturally there,
its refuge and best friend.
worth, I said nothing. I only told her
been sad grief at Yarmouth, on account
flight; and that on me it made a double
reason of the circumstances attending
how quick she always was to divine
and that she would never be the first to
a name.
letter, I received an answer by return
As I read it, I seemed to hear Agnes
me. It was like her cordial voice in
What can I say more!

had been away from home lately, Trad-
dled twice or thrice. Finding Peggotty
being informed by Peggotty (who al-
steered that information to whomsoever
ive it), that she was my old nurse, he
shed a good-humored acquaintance with
and stayed to have a little chat with her

So Peggotty said; but I am afraid the
on her own side, and of immoderate
she was very difficult indeed to stop,
her! when she had me for her

minds me, not only that I expected
a certain afternoon of his own ap-
which was now come, but that Mrs.
resigned everything appertaining to
(the salary excepted) until Peggotty
se to present herself. Mrs. Crupp, after
ers conversations respecting Peggotty,
igh-pitched voice, on the staircase—
visible Familiar it would appear, for
speaking she was quite alone at those
ressed a letter to me, developing her
ning it with that statement of uni-
versal application, which fitted every occurrence
of her life, namely, that she was a mother herself,
she went on to inform me that she had once seen
very different days, but that at all periods of her
existence she had had a constitutional objection
to spies, intruders, and informers. She named no
names, she said; let them the cap fitted, wear it;
but spies, intruders, and informers, especially in
wilders' weeds (this clause was underlined), she
had ever accustomed herself to look down upon.
If a gentleman was the victim of spies, intruders,
and informers (but still naming no names), that
was his own pleasure. He had a right to please
himself; so let him do. All that she, Mrs. Crupp,
stipulated for, was, that she should not be
"brought in contract" with such persons.
Therefore she begged to be excused from any
further attendance on the top set, until things
were as they formerly was, and as they could be
wished to be; and further mentioned that her lit-
tle book would be found upon the breakfast-table
every Saturday morning, when she requested an
immediate settlement of the same, with the be-
nevolent view of saving trouble, "and an ill-conv-
enience" to all parties.

After this, Mrs. Crupp confined herself to mak-
ing pitfalls on the stairs, principally with pitchers,
and endeavoring to delude Peggotty into breaking
her legs. I found it rather harrowing to live in this
state of siege, but was too much afraid of Mrs.
Crupp to see any way out of it.

"My dear Copperfield," cried Traddles, punc-
tually appearing at my door, in spite of all these
obstacles, "how do you do?"

"My dear Traddles," said I, "I am delighted
to see you at last, and very sorry I have not been
at home before. But I have been so much en-
gaged—"

"Yes, yes, I know," said Traddles, "of course.
Yours lives in London, I think."

"What did you say?"

"She—excuse me—Miss D., you know," said
Traddles, coloring in his great delicacy, "lives
in London, I believe?"

"Oh yes. Near London."

"Mine, perhaps you recollect," said Traddles,
with a serious look, "lives down in Devonshire—one
of ten. Consequently, I am not so much en-
gaged as you—in that sense."

"I wonder you can bear," I returned, "to see
her so seldom."

"Hah!" said Traddles, thoughtfully. "It does
seem a wonder. I suppose it is, Copperfield, be-
cause there's no help for it?"

"I suppose so," I replied with a smile, and
not without a blush. "And because you have so
much constancy and patience, Traddles."

"Dear me!" said Traddles, considering about
it, "do I strike you in that way, Copperfield? I
Really I didn't know that I had. But she is such
an extraordinarily dear girl herself, that it's pos-
sible she may have imparted something of those
virtues to me. Now you mention it, Copperfield,
I shouldn't wonder at all. I assure you she is
I believe it was the old identical steel-clasped reticule of my childhood, that shut up like a bite. Compressing her lips, in sympathy with the map, Miss Murdstone opened it—opening her mouth a little at the same time—and produced my last letter to Dora, teeming with expressions of devoted affection.

"I believe that is your writing, Mr. Copperfield?" said Mr. Spenlow.

I was very hot, and the voice I heard was very unlike mine, when I said, "It is, sir!"

"If I am not mistaken," said Mr. Spenlow, as Miss Murdstone brought a parcel of letters out of her reticule, tied round with the dearest bit of blue ribbon, "those are also from your pen, Mr. Copperfield?"

I took them from her with a most deject sensation; and, glancing at such phrases at the top, as "My ever dearest and own Dora," "My best beloved angel," "My blessed one for ever," and the like, blushed deeply, and inclined my head.

"No, thank you!" said Mr. Spenlow, coldly, as I mechanically offered them back to him. "I will not deprive you of them, Miss Murdstone, be so good as to proceed!"

That gentle creature, after a moment’s thoughtful survey of the carpet, delivered herself with much dry unction as follows:

"I must confess to having entertained my suspicions of Miss Spenlow, in reference to David Copperfield, for some time. I observed Miss Spenlow and David Copperfield, when they first met; and the impression made upon me then was not agreeable. The depravity of the human heart is such—"

"You will oblige me, ma’am," interrupted Mr. Spenlow, "by confining yourself to facts!"

Miss Murdstone cast down her eyes, shook her head as if protesting against this unseemly interruption, and with frowning dignity, resumed:

"Since I am to confine myself to facts, I will state them as dryly as I can. Perhaps that will be considered an acceptable course of proceeding. I have already said, sir, that I have had my suspicions of Miss Spenlow, in reference to David Copperfield, for some time. I have frequently endeavored to find decisive corroboration of those suspicions, but without effect. I have therefore forborne to mention them to Miss Spenlow’s father;” locking severely at him; “knowing how little disposition there usually is in such cases, to acknowledge the conscientious discharge of duty.”

Mr. Spenlow seemed quite cowed by the gentlemanly sternness of Miss Murdstone’s manner, and deprecated her severity with a conciliatory little wave of his hand.

"On my return to Norwood, after the period of absence occasioned by my brother’s marriage,” pursued Miss Murdstone in a disdainful voice, "and on the return of Miss Spenlow from her visit to her friend Miss Mills, I imagined that the manner of Miss Spenlow gave me greater occasion for suspicion than before. Therefore I watched Miss Spenlow closely."

"Dear, tender little Dora, so unconscious of the Dragon’s eye."

"Still," resumed Miss Murdstone, "I found no proof until last night. It appeared to me that Miss Spenlow received too many letters from her friend Miss Mills; but Miss Mills being her servant with her father’s full concurrence; another looking blow at Mr. Spenlow, “it was not for me to interfere. If I may not be permitted to allow the natural depravity of the human heart, at least I may—I must—be permitted, so far is that misplaced confidence.”

Mr. Spenlow apologetically murmured its assent.

"Last evening after tea,” pursued Miss Murdstone, “I observed the little dog starting, wilting, and growling about the drawing-room, worrying something. I said to Miss Spenlow, ‘Dora, what is that the dog has in his mouth? It’s paper.’ Miss Spenlow immediately put her hand to her frock, gave a sudden cry, and ran to the dog. I interposed, and said ‘Dora, my love, you must not permit me.’”

Oh Jlp, miserable Spaniel, this wretchedness, then, was your work!

"Miss Spenlow endeavored,” said Miss Murdstone, "to bribe me with kisses, work-boxes and small articles of jewelry—that, of course, I pass over. The little dog retreated under the sofa on my approaching him, and was with great difficulty dislodged by the fire-irons. Even when dislodged he still kept the letter in his mouth; and on my endeavoring to take it from him, at the imminent risk of being bitten, he kept it between his teeth so pertinaciously as to suffer himself to be held suspended in the air by means of the document. At length I obtained possession of it. After perusing it, I taxed Miss Spenlow with having many such letters in her possession; and ultimately obtained from her, the packet which is now in David Copperfield’s hand.”

Here she ceased; and snapping her reticule again, and shutting her mouth, looked as if she might be broken, but could never be bent.

"You have heard Miss Murdstone,” said Mr. Spenlow, turning to me. “I beg to ask, Mr. Copperfield, if you have anything to say in reply?”

The picture I had before me, of the beautiful little treasure of my heart, sobbing and crying all night—of her being alone, frightened, and wretched, then—of her having so piteously begged and prayed that stony-hearted woman to forgive her—of her having vainly offered her those kisses, work-boxes, and trinkets—of her being in such grievous distress, and all for me—very much impaired the little dignity I had been able to muster. I am afraid I was in a tumultuous state for a minute or so, though I did my best to disguise it.

"There is nothing I can say, sir," I answered, "except that all the blame is mine. Dora—"
Spenlow, if you please," said her father.

"I never thought so, before, sir," said Mr. Spenlow, sobbing and as if he were going to take a sudden turn for the worse.

"But now," said Mr. Copperfield, "I believe you are quite mistaken. You have been neglecting your duty as a gentleman in your house, where there is a spirit of confidence. If your confidence, sir, is not deserved, you will compensate for it by showing me respect.

"Mr. Copperfield," said Mr. Spenlow, "I must try my influence with my daughter."

Miss Murdstone, by an expressive sound, a long-drawn expiration, which was neither a sigh nor a moan, but was done as if it were the last word she had to say, gave me her opinion that he should have done this at first.

"I must try," said Mr. Spenlow, "by this means, to convince my daughter that I was not at loose ends in my opinion that he should have done this at first.

"You were already engaged," said Mr. Spenlow, more like Punch and Judy than his usual self, and as if he were going to take a sudden turn for the worse.

"He is right," interrupted Mr. Spenlow, "as I have said before. You are right, sir."


"Barkis, I'll trouble you to look after the tea, and let me have another cup, for I don't fancy that woman's peering-out!"

I knew my aunt sufficiently well to know that she had something of importance on her mind, and that there was far more matter in this affair than a stranger might have supposed. I noticed how her eye lighted on me, when she thought my attention otherwise occupied; and what a curious process of hesitation appeared to be going on within her; while she preserved her outward stiffness and composure. I began to reflect whether I had done anything to offend her; and my conscience whispered me that I had not yet told her about Dora. Could it by any means be that, I wondered?

I knew she would only speak in her own good time, I sat down near her, and spoke to the birds, and played with the cat, and was as easy as I could be. But I was very far from being really easy; and I should still have been so, even if Mr. Dick, leaning over the great kite behind my aunt, had not taken every secret opportunity of shaking his head darly at me, and pointing at her.

"Trot," said my aunt at last, when she had finished her tea, and carefully smoothed down her dress, and wiped her lips—"you needn't go, Barkis!—Trot, have you got to be firm, and self-reliant?"

"I hope so, aunt.

"What do you think?" inquired Miss Betsey.

"I think so, aunt."

"Then why, my love," said my aunt, looking earnestly at me, "why do you think I prefer to sit upon this property of mine to-night?"

I shook my head, unable to guess.

"Because," said my aunt, "it's all I have. Because I'm ruined, my dear!"

If the house, and every one of us, had tumbled into the river together, I hardly have received a greater shock.

"Dick knows it," said my aunt, laying her hand calmly on my shoulder. "I am ruined, my dear Trot! All I have in the world is in this room, except the cottage; and that I have left Janet to let. Barkis, I want to get a bed for this gentleman to-night. To save expense, perhaps you can make up something here for myself. Everything will do. It's only for to-night. We'll talk about this, more, to-morrow."

I was raised from my amazement, and concern for her—I am sure, for her—by her falling on my neck for a moment, and crying that she only grieved for me. In another moment she suppressed this emotion; and said, with an aspect more triumphant than dejected:

"We must meet reverses boldly, and not suffer them to frighten us, my dear. We must learn to set the play out. We must live misfortune down, Trot!"
st now, Mr. Dick, is to keep a cheerful
ice, and not let my aunt see that we are
about it."
ent to this in the most earnest man-
implored me, if I should see him wan-
inches out of the right course, to recall
one of those superior methods which
ys at my command. But I regret to
the fright I had given him proved too
his best attempts at concealment. All
his eyes wandered to my aunt’s face, ex-
tion of the most dismal apprehen-
saw her growing thin on the spot;
actions of this, and put a constraint
read; but his keeping that immovable
rolling his eyes like a piece of ma-
not mend the matter at all. I saw
the loaf at supper (which happened
mall one), as if nothing else stood be-
mind; and when my aunt insisted
using his customary rare, I detected
act of pocketing fragments of his bread
; I have no doubt for the purpose of
with those savings, when we should
ed an advanced stage of attenuation.
, on the other hand, was in a composed
and, which was a lesson to all of us—
m sure. She was extremely gracious to
except when I inadvertently called her
me; and, strange as I knew she felt in
appeared quite at home. She was to
ed, and I was to lie in the sitting-room
ard over her. She made a great point
t the river, in case of a confab I
 suppose really did find some satisfac-
 it circumstance.
 my dear,” said my aunt, when she saw
preparations for compounding her
draught. “No!”
ing, aunt?”
wine, my dear. Ale,”
here is wine here, aunt. And you al-
 it made of wine.”
that, in case of sickness,” said my
Ve mustn’t use it carelessly, Trot. Ale
fair a pint.”
gh Mr. Dick would have fallen, insensi-
bient being resolute, I went out and got
self. As it was growing late, Peggotty
ick took that opportunity of repairing
nder’s shop together. I parted from
ellow, at the corner of the street, with
 kite at his back, a very monument of

it was walking up and down the room
stern, crimping the borders of her
her fingers. I warmed the ale and
 toast on the usual infallible principles.
as ready for her, she was ready for it,
rightcap on, and the skirt of her gown
sk on her knees,” said my aunt, after taking a spoon.

“it’s a great deal better than wine. Not
me.”

I suppose I looked doubtful, for she added:
“Tut, tut, child. If nothing worse than Ale
happens to us, we are well off.”

“Tut, tut, child. If nothing worse than Ale
happens to us, we are well off.”

“I should think so myself, aunt, I am sure,”
said I.

“Then, why don’t you think so?” said
my aunt.

“Young and I are very different people,”
I returned.

“Stuff and nonsense, Trot!” replied my aunt.

My aunt went on with a quiet enjoyment, in
which there was very little affection, if any;
drinking the warm ale with a teaspoon, and so-
kering her stripe of toast in it.

“Trot,” said she, “I don’t care for strange
faces in general, but I rather like that Barkis
of yours, do you know!”

“It’s better than a hundred pounds to hear
you say so!” said I.

“It’s a most extraordinary world,” observed
my aunt, rubbing her nose; “how that woman
ever got into it with that name, is unaccountable
to me. It would be much more easy to be born a
Jackson, or something of that sort, one would
think.”

“Perhaps she thinks too; it’s not her
fault,” said I.

“I suppose not,” returned my aunt, rather
grudging the admission; “but it’s very aggravat-
ing. However, she’s Barkis now. That’s some
comfort. Barkis is uncommonly fond of you,
Trot.”

“There is nothing she would leave undone to
prove it,” said I.

“Nothing, I believe,” returned my aunt.

“Here, the poor fool has been begging and
paying about handing over some of her money—
because she has got too much of it! A simpleton!”

My aunt’s tears of pleasure were positively
trickling down into the warm ale.

“She’s the most ridiculous creature that ever
was born,” said my aunt. “I know, from the
first moment when I saw her with that poor dear
 blessed baby of a mother of yours, that she was
the most ridiculous of mortals. But there are
good points in Barkis!”

Affecting to laugh, she got an opportunity of
putting her hand to her eyes. Having availed
herself of it, she resumed her toast and her
discourse together.

“Oh! Mercy upon us!” sighed my aunt.

“I know all about it, Trot! Barkis and myself
had quite a gossip while you were out with Dick.
I know all about it. I don’t know where those
wretched girls expect to go to, for my part. I
wonder they don’t knock out their brains against
—against mantelpieces,” said my aunt; an idea
which was probably suggested to her by her con-
templation of mine.

“Poor Em’ly!” said I.

“Oh, don’t talk to me about poor,” returned
my aunt. “She should have thought of that, be-
fore she caused so much misery! Give me a kiss,
Trot. I am sorry for your early experience.”
had asked her should she send her love to me, had only cried, as she was always crying, "Oh dear papa! oh, poor papa!" But she had not said No, and that I made the most of.

Mr. Jorkins, who had been at Norwood since the occurrence, came to the office a few days afterwards. He and Tiffey were seated together for some few moments, and then Tiffey looked out at the door and beckoned me in.

"Oh!" said Mr. Jorkins. "Mr. Tiffey and myself, Mr. Copperfield, are about to examine the desk, the drawers, and other such repositories of the deceased, with the view of sealing up his private papers, and searching for a Will. There is no trace of any, elsewhere. It may be as well for you to assist us, if you please."

I had been in agony to obtain some knowledge of circumstances in which my Dora would be placed—_as_, in whose guardianship, and so forth—and this was something towards it. We began the search at once; Mr. Jorkins unlocking the drawers and desks, and we all taking out the papers. The office-papers we placed on one side, and the private papers (which we were not numerous) on the other. We were very grave; and when we came to a stray sheet, or pencil-case, or ring, or anything article of that kind which we associated personally with him, we spoke very low.

We had sealed up several packets; and were still going on dustily and quietly, when Mr. Jorkins said to us, applying exactly the same words to his late partner as his late partner had applied to him:

"Mr. Spenlow was very difficult to move from the beaten track. You know what he was! I am disposed to think he had made no will."

"Oh, I know he had!" said I.

They both stopped and looked at me.

"On the very day when I last saw him," said I, "he told me that he had, and that his affairs were long since settled."

Mr. Jorkins and old Tiffey shook their heads with one accord.

"That looks unpromising," said Tiffey.

"Very unpromising," said Mr. Jorkins.

"Surely you don't doubt—I began.

"My good Mr. Copperfield!" said Tiffey, laying his hand upon my arm, and shutting up both his eyes as he shook his head; "if you had been in the Commons as long as I have, you would know that there is no subject on which men are so inconsistent, and so little to be trusted."

"Why, bless my soul, he made that very remark!" I replied persistently.

"I should call that almost final," observed Tiffey. "My opinion is—no will."

It appeared a wonderful thing to me, but it turned out that there was no will. He had never so much as thought of making one, so far as his papers afforded any evidence; for there was no kind of hint, sketch, or memorandum, of any testamentary intention whatever. What was scarcely less astonishing to me was, that his affairs were in a most disorderly state. Extremely difficult, I heard, to make out, or what he had paid, or of what possessed. It was considered likely years he could have had no clear opinion subjects himself. By little and little it that, in the competition on all points of up and granularity than running high in the he had spent more than his profession which was not a very large one, and his private means, if they ever had been (which was exceedingly doubtful), to a curb indeed. There was a sale of the and lease, at Norwood; and Tiffey told thinking how interested I was in the style, paying all the joint debts of the deceased dutching his share of outstanding goodful debts due to the firm, he wouldn thousand pounds for all the asset ing.

This was at the expiration of about a year: he had suffered tortures all the time, and I really must have lived violent hands by myself, when Miss Mills still reported to us broken-hearted! little Dora would say when I was mentioned, but "Oh, ye, Oh, dear papa!" Also, that she had relations than two aunts, maiden sister Spenlow, who lived at Putney, and who held any other than chance commended by their brother for many years. Not that ever quarrelled (Miss Mills informed) that having been, on the occasion of Dor tening, invited to tea, when they co themselves privileged to be invited to they had expressed their opinion in writing it was "better for the happiness of all that they should stay away. Since when had gone their road, and their brother his.

These two ladies now emerged from retirement, and proposed to take Dora to Putney. Dora, clinging to them both, ex jing, exclaimed, "Oh yes, aunts! Please to Mills and me and slip to Putney!" So she very soon after the funeral.

How I found time to haunt Putney, I don't know; but I contrived, by some other, to prow almost the neighborhood often. Miss Mills, for the more exact of the duties of friendship, kept a journal of the meetings we met me sometimes, on the 6th and read it, or (if she had not time so lead it to me. I how treasured up the of which I subjoin a specimen!—


"Tuesday. D. weak and nervous. I in pulpit. (Do we not remark how wise? J. M.) D. J. M. and D. went to
I AM HANDED OVER TO JORKINS.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WICKFIELD AND KEEP,

My aunt, beginning, I imagine, to be made seriously uncomfortable by my prolonged dejection, made a pretence of being anxious that I should go to Dover to see that all was working well at the cottage, which was let; and to conclude an agreement, with the same tenant, for a longer term of occupation. Janet was drafted into the service of Mrs. Strong, where I saw her every day. She had been undecided, on leaving Dover, whether or not to give the finishing touch to that renunciation of mankind in which she had been educated, by marrying a pilot; but she decided against that venture. Not so much for the sake of principle, I believe, as because she happened not to like him.

Although it required an effort to leave Miss Mills, I felt rather willingly into my aunt’s presence, as a means of enabling me to pass a few tranquil hours with Agnes. I consulted the good Doctor relative to an absence of three days; and the Doctor wishing me to take that relaxation, — he wished me to take more; but my energy could not bear that,—I made up my mind to go.

As to the Commons, I had no great occasion to be particular about my duties in that quarter. To say the truth, we were getting in no very good odor among the tip-top proctors, and were rapidly sliding down to but a doubtful position. The business had been indifferent under Mr. Jorkins, before Mr. Spenlow’s time; and although it had been quickened by the infusion of new blood, and by the display which Mr. Spenlow made, still it was not established on a sufficiently strong basis to bear, without being shaken, such a blow as the sudden loss of its active manager. It fell off very much. Mr. Jorkins, notwithstanding his reputation in the firm, was an easy-going, incapable sort of man, whose reputation out of doors was not calculated to back it up. I was turned over to him now, and when I saw him take his snuff and let the business go, I regretted my aunt’s thousand pounds more than ever.

But this was not the worst of it. There were a number of hang-over and outsiders about the Commons, who, without being proctors themselves, dabbled in common-law business, and got it done by real proctors, who lent their names in consideration of a share in the spoil;—and there were a good many of these too. As our house now wanted business on any terms, we joined this noble head; and threw out bares to the hangers-on and outsiders, to bring their business to us. Marriage licenses and small probates were what we all looked for, and what paid us best; and the competition for these ran very high indeed. Kidnappers and inveiglers were planted in all the avenues of entrance to the Commons, with instructions to do their utmost to cut off all persons in mourning, and all gentlemen who wore anything bashful in their appearance, and to steer clear to the offices in which their respective employers...
Miss Murdstone let fall, I should say it was rather a good marriage."

"Do you mean that there is money, sir?" I asked.

"Yes," said Mr. Spenlow, "I understand there's money. Beauty too, I am told."

"Indeed! Is his new wife young?"

"Just of age," said Mr. Spenlow. "So lately, that I should think they had been waiting for that."

"Lord deliver her!" said Peggotty. So very emphatically and unexpectedly, that we were all three decomposed; until Tiffey came in with the bill.

Old Tiffey soon appeared, however, and handed it to Mr. Spenlow, to look over. Mr. Spenlow, settling his chin in his crust and rubbing it softly; went over the items with a deprecatory air—which of course all wore a Jorkins's doing—and handed it back to Tiffey with a blank sigh.

"Yes," he said. "That's right. Quite right. I should have been extremely happy, Copperfield, to have limited these charges to the actual expenditure out of pocket, but it is an irksome incident in my professional life, that I am not at liberty to consult my own wishes. I have a partner—Mr. Jorkins."

As he said this with a gentle melancholy, which was the next thing to making no charge at all, I expressed my acknowledgments on Peggotty's behalf, and paid Tiffey in back notes. Peggotty then retired to her lodging, and Mr. Spenlow and I went into Court, where we had a divorce suit coming on, under an ingenuous little statute (repeated now, I believe, but in virtue of which I have seen several marriages annulled), of which the merits were these. The husband, whose name was Thomas Benjamin, had taken out his marriage licence as Thomas only; suppressing the Benjamin, in case he should not find himself as comfortable as he expected. Not finding himself as comfortable as he expected, or being a little fatigued with his wife, poor fellow, he now came forward, by a friend, after being married a year or two, and declared that his name was Thomas Benjamin, and therefore he was not married at all. Which the Court confirmed, to his great satisfaction.

I must say that I had my doubts about the strict justice of this, and was not even frightened out of them by the bushel of wheat which reconciles all anomalies.

But Mr. Spenlow argued the matter with me. He said, Look at the world, there was good and evil in that; look at the ecclesiastical law, there was good and evil in that. It was all part of a system. Very good. There you were!

I had not the hardihood to suggest to Dora's father that possibly we might even improve the world a little, if we got up early in the morning, and took off our coats to the work; but I confessed that I thought we might improve the Commons. Mr. Spenlow replied that he would particularly advise me to dismiss that idea from my mind, as not being worthy of my gentlemanly estate, but that he would be glad to hear what improvement I thought the Commons susceptible?

Taking that part of the Commons to be nearest to us—for my new married by this time, and we were out and strolling past the Prerogative Office—Mr. Spenlow said to me, "I thought the Prerogative Office was a quakerish managed institution. May I inquire in what respect?"

I replied, with deference to his experience (but with erasure, I am afraid, to his being Dora's father), it was perhaps a little nonsensical that for the purpose, leased by the registrars, own private emolument, means not obtained to be fire-proof, chocked with the documents it held, and positively, from to the basement, a mercenary speculative registrars, who took great Fees from it, and crammed the public's wills away anywhere, having no other object, but to make a profit of them cheaply. That, perhaps, little unreasonable that these registrars receipt of profits amounting to eight or ten pounds a year, to say nothing of the deputy registrars, and clerks, should not be obliged to spend a life and money, in finding a reasonably safe place, the important documents which all classes were compelled to hand over to them, without therid of them cheaply. That, perhaps, was unjust that all the great offices in this country should be magnificent sinecures, while fortunate working clerks in the cold of up-stairs were the worst rewarded, and considered men, doing important service in London. That perhaps it was a little unreasonable that the principal registrar of all, who was to find the public, constantly required in this place, all needful accommodation, an enormous sinecure in virtue of that, might be, besides, a clergyman, a parson, a holder of a stall in a cathedral, and while the public was put to the inconvenience which we had a specimen every afternoon, the office was busy, and which we knew quite monstrously. That, perhaps, in the Prerogative Office of the diocese of Ca there was altogether such a pestilent job, an pernicious absurdity, that for squeezed away into a corner of St. Paul's yard, which few people knew, it must have returned completely inside out, and upon long ago.

Mr. Spenlow smiled as I became more on the subject, and then argued this quite me as he had argued the other. He was it after all? It was a question of the public felt that these sinecures were in
it for granted that the office was not better, who was the worse for it? Hol was the better for it? All the Very well. Then the good premonition not be a perfect system; noth-;

t; but what he objected to, was, of the wedge. Under the Prerogative country had been glorious. In-;

g into the Prerogative Office, and
could cease to be glorious. He con-
conscious principle of a gentleman to take
found them; and he had no doubt of the office would last our time. I de-

ded opinion, though I had great doubts
I find he was right, however; for
ylasted to the present moment, but
n the teeth of a great parliamentary
not too willingly) eighteen years
these objections of mine were set
, and when the existing storage for
cried as equal to the accumulation
years and a half more. What they
with them since; whether they have
r whether they sell any, now and
adder-shops; I don’t know. I am
not there, and I hope it may not go
ille.

all this down, in my present blissful
use here it comes into its natural
openlow and I falling into this con-
longed it and our sons to go and fro-
ged into general topics. And so it
in the end, that Mr. Spenlow told
week was Dora’s birthday, and he
I if I would come down and join a
in the occasion. I went out of my
dately; became a mere driveller
receipt of a little lace-edged sheet of
“Favored by papa. To remind;”
h his intervening period in a state of

committed every possible absurdity,
preparation for this blessed event.
hen I remember the cravat I bought.
ght be placed in any collection of in-
torture. I provided, and sent down
ood coach the night before; a delicate
r, amounting in itself, I thought,
eclamation. There were crackers in
interest; motes that could be got for
six in the morning. I was in Covent
et, buying a bouquet for Dora. At
on horseback (I hired a gallant
occasion), with the bouquet in
ep it fresh, trotting down to Nor-

that when I saw Dora in the garden
d not to see her, and rode past the
ning to be anxiously looking for it, I
ve small fooleries which other young
my circumstances might have com-
use they came so very natural to me.
I did find the house, and did dis-
garden gate, and drag those sony-

hear hearted boots across the lawn to Dora sitting on
a garden seat under a lilac-tree, what a spectacle
she was, upon that beautiful morning, among the
butterflies, in a white chip bonnet and a dress of
celestial blue!

There was a young lady with her—compara-
tively stricken in years—almost twenty, I should
say. Her name was Miss Mills, and Dora called
her Julia. She was the bosom friend of Dora.
Happy Miss Mills!

Jip was there, and Jip would bark at me
again. When I presented my bouquet, he
grasped his teeth with jealously. Well he might.
If he had the least idea how I adored his mistress,
well he might!

“Oh, thank you, Mr. Copperfield! What dear
flowers!” said Dora.

I had had an intention of saying (and had been
studying the best form of words for three miles)
that I thought them beautiful before I saw them
so near her. But I couldn’t manage it. She was
too bewildering. To see her lay the flowers
against her little dimpled chin, was to lose all
presence of mind and power of language in a
feeble ecstasy. I wonder I didn’t say, “Kill me,
if you have a heart, Miss Mills. Let me die
here!”

Then Dora held my flowers to Jip to smell.
Then Jip growled, and wouldn’t smell them.
Then Dora laughed, and held them a little closer
to Jip, to make him. Then Jip laid hold of a bit
gernature with his teeth, and worried imagi-
cats in it. Then Dora beat him, and pouted,
and said, “My poor beautiful flowers!” as com-
passionately, I thought, as if Jip had laid hold
of me. I wished he had!

“You’ll be so glad to hear, Mr. Copperfield,”
said Dora, “that that cross Miss Murstone is
not here. She has gone to her brother’s mar-
riage, and will be away at least three weeks.
Isn’t that delightful?”

I said I was sure it must be delightful to
her, and all that was delightful to her was del-

ghtful to me. Miss Mills, with an air of
superior wisdom and benevolence, smiled upon
us.

“She is the most disagreeable thing I ever
saw,” said Dora. “You can’t believe how ill-
tempered and shocking she is, Julia.”

“Yes, I can, my dear!” said Julia.

“You can perhaps, love,,” returned Dora, with
her hand on Julia’s. “Forgive my not except-
ing you, my dear, at first.”

I learned, from this, that Miss Mills had had her
trials in the course of a chequered existence; and
that to these, perhaps, I might refer that wise
benignity of manner which I had already noticed.
I found, in the course of the day, that this was
the case: Miss Mills having been unhappy in a
misplaced affection, and being understood to
have retired from the world on her awful stock
of experience, but still to take a calm interest in
the unbrightened hopes and loves of youth.

“But now Mr. Spenlow came out of the house.
and Dora went to him, saying, "Look, papa, what beautiful flowers!" And Miss Mills smiled thoughtfully, as who should say, "Ye May-flowers, enjoy your brief existence in the bright morning of life!" And we all walked from the lawn towards the carriage, which was getting ready.

I shall never have such a ride again. I have never had such another. There were only those three, their hamper, my harper, and the guitar-case, in the phaeton; and, of course, the phaeton was open; and I rode behind it, and Dora sat with her back to the horse, looking towards me. She kept the bouquet close to her on the cushion, and wouldn't allow me to sit on that side of her at all, for fear she would crush it. She often carried it in her hand, and often refreshed herself with its fragrance. Our eyes at those times often met; and my great astonishment is that I didn't go over the head of my gallant grey into the carriage.

There was dust, I believe. There was a good deal of dust, I believe. I have a faint impression that Mr. Spenlow roused me with my riding in it; but I knew of none. I was sensible of a mist of love and beauty about Dora, but of nothing else. I stood up sometimes, and asked me what I thought of the prospect. I said it was delightful, and I daresay it was; but it was all Dora to me. The sun shone Dora, and the birds sang Dora. The south wind blew Dora, and the wild flowers in the hedges were all Doras, to a bud. My comfort is, Miss Mills understood me. Miss Mills alone could enter into my feelings thoroughly.

I don't know how long we were going, and to this hour I know as little where we went. Perhaps it was near Guildford. Perhaps some Arabian-night magician opened up the place for the day, and shut it up for ever when we came away. It was a green spot, on a hill, carpeted with soft turf. There were shady trees, and heather, and, as far as I could see, a rich landscape.

It was a trying thing to find people here, waiting for us; and my jealousy, even of the ladies, knew no bounds. But all of my own sex—especially one insipid, three or four years my elder, with a red whisker, on which he established an amount of presumption not to be endured—were my mortal foes.

We all unpacked our baskets, and employed ourselves in getting dinner ready. Red Whisker pretended he could make a salad (which I don't believe), and obtruded himself on public notice. Some of the young ladies washed the lettuces for him, and sliced them under his directions. Dora was among these. I felt that fate had plotted me against this man, and one of us must fall.

Red Whisker made his salad (I wondered how they could eat it. Nothing should have induced me to touch it) and voted himself into the charge of the wine-cellar, which he constructed, being an ingenious beast, in the hollow trunk of a tree.

By-and-by, I saw him, with the majority of a lobster on his plate, eating his dinner at the feet of Dora!

I have but an indistinct idea of what for some time after this dazeful object itself to my view. I was very merry but it was hollow merriment. I talked to a young creature in pink, with little flirted with her desperately. She received my attentions with favor; but whether on account of her beauty, or because she had any design Whisker, I can't say. Dora's health was so delicate, that I decided to interrupt conversation for that purpose, and to resume it immediately afterwards. I caught Dora's eye, and I thought it looked but it looked at me over the head of Red Whisker, and I was drugged. The young creature in pink had a green; and I rather think the latter so from motives of policy. Howbeit, the general breakup of the party, while the guests of the dinner were being put away, strolled off by myself among the trees, and the noxious state. I was debating whether I should pretend that I was not well, don't know where—upon my gallant; Dora and Miss Mills met me.

"Mr. Copperfield," said Miss Mills, "dull!"

I begged her pardon. Not at all. "And Dora," said Miss Mills, "dull!"

"Oh dear no! Not in the least, " said I, with an almost venerable air, "Eenot,

Do not allow a trivial misunderstanding or a blossoming of spring, which, once quelled, cannot be renewed. I speak, Miss Mills, "from experience of the past—irremovable past. The glistening founds sparkle in the sun, must not stop the cup of life; the oasis in the desert of life must not be plucked up idly."

I hardly knew what I did, I was too over to that extraordinary extent; but Dora's hand and kissed it—and so I kissed Miss Mills's hand; and we all my thinking, to go straight up to the heavens.

We did not come down again. We there all the evening. At first we stay, among the trees: I with Dora's drawn through mine; and Heaven knew as it all was, it would have been a hap have been struck immortal with the feelings, and have strayed among the ever!

But, much too soon, we heard the laughing and talking, and calling Dora?" So we went back, and the Dora to sing. Red Whisker would 

be guitar-case out of the carriage, but Dora nobody knew where it was, but I. Whisker was done for in a moment; and I unlocked it, and I took the great I eat by her, and I had her wood
I have a glorified ride.

As I drank in every note of her dear song to me who loved her, and all might applaud as much as they liked, I had nothing to do with it: a little of which I was afraid it was to be real, and that I should wake up Street presently, and hear Mrs. Du pont's tea-songs in getting breakfast. Dora sang, and others sang, and Miss—about the slumbering echoes in the Memory; as if she were a hundred and the evening came on; and we had a kettle boiling a gipsy-fashion; and I was happy as ever.

And so I did, in fact, that I was asleep in a corner of the carriage by the side and talked to Dora. She patted him—oh, what a horse patted him—and her I not keep right, and now and then I had her with my arm; and I even fancied I saw how it was, and of course I must make up my mind to be real.

Miss Mills, too; that amiable, useful, reclusive patriarch, was not twenty, who had done so much, and must not on any account have her in the carriage for a moment—if you can send. I want to speak to you."

On my gallant grey, bending that the Mills, with my hand upon the car's coming to stay with me. She is with me the day after to-morrow. I like to call, I am sure papa would see you."

And I do but invoke a silent blessing on his head, and store Miss Mills's ad-securest corner of my memory! What to tell Miss Mills, with grateful looks words, how much I appreciated her, and what an inestimable value I set on her? This Mills benignly dismissed me, back to Dora!" I went, and out of the carriage to talk to me, and all the rest of the way; and I rode my so close to the wheel that grazed a leg against it, and "took the dark turner told me, "to the tune of three—which I paid, and thought extrem- o much joy. What time Miss Mills sat looking at the moon, murmuring verses, and recalling, I suppose, the ancient days when she and earth had anything in common.

Norwood was many miles too near, and we reached it many hours too soon; but Mr. Spenslow came to himself a little short of it, and said, "You must come in, Copperfield, and rest!" and I consented, we had sandwiches and wine-and-water. In the light room, Dora blushing looked so lovely, that I could not tear myself away, but sat there staring, in a dream, until the snoring of Mr. Spenslow inspired me with sufficient consciousness to take my leave. So we parted; I riding all the way to London with the farewell touch of Dora's hand still light on mine, recalling every incident and word ten thousand times; lying down in my own bed at last, as enraptured a young noodle as ever was carried out of his five wits by love.

When I awoke next morning, I was resolute to declare my passion to Dora, and know my fate. Happiness or misery was now the question. There was no other question that I knew of in the world, and only Dora could give the answer to it. I passed three days in a luxury of wretched-ness, torturing myself by putting every conceivable variety of discouraging construction on all that ever had taken place between Dora and me. At last, arrayed for the purpose at a vast expense, I went to Miss Mills's, fraught with a declaration.

How many times I went up and down the street, and round the square—painfully aware of being a much better answer to the old riddle than the original one—before I could persuade myself to go up the steps and knock, is no matter now. Even when, at last, I had knocked, and was waiting at the door, I had some flurried thought of asking if that were Mr. Blackboy's (in imitation of poor Barkis), begging pardon, and retreating. But I kept my ground.

Mr. Mills was not at home. I did not expect he would be. Nobody wanted him. Miss Mills was at home. Miss Mills would do.

I was shown into a room up-stairs, where Miss Mills and Dora were. Jip was there. Miss Mills was copying music (I recollect, it was a new song, called Affection's Dirge), and Dora was painting flowers. What were my feelings when I recognised my own flowers; the identical Covent Garden Market purchase! I cannot say that they were very like, or that they particularly resembled any flowers that have ever come under my observation; but I knew from the paper round them, which was accurately copied, what the composition was.

Miss Mills was very glad to see me, and very sorry her Papa was not at home; though I thought we all bore that with fortitude. Miss Mills was conversational for a few minutes, and then, laying down her pen upon Affection's Dirge, got up, and left the room.

I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.

"I hope your poor horse was not tired, when
he got home at night," said Dora, lifting up her
elegant eyes. "It was a long way for him."
I began to think I would do it to-day.
"It was a long way for him," said I, "for he
had nothing to uphold him on the journey."
"Wasn't he fed, poor thing?" asked Dora.
I began to think I would put it off till to-mor-
row.
"Yes—yes," I said, "he was well taken care
of. I mean he had not the unutterable happiness
that I had in being so near you."
Dora bent her head over her drawing, and said,
after a little while—I had sat, in the interval, in
a burning fever, and with my legs in a very rigid
state—
"You didn't seem to be sensible of that happi-
ness yourself, at one time of the day."
I saw now that I was in for it, and it must be
done on the spot.
"You didn't care for that happiness in the
least," said Dora, slightly raising her eyebrows,
and shaking her head, "when you were sitting by
Miss Kitt.
Kitt, I should observe, was the name of the
creature in pink, with the little eyes.
"Though certainly I don't know why you
should," said Dora, "or why you should call it a
happiness at all. But of course you don't mean
what you say. And I am sure no one doubts your
being at liberty to do whatever you like. Jip,
you naughty boy, come here!"
I don't know how I did it. I did it in a mo-
ment. I intercepted Jip. I had Dora in my arms.
I was full of eloquence. I never stopped for a
word. I told her how I loved her. I told her I
should die without her. I told her that I idolised
and worshipped her. Jip barked madly all the
time.
When Dora hung her head and cried, and
trembled, my eloquence increased so much the
more. If she would like me to die for her, she
had but to say the word, and I was ready. Life
without Dora's love was not a thing to have on
any terms. I couldn't bear it, and I wouldn't.
I had loved her every minute, day and night, since
I first saw her. I loved her at that minute to
distraction. I should always love her, every minute,
to distraction. Lovers had loved before, and
lovers would love again; but no lover had ever
loved, might, would, or should ever love, as I loved Dora. The more I raved, the more Jip
barked. Each of us, in his own way, got more
mad every moment.
Well, well! Dora and I were sitting on the
sofa by dull—quiet enough, and Jip was lying
in her lap, winking peacefully at me. It was off
my mind. I was in a state of perfect rapture.
Dora and I were engaged.
I suppose we had some notion that this was to
end in marriage. We must have had some, be-
because Dora stipulated that we were never to be
married without her papa's consent. But, in our
youthful ecstasy, I don't think that we really
looked before us or behind us; or had any aspira-
tion beyond the ignorant present. We
keep our secret from Mr. Spenlow; but
the idea never entered my head, then,
was anything dishonorable in that
Miss Mills was more than usual
when Dora, going to find her, brought
—I apprehend, because there was a
what had passed to awaken the slumber
in the caverns of Memory. But she gets
blessing, and the assurance of her inst
ship, and spoke to us, generally, as
Voice from the Chloster
What an idle time it was! What
stanzas! happy, foolish time it was!
When I measured Dora's finger for
was to be made of Forget-me-nots, and
jeweller, to whom I took the measure,
cut, and laughed over his order-book, at
me anything he liked for the pretty
with its blue stones—so associated in
brance with Dora's hand, that yester-
saw such another, by chance, on the
own daughter, there was a momentary
my heart, like pain!
When I walked about, exalted with
and full of my own interest, and felt t
of loving Dora, and of being beloved,
that if I had walked the air, I could not
more above the people not so situated,
creeping on the earth!
When we had those meetings in the
the square, and sat within the dingy
house, so happy, that I love the London
to this hour, for nothing else, and see
the tropics in their smoky feathers!
When we had our first great quar-
week of our betrothal, and when Dora
back the ring, enclosed in a despairing
note, wherein she used the terrible e
that "our love had begun in folly, and
madness!" which dreadful words ocka
to tear my hair, and cry that all was over.

When, under cover of the night, I for
Mills, whom I saw by stealth in a box
where there was a mangle, and implo
Mills to interpose between us and aver
When Miss Mills undertook the office as
ed with Dora, exhorting us, from the pu
own bitter youth, to mutual concessi
avoidance of the desert of Sahara!

When we cried, and made it up, at
blest again, that the back-kitchen, was
changed to Love's own temple, where we
a plan of correspondence through Miss
ways to comprehend at least one letter
side every day!

What an idle time! What an uns
happy, foolish time! Of all the time
that Time has in his grip, there is no
e one retrospect I can smile at half so
think of half so tenderly.
I WRITE TO AGNES.

CHAPTER XXXIV.
MY AUNT ASTONISHES ME.

to Agnes as soon as Dora and I were wrote her a long letter, in which I ke her comprehend how blest I was, darling Dora was. I entreated Agnes d this as a thoughtless passion which led to any other, or had the least ro o the boyish fancies that we used to

I assured her that its profundity was omable, and expressed my belief that it had ever been known.

As, as I wrote to Agnes on a fine even pen window, and the remembrance of eyes and gentle face came stealing shed such a peaceful influence upon d agitation in which I had been living which my very happiness partook in, that it soothed me into tears. I re I sat resting my head upon my hand, letter was half done, cherishing a gen if Agnes were one of the elements of home. As it, in the retirement of the almost sacred to me by her presence, must be happier than anywhere. As ry, sorrow, hope, or disappointment; in; my heart turned naturally there; a refuge and best friend.

orth, I said nothing. I only told her an sad grief at Yarmouth, on account ght; and that on me it made a double sason of the circumstances attending now quick she always was to divine I that she would never be the first to same.

fter, I received an answer by return. I read it, I seemed to hear Agnes me. It was like her cordial voice in hat can I say more!

had been away from home lately, Trad sly twice or thrice. Finding Peg gotty being informed by Peg gotty (who al ered that information to whomsoever e it), that she was my old nurse, he d a good-humored acquaintance with stayed to have a little chat with her o Peg gotty said; but I am afraid the m her own side, and of immoderate e was very difficult indeed to stop, tert when I had for her me.

nds me, not only that I expected a certain afternoon of his own ap ich was now come, but that Mrs. aigned everything appertaining to be salary excepted) until Peg gotty to present herself. Mrs. Crupp, after w conversations respecting Peg gotty, th-pitched voice, on the staircase—visible Familiar it would appear, for seeking she was quite alone at those used a letter to me, developing her ing it with that statement of uni versal application, which fitted every occurrence of her life, namely, that she was a mother herself, she went on to inform me that she had once seen very different days, but that at all periods of her existence she had had a constitutional objection to spies, intruders, and informers. She named no names, she said; let them the cap fitted, wear it; but spies, intruders, and informers, especially in widers' weeds (this clause was underlined), she had ever accustomed herself to look down upon. If a gentleman was the victim of spies, intruders, and informers (but still naming no names), that was his own pleasure. He had a right to please himself; so let him do. All that she, Mrs. Crupp, stipulated for, was, that she should not be "brought in contract" with such persons. Therefore she begged to be excused from any further attendance on the top set, until things were as they formerly was, and as they could be wished to be; and further mentioned that her little book would be found upon the breakfast-table every Saturday morning, when she requested an immediate settlement of the same, with the benevolent view of saving trouble, "and an ill-convenience" to all parties.

After this, Mrs. Crupp confined herself to making pitfalls on the stairs, principally with pitchers, and endeavoring to delude Peg gotty into breaking her legs. I found it rather harassing to live in this state of siege, but was too much afraid of Mrs. Crupp to see any way out of it.

"My dear Copperfield," cried Traddles, punctually appearing at my door, in spite of all these obstacles, "how do you do?"

"My dear Traddles," said I, "I am delighted to see you at last, and very sorry I have not been at home before. But I have been so much engaged—"

"Yes, yes, I know," said Traddles, "of course. Yours lives in London, I think."

"What did you say?"

"She—excuse me—Miss D., you know," said Traddles, coloring in his great delicacy, "lives in London, I believe?"

"Oh yes. Near London."

"Mine, perhaps you recollect," said Traddles, with a serious look, "lives down in Devonshire—one of ten. Consequently, I am not so much engaged as you—in that sense."

"I wonder you can bear," I returned, "to see her so seldom."

"Hah!" said Traddles, thoughtfully. "It does seem a wonder. I suppose it is, Copperfield, because there's no help for it?"

"I suppose so," I replied with a smile, and not without a blush. "And because you have so much constancy and patience, Traddles."

"Dear me!" said Traddles, considering about it, "do I strike you in that way, Copperfield? Really I didn't know that I had. But she is such an extraordinarily dear girl herself, that it's possible she may have imparted something of those virtues to me. Now you mention it, Copperfield, I shouldn't wonder at all. I assure you she is not
always forgetting herself, and taking care of the other nine;"

"Is she the eldest?" I inquired.

"Oh dear, no," said Traddles. "The eldest is a Beauty."

He saw, I suppose, that I could not help smiling at the simplicity of this reply; and added, with a smile upon his own impecunious face:

"Not, of course, but that my Sophy—pretty name, Copperfield, I always think!"

"Very pretty," I said.

"Not, of course, but that Sophy is beautiful too in my eyes, and would be one of the dearest girls that ever was, in anybody's eyes (I should think). But when I say the eldest is a Beauty, I mean she really is a—" he seemed to be describing clouds about himself, with both hands. "Splendid, you know," said Traddles, energetically.

"Indeed!" I said.

"Oh, I assure you," said Traddles, "something very uncommon, indeed! Then, you know, being formed for society and admiration, and not being able to enjoy much of it in consequence of their limited means, she naturally gets a little irritable and exacting, sometimes. Sophy puts her in good-humor!"

"Is Sophy the youngest?" I hazarded.

"Oh dear, no!" said Traddles, stroking his chin. "The two youngest are only nine and ten. Sophy educates 'em."

"The second daughter, perhaps?" I hazarded.

"No," said Traddles. "Sarah's the second. Sarah has something with the matter with her spine, poor girl. The malady will wear out by and by, the doctors say, but in the meantime she has to lie down for a twelvemonth. Sophy nurses her. Sophy's the fourth."

"Is the mother living?" I inquired.

"Oh yes," said Traddles. "she is alive. She is a very superior woman indeed, but the damp country is not adapted to her constitution; and—"she has lost the use of her limbs."

"Dear me!" said I.

"Very sad, is it not?" returned Traddles.

"But in a merely domestic view it is not so bad as it might be, because Sophy takes her place. She is quite as much a mother to her mother, as she is to the other nine."

I felt the greatest admiration for the virtues of this young lady; and, honestly with the view of doing my best to prevent the good-nature of Traddles from being imposed upon, to the detriment of their joint prospects in life, inquired how Mr. Micawber was?

"He is quite well, Copperfield, thank you," said Traddles. "I am not living with him at present."

"No?"

"No. You see the truth is," said Traddles, in a whisper, "he has changed his name to Mortimer. In consequence of his temporary embarrassments; and he don't come out till after dark—and then in spectacles. There was an exaction put into our house, for rent. Mrs. Micaswurh, a dreadful state that. I really could not give my name to that second bill we have. You may imagine how delight to my feelings, Copperfield, to see them settled with, and Mrs. Micaswurh recovers."

"Hum!" said I.

"Not that her happiness was of an instant," pursued Traddles, "for, within a week another exaction was broken up the establishment. I have it in a furnished apartment since then, and times have been very private indeed. I won't think it selfish, Copperfield, if I say that the broker carried off my little red marble top, and Sophy's flower stand?"

"What a hard thing!" I exclaimed.

"It was a—a—a pull," said he, with his usual prudence at that expression. I mention it reproachfully, however, but who isn't? The fact is, Copperfield, I was down when the brokers repurchase them at the time of their settlement. Sophy was the first place, because the broker, having money that I wanted them, ran the price up to a certain amount, and, as the second place, I didn't have any money. Now, I have kept, since, upon the broker's shop," said he, with a great enjoyment of his mystery, "up at the top of Tottenham Court Road, to-day I find them put out for sale, and only noticed them from over the way, but the broker saw me, bless you, he'd ask a ten shilling for them! What has occurred to me, he's got the money, is, that perhaps you wouldn't ask the broker to do that good nurse of yours to come to the shop—I can show it her from a window, corner of the next street—and make the gain for them, as if they were for herself and me?"

The delight with which Traddles praised this plan to me, and the sense he had of a common article in their remembrance.

I told him that my old nurse would be glad to assist him, and that we would all think of the second plan together, but on one condition. That was, that he should make me a solemn promise to grant no more loans of his name, or the like, to Mr. Micawber.

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, "we have already done so, because I begin to feel that it is not only been inconsiderate, but that I am positively unjust to Sophy. My way of life as passed to myself, there is no longer an incident; but I pledge it to you, too, greatest readiness. That first mischief of mine, I have paid. I have no doubt Mr. Micawber would have paid it if he could, but he is now a man. One thing, I ought to mention, which I meant to mention, but which I do not know, much in Mr. Micawber. Copperfield. It was the second obligation, which was payable.
that it is provided for, but he says it
I think there is something very fair
out that!"

illeg to damp my good friend's con-
therefore assented. After a little
vation, we went round to the chan-
elist Peggoty; Traddles declining
ving with me, both because he
livel est apprehensions that his de-
bought by somebody else be-
re-purchase it, and because it was
always devoted to writing to the
he world.
I forget him peeping round the cor-
et in Tottenham Court Road, while
argaining for the precious articles;
when she came slowly towards us
ring a price, and was hailed by the
er, and went back again. The end
ion was, that she bought the prop-
ly easy terms, and Traddles was
h pleasure.

much obliged to you, indeed," said
earin it was to be sent to where
ight. "If I might ask one other
on would be good enough," said
otty, "to get the flower-pot now,
like (it being Sophy's, Copper-
t home myself!"
as glad to get it for him, and he
her with thanks, and went his way
Court Road, carrying the flower-
ly in his arms, with one of the
expressions of countenance I ever

urned back towards my chambers.
had charms for Peggoty which I
em to possess in the same degree
. I muttered easily along, amused
in at the windows, and waiting for
she chose. We were thus a good
g to the Adelphi.
up-stairs, I called her attention to
appearance of Mrs. Crupp's pitfalls,
prints of recent footsteps. We
much surprised, coming higher up,
 door standing open (which I had
voices inside.
at on another, without knowing
of this, and went into the sit-
was my amazement to find, of all
th, my aunt there, and Mr. Dick!
on a quantity of luggage, with her
ere her, and her cat on her knee,
obinson Crusoe drinking tea. Mr.
oughtfully on a great kite, such as
out together to fly, with more
bout him!
int!" cried I. "Why, what an un-
zure!"
embraced; and Mr. Dick and I
cordially shook hands; and Mrs. Crupp, who was
busy making tea, and could not be too attentive,
cordially said she had knewed well as Mr. Copper
full would have his heart in his mouth, when he
see his dear relations.
"Holloa!" said my aunt to Peggoty, who
quailed before her awful presence. "How are
you?"
"You remember my aunt, Peggoty?" said I.
"For the love of goodness, child," exclaimed
my aunt, "don't call the woman by that South
Sea Island name! If she married and got rid of it,
which was the best thing she could do, why don't
you give her the benefit of the change? What's
your name now,—P?" said my aunt, as a compro-
mise for the obnoxious appellation.
"Barkis, ma'am," said Peggoty, with a curts-
sey.
"Well! That's human," said my aunt. "It
sounds less as if you wanted a Missionary. How
d'ye do, Barkis? I hope you're well?"
Encouraged by these gracious words, and by
my aunt's extending her hand, Barkis came for-
ward, and took the hand, and curtseyed her ac-
knowledgments.
"We are older than we were, I see," said my
aunt. "We have only met each other once before,
you know. A nice business we made of it then! 
Trot, my dear, another cup."
I handed it dutifully to my aunt, who was in
her usual inflexible state of figure; and ventured a
remonstrance with her on the subject of her sit-
ting on a box.
"Let me draw the sofa here, or the easy-chair,
aunt," said I. "Why should you be so uncom-
fortable?"
"Thank you, Trot," replied my aunt, "I pre-
fer to sit upon my property." Here my aunt
looked hard at Mrs. Crupp, and observed, "We
needn't trouble you to wait, ma'am."
"Shall I put a little more tea in the pot afore I
go, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp.
"No, I thank you, ma'am," replied my aunt.
"Would you let me fetch another pat of butter,
ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp. "Or would you be
persuaded to try a new-laid hegg? or should I
brile a rashfer? Ain't there nothing I could do for
your dear aunt, Mr. Copperfull?"
"Nothing, ma'am," replied my aunt. "I
shall do very well, I thank you."
Mrs. Crupp, who had been incessantly smiling
to express sweet temper, and incessantly holding
her head on one side, to express a general feeble-
ness of constitution, and incessantly rubbing her
hands, to express a desire to be of service to all
deserving objects, gradually smiled herself, one-
sided herself, and rubbed herself, out of the room.
"Dick!" said my aunt. "You know what I
told you about time-servers and wealth-worship-
ners?"
Mr. Dick—with rather a scarred look, as if he
had forgotten it—returned a hasty answer in the
affirmative.
"Mrs. Crupp is one of them," said my aunt.
"Barkis, I'll trouble you to look after the tea, and let me have another cup, for I don't fancy that woman's pouring-out!"

I knew my aunt sufficiently well to know that she had something of importance on her mind, and that there was far more matter in this arrival than a stranger might have supposed. I noticed how her eye lighted on me, when she thought my attention otherwise occupied; and what a curious process of hesitation appeared to be going on within her, while she preserved her outward stiffness and composure. I began to reflect whether I had done anything to offend her; and my conscience whispered me that I had not yet told her about Dora. Could it by any means be that, I wondered?

As I knew she would only speak in her own good time, I sat down near her, and spoke to the birds, and played with the cat, and was as easy as I could be. But I was very far from being really easy; and I should still have been so, even if Mr. Dick, leaning over the great kite behind my aunt, had not taken every secret opportunity of shaking his head darkly at me, and pointing at her.

"Trot," said my aunt at last, when she had finished her tea, and carefully smoothed down her dress, and wiped her lips—"you needn't go, Barkis!—Trot, have you got to be firm, and self-reliant?"

"I hope so, aunt."

"What do you think?" inquired Miss Betsey.

"I think so, aunt."

"Then why, my love," said my aunt, looking earnestly at me, "why do you think I prefer to sit upon this property of mine to-night?"

I shook my head, unable to guess.

"Because," said my aunt, "it's all I have. Because I'm ruined, my dear!"

If the house, and every one of us, had tumbled out into the river together, I could hardly have received a greater shock.

"Dick knows it," said my aunt, laying her hand calmly on my shoulder. "I am ruined, my dear Trot! All I have in this world is in this room, except the cottage; and that I have left Janet to let. Barkis, I want to get a bed for this gentleman to-night. To save expense, perhaps you can make up something here for yourself. Anything will do. It's only for to-night. We'll talk about this, more, to-morrow."

I was roused from my amazement, and concern for her—I am sure, for her—by her falling on my neck for a moment, and crying that she only grieved for me. In another moment she suppressed this emotion; and said, with an aspect more triumphant than dejected:

"We must meet reverses boldly, and not suffer them to frighten us, my dear. We must learn to set the play out. We must live misfortune down, Trot!"

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**CHAPTER XXXV. DEPRESSION.**

As soon as I could recover my present mind, which quite deserted me in the first overpowering shock of my aunt's intelligence, I posed to Mr. Dick to come round to the chaise shop, and take possession of the bed which Peggoty had lately vacated. The chandler's being in Hungerford Market, and Hunger Market being a very different place in those days, there was a low wooden colonnade before the door (not very unlike that before the house where the little man and woman used to sit in the old weather-glass), which pleased Dick mightily. The glory of lodging over structure would have compensated him, if I say, for many inconveniences; but, as they were really few to bear, beyond the compound of vors I have already mentioned, and perhaps a want of a little more elbow-room, he was peculiarly charmed with his accommodation. Mrs. G had indignantly assured him that there was room to swing a cat there; but, as Mr. Dick, when observed to me, sitting down on the foot bed, nursing his leg, "You know, Trot, I don't want to swing a cat. I never do swing a cat. Therefore, what does that signify to me?"

I tried to ascertain whether Mr. Dick had understood the causes of this sudden great change in my aunt's affairs. As I have expected, he had none at all. The only count he could give of it, was, that my aunt said to him, the day before yesterday, "Dick, are you really and truly the philosopher take you for?" That then he had said, "I hoped so. That then my aunt had said, "Let us consult. That then he had said, "Oh, deerd! That then my aunt had consulted highly, which he was very glad of. And that they had come to me, and had had bottled whites and sandwiches on the road.

Mr. Dick was so very complacent, sitting at the foot of the bed, nursing his leg, and telling this, with his eyes wide open and a sly smile, that I am sorry to say I was provoked explaining to him that ruin meant distress, and starvation; but, I was soon bitterly regret for this harshness, by seeing his face turn tear and course down his lengthened face while he fixed upon me a look of such match woe, that it might have softened a hard heart than mine. I took infinitely greater to cheer him up again than I had taken to do him; and I soon understood (as I ought to have known at first) that he had been so sad merely because of his faith in the wise and wonderful of women, and his unboundedness on my intellectual resources. The latter, Heve, he considered a match for any kind of auster not absolutely mortal.

"What can we do, Trotwood?" said Dick. "There's the Memorial."

"To be sure there is," said I. "We
MY AUNT'S GENTILENESS.

I suppose I looked doubtful, for she added:
"Tut, tut, child. If nothing worse than Ale happens to us, we are well off."

"I should think so myself, aunt, I am sure," said I.

"Well, then, why don't you think so?" said my aunt.

"Because you and I are very different people," I returned.

"Stuff and nonsense, Trot!" replied my aunt.

My aunt went on with a quiet enjoyment, in which there was very little affection, if any; drinking the warm ale with a teaspoon, and soaking her strips of toast in it.

"Trot," said she, "I don't care for strange faces in general, but I rather like that Barkis of yours, do you know!"

"It's better than a hundred pounds to hear you say so!" said I.

"It's a most extraordinary world," observed my aunt, rubbing her nose; "how that woman ever got into it with that name, is unaccountable to me. It would be much more easy to be born a Jackson, or something of that sort, one would think."

"Perhaps she thinks so, too; it's not her fault," said I.

"I suppose not," returned my aunt, rather grudging the admission; "but it's very aggravating. However, she's Barkis now. That's some comfort. Barkis is uncommonly fond of you, Trot."

"There is nothing she would leave undone to prove it," said I.

"Nothing, I believe," returned my aunt.

"Here, the poor fool has been begging and praying about handing over some of her money—because she has got too much of it! A simpleton!"

My aunt's tears of pleasure were positively trickling down into the warm ale.

"She's the most ridiculous creature that ever was born," said my aunt. "I knew, from the first moment when I saw her with that poor dear blessed baby of a mother of yours, that she was the most ridiculous of mortals. But there are good points in Barkis!"

Affecting to laugh, she got an opportunity of putting her hand to her eyes. Having availed herself of it, she resumed her toast and her discourse together.

"Ah! Mercy upon us!" sighed my aunt.

"I know all about it, Trot! Barkis and myself had quite a gossip while you were out with Dick. I know all about it. I don't know where those wretched girls expect to go to, for my part. I wonder they don't knock out their brains against—against mantelpieces," said my aunt; an idea which was probably suggested to her by her contemplation of mine.

"Poor Emily!" said I.

"Oh, don't talk to me about poor," returned my aunt. "She should have thought of that, before she caused so much misery! Give me a kiss, Trot. I am sorry for your early experiences."
"As I bent forward, she put her tumbler on my knee to detain me, and said:

"Oh, Trot, Trot! And so you fancy yourself in love! Do you?"

"Fancy, aunt!" I exclaimed, as real as I could be.

"I adore her with my whole soul!"

"Dora, indeed!" returned my aunt. "And you mean to say the little thing is very fascinating, I suppose!"

"My dear aunt," I replied, "no one can form the least idea what she is!"

"Ah! And not silly?" said my aunt.

"Silly, aunt!"

I seriously believe it had never once entered my head for a single moment, to consider whether she was or not. I rejected the idea, of course; but I was as a man struck by it, as a new one altogether.

"Not light-headed?" said my aunt.

"Light-headed, aunt?" I could only repeat this daring speculation with the same kind of feeling with which I had repeated the preceding question.

"Well! well!" said my aunt. "I only ask. I don't depreciate her. Poor little couple! And so you think you were formed for one another, and mean to go through a party-capable sort of kind of life, like two pretty pieces of confectionery, do you, Trot?"

She asked me this so kindly, and with such a gentle air, half playful and half sorrowful, that I was quite touched.

"We are young and inexperienced, aunt, I know," I replied; "and I dare say we say and think a good deal that is rather foolish. But we love one another truly, I am sure. If I thought Dora could ever love anybody else, or cease to love me; or that I could ever love anybody else, or cease to love her; I don't know what I should do—go out of my mind, I think!"

"Ah, Trot!" said my aunt, shaking her head, and smiling gravely, "blind, blind, blind!"

"Some one that I know, Trot, my aunt pursued, after a pause, "though of a very plain disposition, has an earnestness of affection in him that reminds me of poor Baby. Earnestness is what that somebody must look for, to sustain him and improve him, Trot. Deep, downright, faithful earnestness."

"If you only knew the earnestness of Dora, aunt!" I cried.

"Oh, Trot!" she said again; "blind, blind!" and without knowing why, I felt a vague unhappy loss or want of something overshadow me like a cloud.

"However," said my aunt, "I don't want to put two young creatures out of conceit with themselves, or to make them unhappy; so, though it is a girl and boy attachment, and girl and boy attachments very often—mind! I don't say always—come to nothing, still we'll be serious about it, and hope for a prosperous issue one of these days. There's time enough for it to come to anything!"

This was not upon the whole very con
to a rapturous lover; but I was glad to be
unt in my confidence, and I was much
being fatigued. So I thanked her as
this mark of her affection, and for all her
kindnesses towards me; and after a ten
night, she took her nightcap into a
room.

How miserable I was, when I lay down I
thought and thought about my being
Mr. Spenlow's eyes; about my not being
thought I was, when I proposed to Dora
the chivalrous necessity of telling Dora's
worldly condition was, and releasing her
engagement if she thought fit; about how
contrive to live, during the long term
articles, when I was earning nothing
doing something to assist my aunt, and so
way of doing anything; about coming I
have no money in my pocket, and to
shabby coat, and to be able to carry Dora
presents, and to ride no gallant grey,
show myself in no agreeable light! So
selfish as I knew it was, and as I tormented
by knowing that it was, to let my mind
my own distress so much, I was so dear
Dora that I could not help it. I knew the
base in me not to think more of my aunt,
of myself; but, so far, selfishness was intense from Dora, and I could not put Dora on
for any mortal creature. How ex
miserable I was, that night!

As to sleep, I had dreams of poverty
sorts and shapes, but I seemed to dream
the previous ceremony of going to sleep
was rugged, wanting to sell Dora match
bundled for a halfpenny; now I was at
in a nightgown and boots, remonstra
by Mr. Spenlow on appearing before the
day or that alrty attire; now I was hungrily pick
the crumbs that fell from old Tiffany's duc
regularly eaten when St. Paul's str
now I was hopelessly endeavoring to get a
to marry Dora, having nothing but one
Hoop's glove to offer in exchange, while
whole Commons rejected; and still, more
conscious of my own room, I was always
about like a distressed ship in a sea
clothes.

My aunt was restless, too, for I had
heard her walking to and fro. Two or
hours in the course of the night, attired in
flannel wrapper in which she looked so
high, she appeared, like a disturbed ghost
room, and came to the side of the sofa
lay. On the first occasion I started up
learn that she inferred from a particular
sky, that Westminster Abbey was
and to be consulted in reference to the pro
of its igniting Buckingham Street, the wind changed. Lying
still, after that,
that she sat down near me, whispering in
"Poor boy!" And then, at a time, she
sometimes more wretched, to know how I

THE INEXORABLE JORKINS.

... she was of me, and how selfishly mindful myself.

difficult to believe that a night so long could be short to anybody else. This con-

unfted me thinking and thinking of an

party where people were dancing the

way, until that became a dream too, and I

music incessantly playing one tune,

Dora incessantly dancing one dance, tak-

the least notice of me. The man

been playing the harp all night, was try-

ain to cover it with an ordinary-sized

; when I awoke; or I should rather say,

effort trying to go to sleep, and saw the

ing in through the window at last.

was an old Roman bath in those days at

of one of the streets out of the Strand

be there still—in which I have bed many

lounge. Dressing myself as quietly as I

leaving Peggoty to look after my

billed head foremost into it, and then

walk to Hansestead. I had a hope

 brisk treatment might refresh my wits a

I think it did them good, for I soon

conclusion that the first step I ought

as to try if my articles could be can-

the premium recovered. I got some

 Heath, and walked back to

Commons, along the watered roads and a

pleasant smell of summer flowers, in

gardens and carried into town on

heads, intent on this first effort to meet

ed circumstances.

ed at the office so soon, after all, that I

an hour's loitering about the Commons, d

Tiffey, who was always first, appeared

key. Then I sat down in my shady cor-

up at the sunlight on the opposite

pots, and thinking about Dora; until

ow came in, crisp and curly.

are you, Copperfield?" said he. "Fine

!"

stiful morning, sir," said I. "Could I

to you before you go into Court?"

all means," said he. "Come into my

ved him into his room, and he began

his gown, and touching himself up be-

glass he had, hanging inside a closet

sorry to say," said I, "that I have some

heartening intelligence from my aunt,"

" said he. "Dear me! Not paralysis,

as no reference to her health, sir," I re-

lish has met with some large losses. In

very little left, indeed." as-
tound me, Copperfield!" cried Mr.

my head. "Indeed, sir," said I, "her

e so changed, that I wish to ask you

it would be possible—at a sacrifice on

of some portion of the premium, of

put in this on the spur of the moment,

warned by the blank expression of his face—"to
cancel my articles?"

What it cost me to make this proposal, nobody

knows. It was like asking, as a favor, to be

tenced to transportation from Dora.

"To cancel your articles, Copperfield. Can-

I explained with tolerable firmness, that I

really did not know where my means of subsis-
etence were to come from, unless I could earn

them for myself. I had no fear for the future, I

said—and I laid great emphasis on that, as if to

ly that I should still be decidedly eligible for a

son-in-law one of these days—but, for the

resent, I was thrown upon my own resources.

"I am extremely sorry to hear this, Copper-

field," said Mr. Spenlow. "Extremely sorry. It

is not usual to cancel articles for any such reason.

It is not a professional course of proceeding. It

is not a convenient precedent at all. Far from it.

At the same time—"

"You are very good, sir," I murmured, antici-
pating a concession.

"Not at all. Don't mention it," said Mr.

Spenlow. "At the same time, I was going to

say, if it had been my lot to have my hands un-

fettered—if I had not a partner—Mr. Jorkins—"

My hopes were dashed in a moment, but I

made another effort.

"Do you think, sir," said I, "if I were to

mention it to Mr. Jorkins—"

Mr. Spenlow shook his head discouragingly.

"Heaven forbid, Copperfield," he replied, "that

I should do any man an injustice; still less, Mr.

Jorkins. But I know my partner, Copperfield.

Mr. Jorkins is not a man to respond to a proposi-
tion of this peculiar nature. Mr. Jorkins is very

difficult to move from the beaten track. You

know what he is!"

I am sure I knew nothing about him, except

that he had originally been alone in the business,

and now lived by himself in a house near Montagu

Square, which was fearfully in want of painting;

that he came very late of a day, and went away

very early; that he never appeared to be consult-

ed about anything; and that he had a dingy little

black-hole of his own up-stairs, where no busi-

ness was ever done, and where there was a yellow

old cartridge-paper pad upon his desk, unsold

by ink, and reported to be twenty years of age.

"Would you object to my mentioning it to

him, sir?" I asked.

"By no means," said Mr. Spenlow. "But I

have some experience of Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield.

I wish it were otherwise, for I should be happy

to meet your views in any respect. I cannot

have the least objection to your mentioning it to

Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield, if you think it worth

while."

Availing myself of this permission, which was

given with a warm shake of the hand, I sat think-

ing about Dora, and looking at the sunlight

shining from the chimney-pots down the wall of the

opposite house, until Mr. Jorkins came. Then...
went up to Mr. Jorkins’s room, and evidently astonished Mr. Jorkins very much by making my appearance there.

"Come in, Mr. Copperfield," said Mr. Jorkins. "Come in!"

I went in, and sat down; and stated my case to Mr. Jorkins pretty much as I had stated it to Mr. Spenlow. Mr. Jorkins was not by any means the awful creature one might have expected, but a large, mild, smooth-faced man of sixty, who took so much snuff that there was a tradition in the Commons that he lived principally on that stimulant, having little room in his system for any other article of diet.

"You have mentioned this to Mr. Spenlow, I suppose," said Mr. Jorkins, when he had heard me, very restlessly, to an end.

I answered Yes, and told him that Mr. Spenlow had introduced his name.

"He said I should object?" asked Mr. Jorkins.

I was obliged to admit that Mr. Spenlow had considered it probable.

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Copperfield, I can’t advance your object," said Mr. Jorkins, nervously. "The fact is—but I have an appointment at the Bank, if you’ll have the goodness to excuse me."

With that he rose in a great hurry, and was going out of the room, when I made bold to say that I feared, then, there was no way of arranging the matter.

"No!" said Mr. Jorkins, stopping at the door to shake his head. "Oh, no! I object, you know," which he said very rapidly, and went out. "You must be aware, Mr. Copperfield," he added, looking restlessly in at the door again, "if Mr. Spenlow objects—"

"Personally, he does not object, sir," said I.

"Oh! Personally!" repeated Mr. Jorkins, in an impatient manner. "I assure you there’s an objection, Mr. Copperfield. Hopeless! What you wish to be done, can’t be done. I—I really have got an appointment at the Bank."

With that he fairly ran away; and to the best of my knowledge it was three days before he showed himself in the Commons again.

Being very anxious to leave no stone unturned, I waited until Mr. Spenlow came in, and then described what had passed; giving him to understand that I was not hopeless of his being able to soften the stonemason Jorkins, if he would undertake the task.

"Copperfield," returned Mr. Spenlow, with a gracious smile, "you have not known my partner, Mr. Jorkins, as long as I have. Nothing is farther from my thoughts than to attribute any degree of artifice to Mr. Jorkins. But Mr. Jorkins has a way of stating his objections which often deceive people. No, Copperfield!" shaking his head. "Mr. Jorkins is not to be moved, believe me!"

I was completely bewildered between Mr. Spenlow and Mr. Jorkins, as to which of them really was the objecting partner; but I was sufficiently cleared that there was only something somewhere in the firm, and that the rest of my aunt’s thousand pounds was out of question. In a state of despondency, which I bear with anything but satisfaction, for I still had too much reference to myself (though in connexion with Dora), I left the room and went homeward.

I was trying to familiarise my mind with the worst, and to present to myself the aspect we should have to make for the future sternness of aspect, when a hackney chariot after me, and stopping at my very doors, I knew it to be Mr. Spenlow. A fair hand was thrust to me from the window; and the face I never seen without a feeling of serenity and kindness, from the moment when it first appeared, on the old oak staircase with the green balustrade, and when I associated it with the strongest me church, was smiling on me.

"Agnes!" I joyfully exclaimed. "Oh, dearest Agnes, of all people in the world, how pleasant to see you!"

"Is it, indeed?" she said, in her cold, SAVE.

"I want to talk to you so much!" I said. "It’s such a lightening of my heart, only look at you! If I had had a conjurer’s cap, I am sure no one I should have wished for but you!"

"What?" returned Agnes.

"Well! perhaps Dora first," I admitted, blushing.

"Certainly, Dora first, I hope," said she, laughing.

"But you next," said I. "Where are we going?"

She was going to my rooms to see me before leaving. The day being very fine, she was glad to get out of the coach, which smelt (I had my own hat on all the time) like a stable put under a frame. She dismissed the coachman, took my arm, and we walked on together, like Hope embodied, to me. How it felt in one short minute, leaving Agnes side!

My aunt had written her one of those abrupt notes—very little longer than a fly—on which her epistolary efforts were limited. She had stated therein that she had fallen into adversity, and was leaving Dr. B—— good, but had quite made up her mind to was so well that nobody need be unext about her. Agnes had come to London to look after her, between whom and herself there had been a mutual liking these many years; but I dated from the time of my taking up my abode in Mr. Wickfield’s house, she was not at home. Her papa was with her—and Uriah.

"And now they are partners," said I. "I found him!"

"Yes," said Agnes. "They have seen me here; and I took advantage of their coming to come too. You must not think me
DEAR AGNES!

... and disinterested, Trotwood, for—I am not cruelly prejudiced—I do not like to go away alone, with him.

he exercise the same influence over old still, Agnes?

shook her head. "There is such a home," said she, "that you would now the dear old house. They live wit..."

"I said I."

keep and his mother. He sleeps in om," said Agnes, looking up into my

I had the ordering of his dreams," I wouldn't sleep there long."

p my own little room," said Agnes, used to learn my lessons. How the

You remember? The little panelled room from the drawing-room?

ember, Agnes? When I saw you, for me, coming out at the door, with your basket of keys hanging at your side?"

just the same," said Agnes, smiling. d you think of it so pleasantly. We happy." and, indeed," said I.

that room to myself still; but I cannot desert Mrs. Hoop, you know. And agnes, quietly, "I feel obliged to bear by, when I might prefer to be alone.

no other reason to complain of her."

ome, sometimes, by her praises of her own natural in a mother. He is a very her.

at Agnes when she said those words, specting in her any consciousness of sign. Her mild but earnest eyes met their own beautiful frankness, and no change in her gentle face.

chief evil of their presence in the old Agnes, "is that I cannot be as I could wish—Urlah Hoop being so mean us—and cannot watch over him, if too bold a thing to say, as closely as I ut. If any fraud or treachery is practis...net him, I hope that simple love and be stronger, in the end. I hope that ad truth are stronger in the end than misfortune in the world."

in bright smile, which I never saw on face, died away, even while I thought it was, and how familiar it had once re; and she asked me, with a quick expression (we were drawing very retc), if I knew how the reverse in my circumstances had been brought about. plying no, she had not told me yet, ame thoughtful, and I fancied I felt her le in mine.

ad my aunt alone, in a state of some... A difference of opinion had arisen erson and Mrs. Crupp, on an abstract property of chambers being inhab- gentler sex); and my aunt, utterly in- different to spasms on the part of Mrs. Crupp, had cut the dispute short, by informing that lady that she smelt of my brandy, and that she would trouble her to walk out. Both of these expres...sions Mrs. Crupp considered actionable, and had expressed her intention of bringing before a "British Judy"—meaning, it was supposed, the bulwark of our national liberties.

My aunt, however, having had time to cool, while Peggotty was out showing Mr. Dick the soldiers at the Horse Guards—and being, besides, greatly pleased to see Agnes—rather plumed herself on the affair than otherwise, and received us with unpinned good-humor. When Agnes laid her bonnet on the table, and sat down beside her, I could not but think, looking on her mil eyes and her radiant forehead, how natural it seemed to have her there: how truthfully, although she was so young and inexperienced, my aunt con...fided in her; how strong she was, indeed, in simple love and truth.

We began to talk about my aunt's losses, and I told them what I had tried to do that morning.

"Which was injudicious, Trot," said my aunt, "but well meant. You are a generous boy—I suppose I must say, young man, now—and I am proud of you, my dear. So far so good. Now, Trot and Agnes, let us look the case of Betsey Trotwood in the face, and see how it stands."

I observed Agnes turn pale, as she looked very attentively at my aunt. My aunt, patting her cat, looked very attentively at Agnes.

"Betsey Trotwood," said my aunt, who had always kept her money matters to herself: "I don't mean your sister. Trot, my dear, but myself—had a certain property. It doesn't matter how much; enough to live on. More; for she had saved a little, and added to it. Betsey fund...ed her property for some time, and then, by the advice of her man of business, laid it out on landed security. That did very well, and returned very good interest, till Betsey was paid off. I am talking of Betsey as if she was a man of war. Well! Then, Betsey had to look about her, for a new investment. She thought she was wiser, now, than her man of business, who was not such a good man of business by this time, as he used to be—I am alluding to your father, Agnes—and she took it into her head to lay it out for herself. So she took her pigs," said my aunt, "to a foreign market; and a very bad market it turned out to be. First, she lost in the mining way, and then she lost in the diving way—flashing up treasure, or some such Tom Thumb nonsense," explained my aunt, rubbing her nose; "and then she lost in the mining way again, and, last of all, to set the thing entirely to rights, she lost in the banking way. I don't know what the Bank shares were worth for a little while," said my aunt; "cent per cent was the lowest of it, I believe; but the Bank was at the other end of the world, and tumbled into space, for what I know; any how, it fell to pieces, and never will and never can pay sixpence; and Betsey's sixpences were
all there, and there's an end of them. Least said, soonest mended!"

My aunt concluded this philosophical summary by fixing her eyes with a kind of triumph on Agnes's, whose color was gradually returning.

"Dear Miss Trotwood, is that all the story?" said Agnes.

"I hope it's enough, child," said my aunt. "If there had been more money to lose, it wouldn't have been all, I dare say. Betsey would have contrived to throw it after the rest, and make another chapter, I have little doubt. But, there was no more money, and there's no more story!"

Agnes had listened at first with suspended breath. Her color still came and went, but she breathed more freely. I thought I knew why. I thought she had had some fear that her unhappy father might be in some way to blame for what had happened. My aunt took her hand in hers, and laughed.

"Is that all?" repeated my aunt. "Why, yes, that's all, except, 'And she lived happily ever afterwards.' Perhaps you may add that of Betsey yet, one of these days. Now, Agnes, you have a wise head. So have you, Trot, in some things, though I can't compliment you always; and here my aunt shook her own at me, with an energy peculiar to herself. "What's to be done? Here's the cottage, taking one time with another, will produce, say seven pounds a-year. I think we may safely put it down at that. Well!—That's all we've got," said my aunt; with whom it was an idiosyncrasy, as it is with some horses, to stop very short when she appeared to be in a fair way of going on for a long while.

"Then," said my aunt, after a rest, "there's Dick. He's good for a hundred a-year, but of course that must be expended on himself. I would sooner send him away, though I know I am the only person who appreciates him, than have him, and not spend his money on himself. How can Trot and I do best, upon our means? What do you say, Agnes?"

"I say, aunt," I interposed, "that I must do something!"

"Go for a soldier, do you mean?" returned my aunt, alarmed; "or to sea? I won't hear of it. You are to be a proctor. We're not going to have any knockings on the head in this family, if you please, sir."

I was about to explain that I was not destitute of introducing that mode of provision into the family, when Agnes inquired if my rooms were held for any long term?

"You come to the point, my dear," said my aunt, "They are not to be got rid of, for six months at least, unless they could be underlet, and that I don't believe. The last man died here. Five people out of six would die—of course—of that woman in sarken with the funnel petticoat. I have a little ready money; and I agree with you, the best thing we can do is to live the term out here, and get Dick a bed-room hard by."

I thought it my duty to hint at the discomfort my aunt would sustain, from living in a cold state of gurilla warfare with Mrs. Cump; she disposed of that objection summarily, claiming, that, on the first demonstration of difficulties, she was prepared to astonish Mrs. G for the whole remainder of her natural life.

"I have been thinking, Trotwood," said my aunt, "that if you had time—"

"I have a good deal of time, Agnes. I always disengaged after four or five o'clock have time early in the morning. In one word, another," said I, conscious of reddening a little. "I thought of the hours and hours I had disengaged about town, and to and fro upon the Wood Road, 'I have abundance of time.'"

"I know you would not mind," said Agnes, coming to me, and speaking in a low, sweet voice. "I told you so. I never think of you in my light."

Agnes answered with her pleasant laugh, that one good Angel (meaning Dora) was enough; and went on to remind me that the Doctor had used to occupy himself in his study, early in the morning, and in the evening—and that this was more delightful with the view of earning my own bread, than with the appearance of earning it under my old master; to which, on the advice of Agnes, I said, "Trot, my dear, I have written a letter to the Doctor, stating my object, and pointing to call on him next day at tea in the forenoon. This I addressed to Highgate; in that place, so memorable to me, he lived and pasted, myself, without losing a minute. Wherever Agnes was, some agreeable task was on her hand. Her noiseless presence seemed inseparable from the place. When I came back, I found my books hanging, just as they had hung so far the parlor window of the cottage; and a chair lamenting my aunt's much easier chair in its position at the open window; and even the green fan, which my aunt had brought away her, screwed on to the window-sill. I knew had done all this, by its seeming to have been done itself; and I should have known in a moment who had arranged my neglected book, the old order of my school days, even if I supposed Agnes to be miles away, instead of her, busy with them, not smiling at the order into which they had fallen.

My aunt was quite gracious on the subject of the Thames (it was really that look very well with sun upon it, though not. Have the was taken
of all parties, we are glad to receive
them. When it is better for the
of all parties that no visiting should
as in the ease of our brother Francis,
ishment), that is quite different.”
ated that my aunt would be proud and
make their acquaintance; though I
was not quite sure of their getting on
ctorily together. The conditions be-
ised, I expressed my acknowledgments
manner; and, taking the hand
Clarissa, and then of Miss Lavinia,
in each case, to my lips.
forma then arose, and begging Mr.
excuse us for a minute, requested me
t. I obeyed, all in a tremble, and was
into another room. There, I found
ving stopping her ears behind the door,
we little face against the wall, and
late-warmer with his head tied up in a
ow beautiful she was in her black frock,
robbed and cried at first, and wouldn’t
om behind the door! How fond we
are another. Then, when she did come out at
hat a state of bliss I was in, when we
at of the plate-warmer, and restored
light, sneezing very much, and were
ited!
sest Dora! Now, indeed, my own for
ot! ” pleaded Dora. “Please! ”
not my own for ever, Dora?”
, of course I am!” cried Dora, “but
lightened!”
med, my own!”
If I don’t like him,” said Dora. “Why
’t I?”
“Friend,” said Dora. “It isn’t any busi-
ese!” (There never was anything so
her childish ways.) “He is the best
we don’t want any best creatures!”

in,” I argued, “you will soon know
and like him of all things. And here is
ming soon; and you’ll like her of all
when you know her.
en don’t bring her!” said Dora, giv-
hot-headed little kiss, and folding her
’t. I know she’s a naughty, mis-
old thing! Don’t let her come here,
ich was a corruption of David.
trance was of no use, then; so I
led admired, and was very much in love
; and she showed me Jip’s new
ning on his blud legs in a corner—
d for, about the space of a flash of
nd then fell down—and I don’t know
should have stayed there, oblivious of
Miss Lavinia had not come in to take
Miss Lavinia was very fond of Dora
she told me Dora was exactly like what she had
been herself at her age—she must have altered a
good deal, and she treated Dora just as if she had
been a toy. I wanted to persuade Dora to come
and see Traddles, but on my proposing it she ran
off to her own room, and locked herself in; so I
went to Traddles without her, and walked away
with him on air.

“Nothing could be more satisfactory,” said
Traddles; “and they are very agreeable old ladies,
I am sure. I shouldn’t be at all surprised if you
were to be married years before me, Copper-
field.”

“Does your Sophy play on any instrument,
Traddles?” I inquired, in the pride of my heart.

“She knows enough of the piano to teach it to
her little sisters,” said Traddles.

“Does she sing at all?” I asked.

“Why, she sings ballads, sometimes, to freshen
up the others a little when they’re out of spirits,”
said Traddles. “Nothing scientific.”

“She doesn’t sing to the guitar?” I said.

“Oh dear no!” said Traddles.

“Paint at all?”

“Not at all,” said Traddles.

I promised Traddles that he should hear Dora
sing, and see some of her flower-painting. He
said he should like it very much, and went home
arm in arm in great good-humor and delight. I
encouraged him to talk about Sophy, on the way;
which he did with a loving reliance on her that I
very much admired. I compared her in my mind
with Dora, with considerable inward satisfaction;
but I candidly admitted to myself that she
seemed to be an excellent kind of girl for Trad-
bles, too.

Of course my aunt was immediately made ac-
quainted with the successful issue of the con-
ference, and with all that had been said and done
in the course of it. She was happy to see me so
happy, and promised to call on Dora’s aunts with-
out loss of time. But she took such a long walk
up and down our rooms that night, while I was
writing to Agnes, that I began to think she meant
to walk till morning.

My letter to Agnes was a fervent and grateful
one, narrating all the good effects that had resulted
from my following her advice. She wrote, by re-
turn of post, to me. Her letter was hopeful,
earnest, and cheerful. She was always cheerful
from that time.

I had my hands more full than ever, now. My
daily journeys to Highgate considered, Putney
was a long way off; and I naturally wanted to go there
as often as I could. The proposed tea-drinkings
being quite impracticable, I compounded with
Miss Lavinia for permission to visit every Satu-
day afternoon, without detriment to my privileged
Sundays. So, the close of every week was a del-
icious time for me; and I got through the rest of
the week by looking forward to it.

I was wonderfully relieved to find that my
aunt and Dora’s aunts rubbed on, all things con-
sidered, much more smoothly than I could have
always forgetting herself, and taking care of the other nine."

"Is she the eldest?" I inquired.

"Oh dear, no," said Traddles. "The eldest is a Beauty."

He saw, I suppose, that I could not help smiling at the simplicity of this reply; and added, with a smile upon his own ingenuous face:

"Not, of course, but that my Sophy—pretty name, Copperfield, I always think?

"Very pretty!" said I.

"Not, of course, but that Sophy is beautiful too in my eyes, and would be one of the dearest girls that ever was, in anybody's eyes (I should think). But when I say the eldest is a Beauty, I mean she really is—" he seemed to be describing clouds about himself, with both hands: "Splendid, you know," said Traddles, energetically.

"Indeed!" said I.

"Oh, I assure you," said Traddles, "something very uncommon, indeed! Then you know, being formed for society and admiration, and not being able to enjoy much of it in consequence of their limited means, she naturally gets a little irritable and exacting, sometimes. Sophy puts her in good-humour!"

"Is Sophy the youngest?" I hazarded.

"Oh dear, no!" said Traddles, stroking his chin. "The youngest are only nine and ten. Sophy educates 'em."

"The second daughter, perhaps?" I hazarded.

"No," said Traddles. "Sarah's the second. Sarah has something with her spine, poor girl. The malady will wear out by-and-by, the doctors say, but in the meantime she has to lie down for a twelvemonth. Sophy nurses her. Sophy's the fourth."

"Is the mother living?" I inquired.

"Oh yes," said Traddles. "she is alive. She is a very superior woman indeed, but the damp country is not adapted to her constitution, and in fact, she has lost the use of her limbs."

"Dear me!" said I.

"Very sad, is it not?" returned Traddles. "But in a merely domestic view it is not so bad as it might be, because Sophy takes her place. She is quite as much a mother to her mother, as she is to the other nine."

I felt the greatest admiration for the virtues of this young lady; and, honestly with the view of doing my best to prevent the good-nature of Traddles from being imposed upon, to the detriment of their joint prospects in life, inquired how Mr. Micawber was?

"He is quite well, Copperfield, thank you," said Traddles. "I am not living with him at present."

"No?"

"No. You see the truth is," said Traddles, in a whisper, "he has changed his name to Mortimer, in consequence of his temporary embarrassments; and he don't come out till after dark—and then in spectacles. There was an execution put into our house, for rent. Mrs. Micawber such a dreadful state that I really could not give my name to that second bill we had. You may imagine how delightful it is to my feelings, Copperfield, to see settled with it, and Mrs. Micawber and her spirits."

"Hum!" said I.

"Not that her happiness was occasion," pursued Traddles, "for, on the other hand, another execution broke up the establishment. I have in a furnished apartment since then, a timer, and very private indeed; I won't think it selfish, Copperfield, if that the broker carried off my little marble top, and Sophy's florin stand?"

"What a hard thing!" I exclaimed.

"It was a —— it was a pull," said Traddles, with his usual wince at that expression, and then mentioned it reproachfully, however, but tive. The fact is, Copperfield, I am not repurchasing them at the time of their first place, because the broker, had that I wanted them, ran the price up to the agent extent; and, in the second place, had—had no money. Now, I have been since, upon the broker's shop," said with a great enjoyment of his mystery up at the top of Tottenham Court Road, to-day, for I only noticed them from over the way, the broker saw me, bless you, he'd ask for them! What has occurred to me, the money, is, that perhaps you would feel it to ask that good nurse of yours to come to the shop—I can show it her from the corner of the next street—and make it gain for them, as if they were for hers can!"

The delight with which Traddles plan this to me, and the sense he has common artfulness, are among the first in my remembrance.

I told him that my old nurse would come to assist him, and that we would all the field together, but on one condition, that it was, that he should make a solemn grant to me no more loans of his name, or else, to Mr. Micawber.

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, already done so, because I begin to feel not only been inconsiderate, but that I positively unjust to Sophy. My wife was, there is no longer an objection, for I had felt such a tension, but I pledge it to you, too greatest readiness. That first unkind have I have paid. I have no doubt Mr. would have paid it if he could, but he One thing I ought to mention, which I much in Mr. Micawber, Copperfield. I the second obligation, which I was
MY AUNT FORGIVES MY NURSE.

me that it is provided for, but he says it now, I think there is something very fair about that!"
unwilling to damp my good friend's con-
and therefore assented. After a little
versation, we went round to the chan-
p, to enlist Peggotty; Traddles declining
he evening with me, both because he
the liveliest apprehensions that his
would be bought by somebody else be-
rather like it, and because it was
be he always desirous of writing to the
in the world.
shall forget him peeping round the cor-
street in Tottenham Court Road, while
was bargaining for the precious articles;
tation when she came slowly towards us
ly offering a price, and was hailed by the
broker, and went back again. The end
rotation was, that she bought the pro-
lerably easy terms, and Traddles was
with pleasure.
very much obliged to you, indeed," said
on hearing it was to be sent to where
hat night. "If I might ask one other
pe you would not think it absurd, Cop-
beforehand, certainly not.
If you would be good enough, said
o Peggotty, "to get the flower-pot now,
should like (it being Sophy's, Copper-
arry it home myself!"
ety was glad to get it for him, and he
ed her with thanks, and went his way
ham Court Road, carrying the flower-
ionately in his arms, with one of the
ed expressions of countenance I ever
en turned back towards my chambers.
ps had charms for Peggotty which I
w them to possess in the same degree
y else, I salluted easily along, amused
ring in at the windows, and waiting for
en as she chose. We were thus a good
etting to the Adelphi.
way up-stairs, I called her attention to
appearance of Mrs. Crupp's pitfalls,
the prints of recent footsteps. We
very much surprised, coming higher up,
ner door standing open (which I had
to hear voices inside.
ked at one another, without knowing
s of this, and went into the sitting-
hat was my amazement to find, of all
earth, my aunt there, and Mr. Dick !
ting on a quantity of luggage, with her
before her, and her cat on her knee,
de Robinson Crusoe drinking tea. Mr.
g thoughtfully on a great kite, such as
en been out together to fly, with more
led about him!
aunt?" cried I. "Why, what an un-
pleasure!"
ally embraced; and Mr. Dick and I
cordially shook hands; and Mrs. Crupp, who was
busy making tea, and could not be too attentive,
cordially said she had known well as Mr. Copper
full would have his heart in his mouth, when he
see his dear relations.
"Holloa!" said my aunt to Peggotty, who
quelled before her awful presence. "How are
you?"
"You remember my aunt, Peggotty?" said I.
"For the love of goodness, child," exclaimed
my aunt, "don't call the woman by that South
Sea Island name! If she married and got rid of it,
which was the best thing she could do, why don't
you give her the benefit of the change? What's
your name now,—P?" said my aunt, as a compro-
use for the obnoxious appellation.
"Barkis, ma'am," said Peggotty, with a curt-
sey.
"Well! That's human," said my aunt. "It
sounds less as if you wanted a Missionary. How
d'ye do, Barkis? I hope you're well?"
Encouraged by these gracious words, and by
my aunt's extending her hand, Barkis came for-
ward, and took the hand, and courtseyed her
acknowledgments.
"We are older than we were, I see," said my
aunt. "We have only met each other once before,
you know. A nice business we made of it then!
Trot, my dear, another cup."
I handed it dutifully to my aunt, who was in
her usual inflexible state of figure; and ventured
a remonstrance with her on the subject of her sit-
ting on a box.
"Let me draw the sofa here, or the easy-chair,
aunt," said I. "Why should you be so uncom-
fortable?"
"Thank you, Trot," replied my aunt, "I pre-
fer to sit upon my property." Here my aunt
looked hard at Mrs. Crupp, and observed, "We
needn't trouble you to wait, ma'am."
"Shall I put a little more tea in the pot afore I
go, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp.
"No, I thank you, ma'am," replied my aunt.
"Would you let me fetch another pat of butter, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp. "Or would you be
persuaded to try a new-laid hogg? or should I
brile a rasher? Ain't there nothing I could do for
your dear aunt, Mr. Copperfull?"
"Nothing, ma'am," returned my aunt. "I
shall do very well, I thank you."
Mrs. Crupp, who had been incessantly smiling
to express sweet temper, and incessantly holding
her head on one side, to express a general feeble-
ness of constitution, and incessantly rubbing her
hands, to express a desire to be of service to all
deserving objects, gradually smiled herself, one-
sided herself, and rubbed herself, out of the room.
"Dick!" said my aunt. "You know what I
told you about time-servers and wealth-worship-
ners?"
Mr. Dick—with rather a scared look, as if he
had forgotten it—returned a hasty answer in the
affirmative.
"Mrs. Crupp is one of them," said my aunt.
"As I bent forward, she put her thumb on my knee to detain me, and said:

"Oh, Trot, Trot! And do you fancy yourself in love? Do you?"

"Fancy, aunt!" I exclaimed, as red as I could be. "I adore her with my whole soul!"

"Dora, indeed!" returned my aunt. "And you mean to say the little thing is very fascinating, I suppose?"

"My dear aunt," I replied, "no one can form the least idea what she is!"

"Ah! And not silly?" said my aunt.

"Silly, aunt!"

I seriously believe it had never once entered my head for a single moment, to consider whether she was or not. I recollected the idea, of course; but I was in a manner struck by it, as a new one altogether.

"Not light-headed?" said my aunt.

"Light-headed, aunt!" I could only repeat this daring speculation with the same kind of feeling with which I had repeated the preceding question.

"Well! well!" said my aunt. "I only ask. I don't deprecate her. Poor little couple! And so you think you were formed for one another, and are to go through a party-upper-table kind of life, like two pretty pieces of confectionery, do you, Trot?"

She asked me this so kindly, and with such a gentle air, half playful and half sorrowful, that I was quite touched.

"We are young and inexperienced, aunt, I know," I replied; "and I dare say we say and think a good deal that is rather foolish. But we love one another truly, I am sure. If I thought Dora could ever love anybody else, or cease to love me; or that I could ever love anybody else, or cease to love her; I don't know what I should do—go out of my mind, I think!"

"Ah, Trot!" said my aunt, shaking her head, and smiling gravely, "blind, blind, blind!"

"Some one that I know, Trot," my aunt pursued, after a pause, "thought of a very pleasant disposition, has an earnestness of affection in him that reminds me of poor Baby. Earnestness is what that Somebody must look for, to sustain him and improve him, Trot. Deep, downright, faithful earnestness."

"If you only knew the earnestness of Dora, aunt!" I cried.

"Oh, Trot!" she said again; "blind, blind!" and without knowing why, I felt a vague unhappy loss or want of something overshadow me like a cloud.

"However," said my aunt, "I don't want to put two young creatures out of conceit with themselves, or to make them unhappy; so, though it is a girl and boy attachment, and girl and boy attachments very often—mind! I don't say always!—come to nothing, still we'll be serious about it, and hope for a prosperous issue one of these days. There's time enough for it to come to anything!"

This was not upon the whole very contrary to a rapturous lover; but I was glad to think in my confidence, and I was mindful of being fatigued. So I thanked her not for this mark of her affection, and for all the kindnesses towards me; and after a tearful night, she took her nightcap into her room.

How miserable I was, when I lay down I thought and thought about my being Mr. Spewlow's eyes; about my not being thought I was, when I proposed to Dora the chivalrous necessity of telling Dora how I was. And worldly condition was, and releasing her engagement if she thought fit; about how contrived to live, during the long ten articles, when I was earning nothing; doing something to assist my aunt, and the way of doing anything; about coming to have no money in my pocket, and a shabby coat, and to be able to carry Dora presents, and to ride no gallant grey, show myself in no agreeable light! So selfish as I knew it was, and as I tortured by knowing that it was, to let my mind on my own distress so much, I was so disarmed that I could not help it. I knew it was in me not to think more of myself; but, so far, selfishness was in me. From Dora, and I could not put Dora or any mortal creature. How miserable I was, that night!

As to sleep, I had dreams of poor sorts and shapes, but I seemed to dream the previous ceremony of going to sleep was interrupted, wanting to sell Dora mat bundles for a halfpenny; now I was at a night-school, and books, remonstrating by Mr. Spewlow on appearing before the that airy attire; now I was hungry, the crumbs that fell from old Tiffey's, regularly eaten when St. Paul's st now I was hopelessly endeavoring to get to marry Dora, having nothing, but one Hippo's gloves to offer in exchange, a whole Commons rejected; and still, no consolation of my own room, I was always about like a distressed ship in a se

My aunt was restless, too, for I heard her walking to and fro. Two times in the course of the night, attire, flannel wrapper in which she looked so high, she appeared, like a disturbed ghost, room, and came to the side of the soft I lay. On the first occasion I started up to learn that she inferred from a particular the sky, that Westminster Abbey was, and to be consulted in reference to the point of its igniting Buckingham Street, in wind changed. Lying still, after that, that she sat down near me, whispering, "Poor boy!" And then it made me times worse wretched, to know how
It was difficult to believe that a night so long ago, could be short to anybody else. This conversation set me thinking and thinking of an imaginary party where people were dancing the away, until that became a dream too, and I heard the music incessantly playing one tune, and saw Dora incessantly dancing one dance, without the least notice of me. The man had been playing the harp all night, was trying vainly to cover it with an ordinary-sized tarp, when I awoke; or I should rather say, as I left off trying to go to sleep, and saw the chiming in through the window at last.

There was an old Roman bath in those days at bottom of one of the streets out of the Strand may be there still—in which I had many a plunge. Dressing myself as quickly as I could, and leaving Pegotty to look after my , I tumbled head foremost into it, and then for a walk to Hampstead. I had a hope that brisk treatment might freshen my wits a little; and I think it did them good, for I soon came to the conclusion that the first step I ought to try if my articles could be candid and the premium recovered. I got some fruit on the Heath, and walked back to our Commons, along the watered roads and with a pleasant smell of summer flowers, in gardens and carried into town on staves’ heads, intent on this first effort to meet altered circumstances.

Arrived at the office so soon, after all, that I left an hour’s lottering about the Commons, e old Tiffey, who was always first, appeared his key. Then I sat down in my shady corner, looking up at the sunlight on the opposite asy-pots, and thinking about Dora; until Spenlow came in, crisp and curly.

How are you, Copperfield?” said he. “Fine day!”

“Beautiful morning, sir,” said I. “Could I send word to you before you go into Court?”

“By all means,” said he. “Come into my room.”

I followed him into his room, and he began sitting on his gown, and touching himself up behind a little glass he had, hanging inside a closet.

“I am sorry to say,” said I, “that I have some disheartening intelligence from my aunt.”

“Do!” said he. “Dear me! Not paralysis, is it?”

“Dr. has no reference to her health, sir,” I replied. “She has met with some very little left, indeed.”

You astound me, Copperfield!” cried Mr. Spenlow.

Shook my head. “Indeed, sir,” said I, “her health is so much changed, that I wish to ask you for it would be possible—at a sacrifice on part of some portion of the premium, of course.” I put this in on the spur of the moment, warned by the blank expression of his face—“to cancel my articles?”

What it cost me to make this proposal, nobody knows. It was like asking, as a favor, to be sentenced to transportation from Dora.

“To cancel your articles, Copperfield. Cancel?”

I explained with tolerable firmness, that I really did not know where my means of subsistence were to come from, unless I could earn them for myself. I had no fear for the future, I said—and I laid great emphasis on that, as if to imply that I should still be decidedly eligible for a son-in-law one of these days—but, for the present. I was thrown upon my own resources.

“I am extremely sorry to hear this, Copperfield,” said Mr. Spenlow. “Extremely sorry. It is not usual to cancel articles for any such reason. It is not a professional course of proceeding. It is not a convenient precedent at all. Far from it. At the same time—”

“You are very good, sir,” I murmured, anticipating a concession.

“Not at all. Don’t mention it,” said Mr. Spenlow. “At the same time, I was going to say, if it had been my lot to have my hands unfettered—if I had not a partner—Mr. Jorkins—”

My hopes were dashed in a moment, but I made another effort.

“Do you think, sir,” said I, “if I were to mention it to Mr. Jorkins—”

Mr. Spenlow shook his head discouragingly. “Heaven forbid, Copperfield,” he replied, “that I should do any man an injustice; still less, Mr. Jorkins. But I know my partner, Copperfield. Mr. Jorkins is not a man to respond to a proposition of this peculiar nature. Mr. Jorkins is very difficult to move from the beaten track. You know what he is!”

I am sure I knew nothing about him, except that he had originally been alone in the business, and now lived by himself in a house near Montagn Square, which was fearfully in want of painting; that he came very late of a day, and went away very early; that he never appeared to be consulted about anything; and that he had a dingy little black-hole of his own up-stairs, where no business was ever done, and where there was a yellow old cartridge-paper pad upon his desk, unsoiled by ink, and reported to be twenty years of age.

“Would you object to my mentioning it to him, sir?” I asked.

“By no means,” said Mr. Spenlow. “But I have some experience of Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield. I wish it were otherwise, for I should be happy to meet your views in any respect. I cannot have the least objection to your mentioning it to Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield, if you think it worth while.”

Availing myself of this permission, which was given with a warm shake of the hand, I sat thinking about Dora, and looking at the sunlight streaming from the chimney-pot down the wall of the opposite house, until Mr. Jorkins came. I then
"I have thought so much about it."
"You must think less about it. Remember that I confide in simple love and truth at last. Have no apprehensions for me, Trotwood," she added, after a moment; "the stop you dread my asking, I shall never take."

Although I think I had never really feared it, in any season of cool reflection, it was an unanswerable relief to me to have this assurance from her own truthful lips. I told her so, earnestly.

"And when this visit is over," said I, "for we may not be alone another time—how long is it likely to be, my dear Agnes, before you come to London again?"

"Probably a long time," she replied; "I think it will be best—for papa's sake—to remain at home. We are not likely to meet often, for some time to come; but I shall be a good correspondent of Dora's, and we shall frequently hear of one another that way."

We were now within the little court-yard of the Doctor's cottage. It was growing late. There was a light in the window of Mrs. Strong's chamber, and Agnes, pointing to it, bade me good-night.

"Do not be troubled," she said, giving me her hand, "by our misfortunes and anxieties. I can be happier in nothing than in your happiness. If you can ever give me help, rely on it I will ask you for it. God bless you always!"

In her beaming smile, and in those last tones of her cheerful voice, I seemed again to see and hear my little Dora in her company. I stood awhile, looking through the porch at the stars, with a heart full of love and gratitude, and then walked slowly forth. I had engaged a bed at a decent alehouse close by, and was going out at the gate, when, happening to turn my head, I saw a light in the Doctor's study. A half-reproachful fancy came into my mind, that he had been working at the Dictionary without my help. With the view of seeing if this were so, and, in any case, of bidding him good-night, if he were yet sitting among his books, I turned back, and going softly across the hall, and gently opening the door, looked in.

The first person whom I saw, to my surprise, by the sober light of the shaded lamp, was Uriah. He was standing close beside it, with one of his skeleton hands over his mouth, and the other resting on the Doctor's table. The Doctor sat in his study-chair, covering his face with his hands. Mr. Wickfield, sorely troubled and distressed, was leaning forward, irresolutely touching the Doctor's arm.

For an instant, I supposed that the Doctor was ill. I hastily advanced a step under that impression, and met Uriah's eye, and saw what was the matter. I would have withdrawn, but the Doctor made a gesture to detain me, and I remained.

"At any rate," observed Uriah, with a writh of his angry face, "we may keep the door shut. We needn't make it known to all the town."

Saying which, he went on his toes to the door which I had left open, and carefully closed it. Then he came back, and took up his former position. There was that abrangent show of expectation zeal in his voice and manner, mere intolerable—at least to me—than any denounced could have assumed.

"I have felt it incumbent upon me, Mr. Copperfield," said Uriah, "to point out to Doctor Strong what you and me have already said about. You didn't exactly understand, though?"

I gave him a look, but no other answer, going to my good old master, said a few words that meant to be words of comfort and encouragement. He put his hand upon my shoulder, as it had been his custom to do when I was a little fellow, but did not lift his grey head.

"As you didn't understand me, Master Copperfield," resumed Uriah in the same officious manner, "I may take the liberty of unblush mentioning, being among friends, that I have called Doctor Strong's attention to the going-on of Mrs. Strong. It's much against the grain with me. I assure you, Copperfield, to be concerned in anything so unpleasant; but really, as it is, we're all mixing ourselves up with what oughtn't to be. That was what my meaning was, sir, when you didn't understand me."

I wonder now, when I recall his leer, that I did not collar him, and try to shake the breath out of his body.

"I dare say I didn't make myself very clear," he went on, "nor you neither. Naturally, we were both of us inclined to give such a subject a wide berth. How's ever, at last I have made up my mind to speak plain; and I have mentioned to Doctor Strong that—did you speak, sir?"

This was to the Doctor, who had motioned the sound might have touched any heart, I thought, but it had no effect upon Uriah's.

"—mentioned to Doctor Strong," he proceeded, "that any one may see that Mr. Maldon, and the lovely and agreeable lady as is Doctor Strong's wife, are too sweet on one another. Really the time is come (we being at present all mixing ourselves up with what oughtn't to be), when Doctor Strong must be told that this was full as plain to everybody as the sun, before Mr. Maldon went to India; that Mr. Maldon made excuses to come back, for nothing else; and that he's always been for nothing else. When you come in, sir, I was just putting it to my fellow-partner," towards whom he turned, "to say to Doctor Strong upon his word and honor, whether he'd ever been of this opinion long ago, or not. Come, Mr. Wickfield, sir! Would you be so good as tell us? Yes or no, sir? Come, partner!"

"For God's sake, my dear Doctor," said Mr. Wickfield, again laying his inscrutable hand upon the Doctor's arm, "don't attach too much weight to any suspicion I may have entertained."

"There!" cried Uriah, raising his hands.

"What a melancholy conclusion! Don't we
DEAR AGNES!

I disinterested, Trotwood, for—I am be cruelly prejudiced—I do not like to go away alone, with him."

You exercise the same influence over me still, Agnes?" took her head. "There is such a home," said she, "that you would see the dear old house. They live in it!"
"I said I. keep and his mother. He sleeps in it," said Agnes, looking up into my

I had the ordering of his dreams," I wouldn't sleep there long."

my own little room," said Agnes, sed to learn my lessons. How the You remember? The little panelled door from the drawing-room?"
ber, Agnes? When I saw you, for a coming out at the door, with your basket of keys hanging at your side?"

at the same," said Agnes, smiling. you think of it so pleasantly. We

we, indeed," said I.

that room to myself still; but I cannot desert Mrs. Heep, you know. And nee, quietly, "I feel obliged to bear y, when I might prefer to be alone. no other reason to complain of her. me, sometimes, by her praises of her

st Agnes when she said these words, erecting in her any consciousness of gn. Her mild but earnest eyes met their own beautiful frankness, and o change in her gentle face.

evil of their presence in the d Agnes, "is that I cannot be as s I could wish—Uriah Heep being so en us—and cannot watch over him, if oo bold a thing to say, as closely as I t. if any fraud or treachery is practi st him, I hope that simple love and e stronger, in the end. I hope that d truth are stronger in the end than misfortune in the world."

bright smile, which I never saw on face, died away, even while I thought it was; and how familiar it had once z; and she asked me, with a quick expression (we were drawing very bet). If I know how the reverse in my instanes had been brought about. lying no, she had not told me yet, no thoughtful, and I fancied I felt her in mine.

m my aunt alone, in a state of some

A difference of opinion had arisen herself and Mrs. Crupp, on an abstract e propriety of chambers being inhabi
ted by sex; and my aunt, utterly in-
different to spasms on the part of Mrs. Crupp, had cut the dispute short, by informing that lady that she smelt of my brandy, and that she would trouble her to walk out. Both of these expressions Mrs. Crupp considered actionable, and had expressed her intention of bringing before a "British Judy"—meaning it was supposed, the bulwark of our national liberties.

My aunt, however, having had time to cool, while Peggotty was out showing Mr. Dick the soldiers at the Horse Guards—and being, besides, greatly pleased to see Agnes—rather plumed herself on the affair than otherwise, and received us with unimpaired good-humor. When Agnes laid her bonnet on the table, and sat down beside her, I could not but think, looking on her mild eyes and her radiant forehead, how natural it seemed to have her there: how trustfully, although she was so young and inexperienced, my aunt con fided in her; how strong she was, indeed, in simple love and truth.

We began to talk about my aunt's losses, and I told them what I had tried to do that morning.

"Which was injudicious, Trot," said my aunt, "but well meant. You are a generous boy—I suppose I must say, young man, now—and I am proud of you, my dear. So far so good. Now, Trot and Agnes, let us look the case of Betsey Trotwood in the face, and see how it stands."

I observed Agnes turn pale, as she looked very attentively at my aunt. My aunt, patting her cat, looked very attentively at Agnes.

"Betsey Trotwood," said my aunt, who had always kept her money matters to herself: "—I don't mean your sister. Trot, my dear, but myself—had a certain property. It don't matter how much; enough to live on. More; for she had saved a little, and added to it. Betsey fund ed her property for some time, and then, by the advice of her man of business, laid it out on landed security. That did very well, and returned very good interest, till Betsey was paid off. I am talking of Betsey as if she was a man-of-war. Well! Then, Betsey had to look about her, for a new investment. She thought she was wiser, now, than her man of business, who was not such a good man of business by this time, as he used to be—I am alluding to your father, Ag nes—and she took it into her head to lay it out for herself. So she took her pige," said my aunt, "to a foreign market; and a very bad market it turned out to be. First, she lost in the mining way, and then she lost in the diving way—fishing up treasure, or some such Tom Titler nonsense," explained my aunt, rubbing her nose; "and then she lost in the mining way again, and, last of all, to set the thing entirely to rights, she lost in the banking way. I don't know what the Bank shares were worth for a little while," said my aunt; "cent per cent was the lowest of it, I believe; but the Bank was at the other end of the world, and tumbled into space, for what I know, anyhow, it fell to pieces, and never will and never can pay sixpence; and Betsey's sixpences were.
all there, and there's an end of them. Least said, soonest mended!"

My aunt concluded this philosophical summary by fixing her eyes with a kind of triumph on Agnes, whose color was gradually returning.

"Dear Miss Trotwood, is that all the history?" said Agnes.

"I hope it's enough, child," said my aunt.

"If there had been more money to lose, it wouldn't have been all, I dare say. Betsey would have contrived to throw it after the rest, and make another chapter, I have little doubt. But, there was no more money, and there's no more story."

Agnes had listened at first with suspended breath. Her color still came and went, but she breathed more freely. I thought I knew why. I thought she had had some fear that her unhappy father might be in some way to blame for what had happened. My aunt took her hand in hers, and laughed.

"Is that all?" repeated my aunt. "Why, yes, that's all, except, 'And she lived happy ever afterwards.' Perhaps I may add that of Betsey yet, one of these days. Now, Agnes, you have a wise head. So have you, Trot, in some things, though I can't compliment you always;" and here my aunt shook her own at me, with an energy pecu liar to herself. "What's to be done? Here's the cottage, taking one time with another, will produce, say seventy pounds a-year. I think we may safely put it down at that. Well!—That's all we've got," said my aunt; with whom it was an idiosyncrasy, as it is with some horses, to stop very short when she appeared to be in a fair way of going on for a long while.

"Thyn," said my aunt, after a rest, "there's Dick. He's good for a hundred a-year, but of course that must be expended on himself. I would sooner send him away, though I know I am the only person who appreciates him, than have him, and not spend his money on himself. How can Trot and I do best, upon our means? What do you say, Agnes?"

"I say, aunt," I interposed, "that I must do something!"

"Go for a soldier, do you mean?" returned my aunt, alarmed; "or go to sea? I won't hear of it. You are to be a proctor. We're not going to have any knockings on the head in this family, if you please, sir."

I was about to explain that I was not desirous of introducing that mode of provision into the family, when Agnes inquired if my rooms were held for any long term?

"You come to the point, my dear," said my aunt. "They are not to be got rid of, for six months at least, unless they could be underlet, and that I don't believe. The last man died here. Five people out of six would die—of course—of that woman in nankeen with the funnel petticoat.

I have a little ready money; and I agree with you, the best thing we can do is to live the term out here, and get Dick a bed-room hard by."

I thought it my duty to hint at the discomfort my aunt would sustain, from living in a state of guerrilla warfare with Mrs. Cr...
MR. WICKFIELD AND HIS PARTNER.

but she could not relent towards the moke, which, she said, "peppered." A complete revolution, in which Peggoty seemed to do with a gentle and how much Agnes did without at all, when a knock came at the door. "It's promised me that he would come." I the door, and admitted, not only Mr. but Uriah Heep. I had not seen Mr. for some time. I was prepared for a re in him, after what I had heard from his appearance shocked me.

not that he looked many years older, I dressed with the old scrupulous care; that there was an unwholesome ruddiness in his face; or that his eyes were full and or that there was a nervous trembling in the cause of which I knew, and had not seen at work. It was not that he is good looks, or his old bearing of a——for that he had not—but the thing that most was, that with the evidences of superiority still upon him, he should yield to that crawling impersonation of Uriah Heep. The reversal of the two their relative positions, Uriah of Mr. Wickfield's of dependence, was a painful to me than I can express. If I in ape taking command of a Man, I dry have thought it a more degrading

eared to be only too conscious of it. When he came in, he stood still; and ead bowed, as if he felt it. This was moment; for Agnes softly said to him, there is Miss Trotwood—and Trotwood, have not seen for a long while!" and approached, and constrainedly gave my hand, and shook hands more cordially. In the moment's pause I speak of, it a countenance form itself into a most smile. Agnes saw it too, I think, for from him.
y aunt saw, or did not see, I defy the physiognomy to have made out, within consent. I believe there never was such an imperturbable countenance chose. Her face might have been a on the occasion in question, for any ew upon her thoughts; until she broke his usual abruptness.

Wickfield!" said my aunt; and he at her for the first time. "I have been is daughter how well I have been disney money for myself, because I couldn't on, as you were growing rusty in busi

er. We have been taking counsel to l getting on very well, all things con

gnies is worth the whole firm, in my

"If I may umbly make the remark," said Uriah Heep, with a writhe, "I fully agree with Miss Betsey Trotwood, and should be only too appy if Miss Agnes was a partner."

"You're a partner yourself, you know," returned my aunt, "and that's about enough for you, I expect. How do you find yourself, sir?"

In acknowledgment of this question, addressed to him with extraordinary curtsey, Mr. Heep, uncomfortably clutching the blue bag he carried, replied that he was pretty well, he thanked my aunt, and hoped she was the same.

"And you, Master—I should say, Mister Copperfield," pursuad Uriah. "I hope I see you well! I am rejoiced to see you, Master Copperfield, even under present circumstances." I believed that; for he seemed to relish them very much. "Present circumstances is not what your friends would wish for you, Master Copperfield, but it isn't money makes the man: it's—I am really unequal with my on powers to express what it is," said Uriah, with a flushing jerk, "but it isn't money!"

Here he shook hands with me: not in the common why, but standing at a good distance from me, and lifting my hand up and down like a pump-handle, that he was a little afraid of.

"And how do you think we are looking, Master Copperfield,—I should say, Mister?" fawned Uriah. "Don't you find Mr. Wickfield blooming, sir? Years don't tell much in our firm, Master Copperfield, except in raising up the humble, namely, mother and self—and in developing," he added, as an after thought, "the beautiful, namely, Miss Agnes."

He jerked himself about, after this compliment, in such an intolerable manner, that my aunt, who had sat looking straight at him, lost all patience.

"Dence take the man!" said my aunt, sternly, "what's he about? Don't be galvanic, sir!"

"I ask your pardon, Miss Trotwood," returned Uriah; "I'm aware you're nervous."

"Go along with you, sir!" said my aunt, anything but appeased. "Don't presume to say so! I am nothing of the sort. If you're an eel, sir, conduct yourself like one. If you're a man, control your limbs, sir! Good God!" said my aunt, with great indignation, "I am not going to be serpentined and corkscrewed out of my senses!"

Mr. Heep was rather abashed, as most people might have been, by this explosion; which derived great additional force from the indignant manner in which my aunt afterwards moved in her chair, and shook her head as if she were making snaps or bounces at him. But, he said to me aside in a meek voice:

"I am well aware, Master Copperfield, that Miss Trotwood, though an excellent lady, has a quick temper (indeed I think I had the pleasure of knowing her, when I was an able clerk, before you did, Master Copperfield), and it's only natural, I am sure, that it should be made quicker by present circumstances. The wonder is, that
he got home at night," said Dora, lifting up her beautiful eyes. "It was a long way for him.

I began to think I would do it to-day.

"It was a long way for him," said I, "for he had nothing to uphold him on the journey."

"When's he fed, poor thing?" asked Dora.

I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.

"Ye—yes," I said, "he was well taken care of. I mean he had not the unutterable happiness that I had in being so near you."

Dora bent her head over her drawing, and said, after a little while—I had sat, in the interval, in a burning fever, and with my legs in a very rigid state—

"You didn't seem to be sensible of that happiness yourself, at one time of the day."

I saw now that I was in it, and it must be done on the spot.

"You didn't care for that happiness in the least," said Dora, slightly raising her eyebrows, and shaking her head, "when you were sitting by Miss Kitt."

Kitt, I should observe, was the name of the creature in pink, with the little eyes.

"Though certainly I don't know why you should," said Dora, "or why you should call it a happiness at all. But of course you don't mean what you say. And I am sure no one doubts your being at liberty to do whatever you like. Jip, you naughty boy, come here!"

I don't know how I did it. I did it in a moment. I intercepted Jip. I had Dora in my arms. I was full of eloquence. I never stopped for a word. I told her how I loved her. I told her I should die without her. I told her that I idolised and worshipped her. Jip barked madly all the time.

When Dora hung her head and cried, and trembled, my eloquence increased so much the more. If she would like me to die for her, she had but to say the word, and I was ready. Life without Dora's love was not a thing to have on any terms. I couldn't bear it, and I wouldn't. I had loved her every minute, day and night, since I first saw her. I loved her at that minute to distraction. I should always love her, every minute, to distraction. Lovers had loved before, and lovers would love again; but no lover ever loved, might, could, would, or should ever love, as I loved Dora. The more I raved, the more Jip barked. Each of us, in his own way, got more mad every moment.

Well, well! Dora and I were sitting on the sofa by-and-by, quiet enough, and Jip was lying in her lap, winking peacefully at me. It was off my mind. I was in a state of perfect rapture. Dora and I were engaged.

I suppose we had some notion that this was to end in marriage. We must have had some, because Dora stipulated that we were never to be married without her papa's consent. But, in our youthful constancy, I don't think that we really looked on it, or behind it; or had any aspiration beyond the ignorant present. We were very young. We kept our secret from Mr. Spenslow; but I heard the idea never entered my head, that there was anything dishonorable in that.

Miss Mills was more than usually busy when Dora, going to find her, brought her—she apprehended, because there was a tenderness in what had passed to awaken the slumbering in the caverns of Memory. But she gave a blessing, and the assurance of her lasting friendship and interest to us, generally, as her voice from the Colster.

What an idle time it was! What an unimportant, happy, foolish time it was!

When I measured Dora's finger for a ring to be made of Forget-me-nots, and went to the jeweller, to whom I took the measure, for an estimate, and bought the ordered book and anything else that he liked for the pretty ring with its blue stones—all associated in my mind with Dora's hand, that I have seen it, and I have seen another, by chance, on the finger of my own daughter, there was a momentary sense of my heart, like pain!

When I walked about, excited with my love and full of my own interest, and felt the love of loving Dora, and of being beloved, so that I could not walk the air, I could not be more above the people not so situated, we were creeping on the earth!

When we had those meetings in the garden, and saw the sky, and went into the shady house, so happy, that I love the London of this hour, for nothing else, and see the stars of the tropics in their smoky feathers!

When we had our first great quarrel (a week of our betrothal), and when Dora took the ring, enclosed in a despairing gesture, wherein she used the terrible expression that "our love had begun in folly, and ended in madness!" which dreadful words occasioned her to tear her hair, and cry that all was over!

When, under cover of the night, I flew to Mills, whom I saw by stealth in a back where there was a mangle, and implored Miss Mills to interpose between us and avert it. When Miss Mills undertook the office and said with Dora, exhorting us, from the pulse of her own bitter youth, to mutual concession, avoidance of the desert of Sahara!

When we cried, and made it up, and blazed again, that the back-kitchen, mangle, changed to Love's own temple, where we planned a correspondence through Miss M. to comprehend at least one letter a side every day!

What an idle time! What an unimportant happy, foolish time! Of all the times that Time has in his grip, there is none one retrospect I can smile at half so much as think of half so tenderly.
CHAPTER XXXIV.

MY AUNT ASTONISHES ME.

To Agnes as soon as Dora and I were
wrote her a long letter, in which I
wished her comprehend how blest I was,
arranging Dora was. I entreated Agnes
to think of this as a thoughtless passion which
had to any other, or had the least re-

to the boyish fancies that we used to

I assured her that its profundity was
now, and expressed my belief that
it had ever been known.

as I wrote to Agnes on a fine even-

to window, and the remembrance of

a eyes and gentle face came stealing

its peace influence upon

agitation in which I had been living

which my very happiness partook in

that it soothed me into tears. I re-

I sat resting my head upon my hand,
tessa, half done, cherishing a gen-
tle Agnes were one of the elements of

the. As if, in the retirement of the

most sacred to me by her presence,

must be happier than anywhere. As

y, sorrow, hope, or disappointment;
safely; my heart turned naturally there,

refuge and best friend.

worth, I said nothing. I only told her

that I was sad grief at Yarmouth, on acount

ght; and that on me it made a double

ason of the circumstances attending

now quick she always was to divine

I that she would never be the first to

aner, I received an answer by return

I read it, I seemed to hear Agnes

me. It was like her cordial voice in

hat can I say more!

had been away from home lately, Traddles,
twice or thrice. Finding Pegotty

being informed by Pegotty (who al-

lered that information to whomsoever

it), that she was my old nurse, he

had a good-humored acquaintance with

stayed to have a little chat with her

Pegotty said; but I am afraid the

in her own side, and of immoderate

was very difficult indeed to stop,

her! when she had me for her

nds me, not only that I expected

certain afternoon of his own ap-

ich was now come, but that Mrs.

signed everything appertaining to

salary excepted) until Pegotty

to present herself. Mrs. Crupp, after

conversations respecting Pegotty,

pitched voice, on the staircase—

visible Familiar it would appear, for

peaking she was quite alone at those

need a letter to me, developing her

ning it with that statement of uni-

versal application, which fitted every occurrence

of her life, namely, that she was a mother herself,

she went on to inform me that she had once seen

very different days, but that at all periods of her

existence she had had a constitutional objection

to spies, intruders, and informers. She named no

names, she said; let them the cap fitted, wear it;

but spies, intruders, and informers, especially in

widder's weeds (this clause was underlined), she

had ever accustomed herself to look down upon.

If a gentleman was the victim of spies, intruders,

and informers (but still naming no names), that

was his own pleasure. He had a right to please

himself; so let him do. All that she, Mrs. Crupp,

stipulated for, was, that she should not be

"brought in contract" with such persons.

Therefore she begged to be excused from any

further attendance on the top set, until things

were as they formerly was, and as they could be

wished to be; and further mentioned that her lit-

tle book would be found upon the breakfast-table

every Saturday morning, when she requested an

immediate settlement of the same, with the

benevolent view of saving trouble, "and an ill-con-

venience" to all parties.

After this, Mrs. Crupp confined herself to mak-

ing pitfalls on the stairs, principally with pitchers,

and endeavoring to delude Pegotty into breaking

her legs. I found it rather harassing to live in this

state of siege, but was too much afraid of Mrs.

Crupp to see any way out of it.

"My dear Copperfield," cried Traddles, punctu-

ally appearing at my door, in spite of all these

obstacles, "how do you do?"

"My dear Traddles," said I, "I am delighted
to see you at last, and very sorry I have not been

at home before. But I have been so much en-
gaged—"

"Yes, yes, I know," said Traddles, "of course.

Yours lives in London, I think."

"What did you say?"

"She—excuse me—Miss D., you know," said

Traddles, coloring in his great delicacy, "lives in

London, I believe?"

"Oh yes. Near London."

"Mine, perhaps you recollect," said Traddles,

with a serious look, "lives down in Devonshire—
one of ten. Consequently, I am not so much en-
gaged as you—in that sense."

"I wonder you can bear," I returned, "to see

her so seldom."

"Hah!" said Traddles, thoughtfully. "It does

seem a wonder. I suppose it is, Copperfield, be-

cause there's no help for it?"

"I suppose so," I replied with a smile, and not

without a blush. "And because you have so

much constancy and patience, Traddles."

"Dear me!" said Traddles, considering about

it, "do I strike you in that way, Copperfield? I

really I didn't know that I had. But she is such

an extraordinarily dear girl herself, that it's pos-

sible she may have imparted something of those

virtues to me. Now you mention it, Copperfield,

I shouldn't wonder at all. I assure you she
always forgetting herself, and taking care of the other nine."
"Is she the eldest?" I inquired.
"Oh dear, no," said Traddles. "The eldest is a Beauty."

He said, I suppose, that I could not help smiling at the simplicity of this reply; and added, with a smile upon his own ingenuous face:
"Not, of course, but that my Sophy—pretty name, Copperfield, I always think."
"Very pretty!" said I.
"Not, of course, but that Sophy is beautiful too in my eyes, and would be one of the dearest girls that ever was, in anybody's eyes (I should think). But when I say the eldest is a Beauty, I mean she really is—a—she seemed to be describing clouds about himself, with both hands: 'Splendid, you know,' said Traddles, energetically.

"Indeed!" said I.
"Oh, I assure you," said Traddles, "something very uncommon, indeed! Then, you know, being formed for society and admiration, and not being able to enjoy much of it in consequence of their limited means, she naturally gets a little irritable and excitable, sometimes. Sophy puts her in good-humor!"

"Is Sophy the youngest?" I hazarded.

"Oh dear, no!" said Traddles, stroking his chin. "The two youngest are only nine and ten. Sophy educates 'em."

"The second daughter, perhaps?" I hazarded.

"No," said Traddles. "Sarah's the second. Sarah has something the matter with her spine, poor girl. The malady will wear out by-and-bye, the doctors say, but in the meantime she has to lie down for a twelvemonth. Sophy nurses her. Sophy's the fourth."

"Is the mother living?" I inquired.

"Oh yes," said Traddles, "she is alive. She is a very superior woman indeed, but the dandy country is not adapted to her constitution, and—in fact, she has lost all the use of her limbs."

"Dear me!" said I.

"Very sad, is it not?" returned Traddles. "But in a merely domestic view it is not so bad as it might be, because Sophy takes her place. She is almost as much a mother to her mother, as she is to the other nine."

I felt the greatest admiration for the virtues of this young lady; and, honestly with the view of doing my best to prevent the good-nature of Traddles from being imposed upon, to the detriment of their joint prospects in life, inquired how Mr. Micawber was?

"He is quite well, Copperfield, thank you," said Traddles. "I am not living with him at present."

"No?"

"No. You see the truth is," said Traddles, in a whisper, "he has changed his name to Mortimer, in consequence of his temporary embarrassments; and he don't come out till after dark—and then in spectacles. There was an execution put into our house, for rent. Mrs. Micawber was in such a dreadful state that I really couldn't resist giving my name to that second bill we spoke of here. You may imagine how delightful it was to my feelings, Copperfield, to see the matter settled with, and Mrs. Micawber recover her spirits."

"Hum!" said I.

"Not that her happiness was of long duration," pursued Traddles, "for, unfortunately, within a week another execution came in, broke up the establishment. I have been living in a furnished apartment since then, and the Micawbers have been very private indeed. Dobre's won't think it selfish, Copperfield, if I mention that the broker carried off my little round table with the marble top, and Sophy's flower pot to stand?"

"What a hard thing!" I exclaimed indignantly.

"It was a—a—it was a pull," said Traddles with his usual wince at that expression. "I don't mention it reproachfully, however, but with a regret. The fact is, Copperfield, I was unable to repurchase them at the time of their seizure in the first place, because the broker, having ascertained that I wanted them, ran the price up to an exorbitant extent; and, in the second place, because—I hadn't any money. Now, I have kept my eye since, upon the broker's shop," said Traddles, with a great enjoyment of his mystery, "with a view to the top of Tottenham Court Road; and, last, to-day I find them put out for sale. I have only noticed them from over the way, because the broker saw me, bless you, he'd ask any price for them! What has occurred to me, having the money, is, that perhaps you wouldn't object to ask that good-nature of yours to come with me to the shop—I can show it her from round the corner of the next street—and make the best of a gain for them, as if they were for herself, that she can!"

The delight with which Traddles prepared this plan to me, and the sense he had of the uncommon affluence, are among the fondest things in remembrance.

I told him that my old nurse would be delighted to assist him, and that we would all three take the field together, but on one condition. That condition was, that he should make a solemn resolution to grant no more loans of his name, or anything else, to Mr. Micawber.

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, "I have already done so, because I begin to feel that I have not only been inconsiderate, but that I have been positively unjust to Sophy. My word was passed to myself, there is no longer any suspension; but I pledge it to you, too, with the greatest readiness. That first unlucky obligation, I have paid. I have no doubt Mr. Micawber would have paid it if he could, but he could not."

One thing I ought to mention, which I like very much in Mr. Micawber, Copperfield. It relates to the second obligation, which has not yet been
that it is provided for, but he says it
not, I think there is something very fair
about that!"

willing to damp my good friend's con-
id therefore assented. After a little
conversation, we went round to the chan-
to enlist Peggotty; Traddles declining
an evening with me, both because he
se liveliest apprehensions that his
ould be bought by somebody else be-
ly re-purchase it, and because it was
; he always devoted to writing to the
in the world.
shall forget him peeping round the cor-
tree in Tottenham Court Road, while
as bargaining for the precious articles;
tion when she came slowly towards us
nning a price, and was hailed by the
ker, and went back again. The end
iation was, that she bought the pro-
early easy terms, and Traddles was
with pleasure.
my much obliged to you, indeed," said
uring it was to be sent to where
ight. "If I might ask one other
e you would not think it absurd, Cop-
forehand, certainly not.
if you would be good enough," said
eggotty, "to get the flower-pot now,
sould like (it being Sophy's, Copper-
you gave it to me myself!"
was glad to get it for him, and he
ed her with thanks, and went his way
m Court Road, carrying the flower-
nately in his arms, with one of the
d expressions of countenance I ever

turned back towards my chambers.
nd had charms for Peggotty which I
them to possess in the same degree
, I sampered easily along, amused
ng in at the windows, and waiting for
as she chose. We were thus a good
ting to the Adelphi.
my up-stairs, I called her attention to
appearance of Mrs. Crupp's pitfalls,
the prints of recent footsteps. We
ay much surprised, coming higher up,
eter door standing open (which I had
ard voices inside.
ed at one-another, without knowing
ce of this, and went into the sitting-
it was my amazement to find, of all
earth, my aunt there, and Mr. Dick
ing on a quantity of luggage, with her
before her, and her cat on her knee,
Robinson Crusoe drinking tea. Mr.
thoughtfully on a great kite, such as
been out together to fly, with more
d about him!

aunt!" cried I. "Why, what an un-
sware!"
ily embraced; and Mr. Dick and I
cordially shook hands; and Mrs. Crupp, who was
busy making tea, and could not be too attentive,
cordially said she had known well as Mr. Copper-
full would have his heart in his mouth, when he
see his dear relations.

"Holloa!" said my aunt to Peggotty, who
qualled before her awful presence. "How are
you?"

"You remember my aunt, Peggotty?" said I.
"For the love of goodness, child," exclaimed
my aunt, "don't call the woman by that South
Sea Island name! If she married and got rid of it,
which was the best thing she could do, why don't
you give her the benefit of the change? What's
your name now,—P?" said my aunt, as a compro-
mise for the obnoxious appellation.

"Barkis, ma'am," said Peggotty, with a curt-
sey.

"Well! That's human," said my aunt. "It
sounds less as if you wanted a Missionary. How
d'ye do, Barkis? I hope you're well?"

Encouraged by these gracious words, and by
my aunt's extending her hand, Barkis came for-
ward, and took the hand, and curtseyed her ac-
knowledgments.

"We are older than we were, I see," said my
aunt. "We have only met each other once before,
you know. A nice business we made of it then!
Trot, my dear, another cup."

I handed it dutifully to my aunt, who was in
her usual inflexible state of figure; and ventured
a remonstrance with her on the subject of her sit-
ting on a box.

"Let me draw the sofa here, or the easy-chair,
aunt," said I. "Why should you be so uncom-
fortable?"

"Thank you, Trot," replied my aunt. "I pre-
ferr to sit upon my property." Here my aunt
looked hard at Mrs. Crupp, and observed, "We
needn't trouble you to wait, ma'am."

"Shall I put a little more tea in the pot afore I
go, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp.

"No, I thank you, ma'am," replied my aunt.

"Would you let me fetch another pat of butter,
ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp. "Or would you be
persuaded to try a new-laid hagg? or should I
brile a rasher? Ain't there nothing I could do for
your dear aunt, Mr. Copperfull?"

"Nothing, ma'am," returned my aunt. "I
shall do very well, I thank you."

Mrs. Crupp, who had been incessantly smiling
to express sweet temper, and incessantly holding
her head on one side, to express a general feeble-
ness of constitution, and incessantly rubbing her
hands, to express a desire to be of service to all
deserving objects, gradually smiled herself, one-
sided herself, and rubbed herself, out of the room.

"Dick!" said my aunt. "You know what I
told you about time-servers and wealth-worshipp-
ers?"

Mr. Dick—with rather a scared look, as if he
had forgotten it—returned a hasty answer to the
affirmative.

"Mrs. Crupp is one of them," said my aunt.
"Barkis, I'll trouble you to look after the tea, and let me have another cup, for I don't fancy that woman's pouring-out!"

I knew my aunt sufficiently well to know that she had something of importance on her mind, and that there was far more matter in this arrival than a stranger might have supposed. I noticed how her eye lighted on me, when she thought my attention otherwise occupied; and what a curious process of hesitation appeared to be going on within her, while she preserved her outward stiffness and composure. I began to reflect whether I had done anything to offend her; and my conscience whispered me that I had not yet told her about Dora. Could it by any means be that, I wondered?

As I knew she would only speak in her own good time, I sat down near her, and spoke to the birds, and played with the cat, and was as easy as I could be. But I was very far from being really easy; and I should still have been so, even if Mr. Dick, leaning over the great kist behind my aunt, had not taken every secret opportunity of shaking his head daintily at me, and pointing at her.

"Trot," said my aunt at last, when she had finished her tea, and carefully smoothed down her dress, and wiped her lips—"you needn't go, Barkis!—Trot, have you got to be firm, and self-reliant?"

"I hope so, aunt.""What do you think?"' inquired Miss Betsey.

"I think so, aunt.""Then why, my love," said my aunt, looking earnestly at me, "why do you think I prefer to sit upon this property of mine to-night?"

I shook my head, unable to guess.

"Because," said my aunt, "it's all I have. Because I'm ruined, my dear!"

If the house, and every one of us, had tumbled out into the river together, I could hardly have received a greater shock.

"Dick knows it," said my aunt, laying her hand calmly on my shoulder. "I am ruined, my dear Trot! All I have in the world is in this room, except the cottage; and that I have left Janet to let. Barkis, I want to get a bed for this gentleman to-night. To save expense, perhaps you can make up something here for yourself. Anything will do. It's only for to-night. We'll talk about this, more, to-morrow."

I was roused from my amazement, and concern for her—I am sure, for her—by her falling on my neck for a moment, and crying that she only grieved for me. In another moment she suppressed this emotion; and said with an aspect more triumphant than dejected:

"We must meet reverses boldly, and not suffer them to frighten us, my dear. We must learn to act the play out. We must live misfortune down, Trot!"

CHAPTER XXXV.
DEPRESSION.

As soon as I could recover my presence of mind, which quite deserted me in the overpowering shock of my aunt's intelligence, I proposed to Mr. Dick to come round to the shop, and take possession of the bed which Peggotty had lately vacated. The chandler being in Hungerford Market, and Hurst Market being a very different place in the weather, there was a low wooden colonnade before the door (not very unlike that before the house where the little man and woman used to sit in the old weather-glass), which pleased Dick mightily. The glory of lodging of structure would have compensated him, say, for many inconveniences; but as it really few to hear, beyond the compliments I have already mentioned, and perhaps want of a little more able room, he was not only charmed with his accommodation. Mr. Dick had indulgently assumed him that there room to swing a cat there; but as Mr. Dick observed to me, sitting down on the floor, nursing his leg, "You know, Trot, I don't want to swing a cat. I never do swing a cat. Therefore, what does that signify to me?"

I tried to ascertain whether Mr. Dick had an understanding of the causes of this end and great change in my aunt's affairs. As I have expected, he had none at all. The count he could give of it, was, that my aunt said to him, the day before yesterday, "Dick, are you really and truly the fellow who takes you for?" That then he had said, "I hoped so. That then my aunt had said, "You are ruined." That then she had said, "I declared!" That then my aunt had said, "I declare!" and he was very glad of it. And I had come to me, and had had nothing and sandwiches on the road.

Mr. Dick was so very complacent, as he lay on the foot of the bed, nursing his leg, and told me this, with his eyes wide open and a smile, that I am sorry to say I was prone to explain to him that ruin meant desire and starvation; but, I was soon bitterly for this harshness, by seeing his face turn and tears course down his lengthened while he fixed upon me a look of such unspeakable woe, that it might have softened a heart of stone. I took infinitely greater to cheer him up again than I had taken to him; and I soon understood (as I ought to have known at first) that he had been so miserable because of his faith in the wisdom of wonderful women, and his unbounded confidence in my resources. The facts, he considered a match for any kind of waster not absolutely mortal.

"What can we do, Trotwood?" said Dick. "There's the Memorial!"

"To be sure there is," said I.
MY AUNT'S GENTleness.

I suppose I looked doubtful, for she added:

"Tut, tut, child. If nothing worse than Ale happens to us, we are well off."

"I should think so myself, aunt, I am sure,” said I.

"Well, then, why don't you think so?” said my aunt.

"Because you and I are very different people,” I returned.

"Stuff and nonsense, Trot!” replied my aunt.

My aunt went on with a quiet enjoyment, in which there was very little affection, if any; drinking the warm ale with a teaspoon, and soaking her strips of toast in it.

"Trot,” said she, "I don't care for strange faces in general, but I rather like that Barkis of yours, do you know!"

"It's better than a hundred pounds to hear you say so!" said I.

"It's a most extraordinary world,” observed my aunt, rubbing her nose; "how that woman ever got into it with that name, is unaccountable to me. It would be much more easy to be born a Jackson, or something of that sort, one would think.”

"Perhaps she thinks so, too; it's not her fault,” said I.

"I suppose not,” returned my aunt, rather grudging the admission; "but it's very aggravating. However, she's Barkis now. That's some comfort. Barkis is uncommonly fond of you, Trot.”

"There is nothing she would leave undone to prove it,” said I.

"Nothing, I believe,” returned my aunt. "Here, the poor fool has been begging and praying about handing over some of her money—because she has got too much of it! A simpleton!”

My aunt's tears of pleasure were positively trickling down into the warm ale.

"She's the most ridiculous creature that ever was born,” said my aunt. "I knew, from the first moment when I saw her with that poor dear blessed baby of a mother of yours, that she was the most ridiculous of mortals. But there are good points in Barkis!"

Affecting to laugh, she got an opportunity of putting her hand to her eyes. Having availed herself of it, she resumed her toast and her discourse together.

"Ah! Mercy upon us!” sighed my aunt.

"I know all about it, Trot! Barkis and myself had quite a gossip while you were out with Dick. I know all about it. I don't know where these wretched girls expect to go to, for my part. I wonder they don't knock out their brains against —against mantelpieces," said my aunt; an idea which was probably suggested to her by her contemplation of mine.

"Poor Emily!” said I.

"Oh, don't talk to me about poor,” returned my aunt. "She should have thought of that, before she caused so much misery! Give me a kiss, Trot. I am sorry for your early experience.”

It now, Mr. Dick, is to keep a cheerful

uted to this in the most earnest man-

ness, if I should see him vanish out of the right course, to recall me of those superior methods which I was at my command. But I regret to the fright I had given him proved too

scious that, and put a constraint

rolling his eyes like a piece of mad

not mend the matter at all. I saw

the loaf at supper (which happened

as if nothing else stood be-

breath; and when my aunt insisted

ting his customary repeat, I detected

d so much in the pocketing fragments of his bread

had no doubt for the purpose of

with those savings, when we should

advanced stage of attenuation.

on the other hand, was in a composed

which was a lesson to all of us—

sure. She was extremely gracious to

cept when I inadvertently called her

and, strange as I know she felt in

quaint at home. She was too

d, and I was to lie in the sitting-room,

and over her. She made a great point

ear the river, in case of a confusa-

suppose really did find some satisfac-

circumstance.

d," said my aunt, when she saw

preparations for compounding her

-draught, "No!"

ig, aunt?"

ine, my dear. Ale.”

ese is wine here, aunt. And you al-

that, in case of sickness,” said my

e mustn't use it carelessly, Trot. Ale

it Mr. Dick would have fallen, insensi-

ient being resolute, I went out and got

As it was growing late, Peggotty

that opportunity of repairing

ller's shop together. I parted from

c, at the corner of the street, with

ite at his back, a very monument of

was walking up and down the room

turned, crimping the borders of her

ith her fingers. I warmed the ale and

ast on the usual infallible principles.

ready for her, she was ready for it,

ightcap on, and the skirt of her gown

ner's knees.

ar,” said my aunt, after taking a spoon.

it's agreeable better than wine. Not

me.”
"As I bent forward, she put her tumbler on my knee to detain me, and said:

"Oh, Trot, Trot! And so you fancy yourself in love! Do you?"

"Fancy, aunt!" I exclaimed, as red as I could be. "I adore her with my whole soul!"

"Dora, indeed!" returned my aunt. "And you mean to say the little thing is very fascinating, I suppose?"

"My dear aunt," I replied, "no one can form the least idea what she is!"

"Ah! And not silly?" said my aunt.

"Silly, aunt!"

I seriously believe it had never once entered my head for a single moment to consider whether she was or not. I recited the idea, of course; but I was in a manner struck by it, as a new one altogether.

"Not light-headed?" said my aunt.

"Light-headed, aunt!" I could only repeat this daring speculation with the same kind of feeling with which I had repeated the preceding question.

"Well! well!" said my aunt. "I only ask. I don't depreciate her. Poor little couple! And so you think you were formed for one another, and are to go through a party-supper-table kind of life, like two pretty pieces of confectionery, do you, Trot?"

She asked me this so kindly, and with such a gentle air, half playful and half sorrowful, that I was quite touched.

"We are young and inexperienced, aunt, I know," I replied; "and I dare say we say and think a good deal that is rather foolish. But we love one another truly, I am sure. If I thought Dora could ever love anybody else, or cease to love me; or that I could ever love anybody else, or cease to love her; I don't know what I should do—go out of my mind, I think!"

"Ah, Trot!" said my aunt, shaking her head, and smiling gravely, "blind, blind, blind!"

"Some one that I know, Trot," my aunt pursued, after a pause, "though of a very pliant disposition, has an earnestness of affection in him that reminds me of poor baby. Earnestness is what that Somebody must look for, to sustain him and improve him, Trot. Deep, downright, faithful earnestness."

"If you only knew the earnestness of Dora, aunt!" I cried.

"Oh, Trot!" she said again: "blind, blind!" and without knowing why, I felt a vague unhappy loss or want of something overshadow me like a cloud.

"However," said my aunt, "I don't want to put two young creatures out of conceit with themselves, or to make them unhappy; so, though it is a girl and boy attachment, and girl and boy attachments very often—mind! I don't say always!—come to nothing, still we'll be serious about it, and hope for a prosperous issue one of these days. There's time enough for it to come to anything!"

This was not upon the whole very con to a rapturous lover; but I was glad to know that my aunt in my confidence, and I was minded being fatigued. So I thanked her for the careful way in which she spoke to me, and for all her kindnesses towards me; and after a little while, she took her nightcap into a room.

How miserable I was, when I lay down I thought of what I had been thinking. Mr. Spenlow's eyes; about my not being thought of at all; and then, the chivalrous necessity of telling Dora of a worldly condition was, and releasing her & engagement if she thought of it; and how I contrived to live, during the long term articles, when I was earning nothing; doing something to assist my aunt, and in a way of doing anything; about coming to have no money in my pocket, and to shabby coat, and to be able to carry Dora's presents, and to ride in a gallow grey, show myself in no agreeable light! So sullenly as I knew it was, and as I tortured by knowing that it was, to let my mind my own distress so much, I was so deep for Dora that I could not help it. I know that base in me not to think more of my aunt's of myself; but, as far, selfishness was lost to Dora, and I could not put Dora on it for any moral creature. How can miserable I was, that night!"

As to sleep, I had dreams of poverty sorts and shapes, but I seemed to dream the previous ceremony of going to sleep. This was a dream, and to sell Dora much more bundles for a halfpenny; now I was at in a night-gown and boots, remaining by Mr. Spenlow on appearing before the court that aly attire; now I was hungrily piling the crumbs that fell from old Tiffey's dish, regularly eaten when St. Paul's are served now. I was hopelessly endeavoring to get a to marry Dora, having nothing but one of Beep's gloves to offer in exchange, and whole Commons rejected; and, still more, conscious of my own room. I was always about like a distressed ship in a sea clothes.

My aunt was restless, too, for I first heard her walking to and fro. Two or times in the course of the night, attired in a flannel wrapper in which she looked set high, she appeared, like a disturbed ghost, and came to the side of the sofa I lay. On the first occasion I started up to learn that she inferred from a particular the sky, that Westminster Abbey was a and to be consulted in reference to the protection of its igniting Buckingham Street, in a wind. Lying still, after that, that she sat down near me, whispering to "Poor boy!" And then it made me times more wretched, to know how so
THE INEXORABLE JORKINS.

as of me, and how selfishly mindful
result to believe that a night so long
short to anybody else. This con-
time thinking and thinking of an-
y where people were dancing the
still that became a dream too, and I
iccessantly playing one tune,
Incessantly dancing one dance,
the least notice of me. The man
playing the harp all night, was try-
over it with an ordinary-sized
I awoke; or I should rather say,
trying to go to sleep, and saw the
through the window at last.

an old Roman bath in those days at
one of the streets out of the Strand
re still—in which I have been many
dressing myself as quietly as I
aving Peggotty to look after my
head foremost into it, and then
k to Hampstead. I had a hope
reatment might freshen my wits a
it did them good, for I soon
clusion that the first step I ought
try if my articles could be can-
premium recovered. I got some
be Heath, and walked back to
ons, along the watered roads and
ant smell of summer flowers,
rens and carried into town on
is, intent on this first effort to meet
stances.
the office so soon, after all, that I
's loitering about the Commons,
y, who was always first, appeared
Then I sat down in my shady cor-
at the sunlight on the opposite
and thinking about Dora; until
me in, crisp and curly.
ou, Copperfield?" said he. "Fine
morning, sir," said I. "Could I
ou before you go into Court?"
ans," said he. "Come into my
m into his room, and he began
town, and touching himself up be-
he had, hanging inside a closet
to say," said I, "that I have some
ning intelligence from my aunt." he.
"Dear me! Not paralysis,
ference to her health, sir," I re-
t met with some large losses. In
y little left, indeed."
and me, Copperfield!" cried Mr.
read. "Indeed, sir," said I, "her
changed, that I wish to ask you
uld be possible—at a sacrifice on
portion of the premium, of
this on the spur of the moment,
warned by the blank expression of his face—"to
cancel my articles!"

What it cost me to make this proposal, nobody
knows. It was like asking, as a favor, to be sen-
tenced to transportation from Dora.

"To cancel your articles, Copperfield. Can-
cel?"
I explained with tolerable firmness, that I
really did not know where my means of subsis-
tence were to come from, unless I could earn
them for myself. I had no fear for the future, I
said—and I laid great emphasis on that, as if to
imply that I should still be decidedly eligible for
a son-in-law one of these days—but, for the pre-
ent, I was thrown upon my own resources.

"I am extremely sorry to hear this, Copper-
field," said Mr. Spenlow. "Extremely sorry. It
is not usual to cancel articles for any such reason.
It is not a professional course of proceeding. It
is not a convenient precedent at all. Far from
it. At the same time—"

"You are very good, sir," I murmured, antici-
pating a concession.

"Not at all. Don't mention it," said Mr.
Spenlow. "At the same time, I was going to
say, if it had been my lot to have my hands un-
fettered—if I had not a partner—Mr. Jorkins—"
My hopes were dashed in a moment, but I
made another effort.

"Do you think, sir," said I, "if I were to
mention it to Mr. Jorkins—"
Mr. Spenlow shook his head discouragingly.
"Heaven forbid, Copperfield," he replied, "that
I should do any man an injustice; still less, Mr.
Jorkins. But I know my partner, Copperfield.
Mr. Jorkins is not a man to respond to a proposi-
tion of this peculiar nature. Mr. Jorkins is very
difficult to move from the beaten track. You
know what he is!"

I am sure I knew nothing about him, except
that he had originally been alone in the business,
and now lived by himself in a house near Montagu
Square, which was fearfully in want of painting;
that he came very late of a day, and went away
very early; that he never appeared to be consult-
ed about anything; and that he had a dingy little
black-hole of his own up-stairs, where no busi-
ness was ever done, and where there was a yellow
old cartridge-paper pad upon his desk, unsoiled
by ink, and reported to be twenty years of age.

"Would you object to my mentioning it to
him, sir?" I asked.

"By no means," said Mr. Spenlow. "But I
have some experience of Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield.
I wish it were otherwise, for I should be happy
to meet your views in any respect. I cannot
have the least objection to your mentioning it to
Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield, if you think it worth
while."

Availing myself of this permission, which was
given with a warm shake of the hand, I sat think-
ing about Dora, and looking at the sunlight steal-
ing from the chimney-pot down the wall of the
opposite house, until Mr. Jorkins came. A then
went up to Mr. Jorkins's room, and evidently astonished Mr. Jorkins very much by making my appearance there.

"Come in, Mr. Copperfield," said Mr. Jorkins.

"Come in!"

I went in, and sat down; and stated my case to Mr. Jorkins pretty much as I had stated it to Mr. Spenlow. Mr. Jorkins was not by any means the awful creature one might have expected, but a large, mild, smooth-faced man of sixty, who took so much snuff that there was a tradition in the Commons that he lived principally on that stimulant, having little room in his system for any other article of diet.

"You have mentioned this to Mr. Spenlow, I suppose?" said Mr. Jorkins, when he had heard me, very restlessly, to an end.

I answered Yes, and told him that Mr. Spenlow had introduced his name.

"He said I should object?" asked Mr. Jorkins.

I was obliged to admit that Mr. Spenlow had considered it probable.

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Copperfield, I can't advance your object," said Mr. Jorkins, nervous-

ly. "The fact is—but I have an appointment at the Bank, if you'll have the goodness to excuse me."

With that he rose in a great hurry, and was going out of the room, when I made bold to say that I feared, then, there was no way of arranging the matter.

"No!" said Mr. Jorkins, stopping at the door to shake his head. "Oh, no! I object, you know," which he said very rapidly, and went out. "You must be aware, Mr. Copperfield," he added, looking restlessly in at the door again, "if Mr. Spenlow objects—"

"Personally, he does not object, sir," said I.

"Oh! Personally!" repeated Mr. Jorkins, in an impatient manner. "I assure you there's an objection, Mr. Copperfield. Hopeless! What you wish to be done, can't be done. I—really have got an appointment at the Bank." With that he fairly ran away; and to the best of my knowledge it was three days before he showed himself in the Commons again.

Being very anxious to leave no stone unturned, I waited until Mr. Spenlow came in, and then described what had passed; giving him to understand that I was not hopeless of his being able to soften the adamantite Jorkins, if he would undertake the task.

"Copperfield," returned Mr. Spenlow, with a gracious smile, "you have not known my partner, Mr. Jorkins, as long as I have. Nothing is farther from my thoughts than to attribute any degree of artifice to Mr. Jorkins. But Mr. Jorkins has a way of stating his objections which often deceives people. No, Copperfield!" shaking his head. "Mr. Jorkins is not to be moved, believe me!"

I was completely bewildered between Mr. Spenlow and Mr. Jorkins, as to which of them really was the objecting partner; but I was sufficiently clear that there was nowhere in the firm, and that there my aunt's thousand pounds was out of action. In a state of despondency, which I'm sure with anything but satisfaction, for still had too much reference to myself to always in connexion with Dora, I left and went homeward.

I was trying to familiarise my mind with the worst, and to present to myself the arrears we should have to make for the future sternest aspect, when a hackney chaise met me, and stopping at my very window, I was instantly made to look up. A fair hand was forth to me from the window; and the face never seen without a feeling of serenity in it, from the moment it first revealed itself in the old oak staircase with the green balustrade, and when I associated in beauty with the stained glass window over the church, was smiling on me.

"Agnes!" I joyfully exclaimed. "Dear Agnes, of all people in the world, I am so glad to see you!"

"Is it, indeed?" she said, in her common way. "I want to talk to you so much!"

"It's such a lightening of my heart, out at you! If I had had a confidante's cap, no one I should have wished for but you."

"What?" returned Agnes.


"But you next!" said I. "Where going?"

She was going to my rooms to see me. The day being very fine, she was going out of the chaise, which smelt (I had made it all this time) like a stable put under her frame. She dismissed the coachman, took my arm, and we walked on together, one like Hope embodied, to me. How I felt in one short minute, having Agnes by side!

My aunt had written her one of abrupt notes—very little longer than a post note—to which her epistolary efforts were limited. She had stated therein that she had fallen into adversity, and was leaving it good, but had quite made up her mind I was so well that nobody need be much about her. Agnes had come to London the day after my aunt, between whom and herself there had been a mutual liking these many years; dated from the time of my taking up my seat in Mr. Wickfield's house. She was not said. Her papa was with her—and Uriah Heep.

"And now they are partners," said I found him!"

"Yes," said Agnes, "They have some good news here; and I took advantage of that to come too. You must not think in
Dear Agnes!

I am IS interested, Trotwood, for—I am cruelly prejudiced—I do not like to say it, alone, with him.”

She exercise the same influence over me, Agnes!” she said, and knuckled her head. “There is such a feeling, I said she, “that you would like the dear old house. They live there, and I love them. We had the ordering of his dreams,” she said, “I couldn’t sleep there long.”

“Why the own little room,” said Agnes, “I could not learn my lessons. How the you remember? The little panelled room from the drawing-room?”

“Agnes? When I saw you, for your coming out at the door, with your ket of keys hanging at your side?”

“I am the same,” said Agnes, smiling. “I think of it so pleasantly. We are, indeed,” said I.

“Trotwood to myself still; but I cannot bear Mrs. Hoop, you know. And I truly, “I feel obliged to hear when I might prefer to be alone.

Other reason to complain of her, sometimes, by her praises of her natural in a mother. He is a very .

Agnes when she said these words, ting in her any consciousness of her mild but earnest eyes met her own beautiful frankness, and her in her gentle face.

Of their presence in the Agnes, “is that I cannot be as could wish—Uriah Hoop ‘being so us—and cannot watch over him, if bold a thing to say, as closely as I if any flesh or treachery is prach him, I hope that simple love and tranger, in the end. I hope that with are stronger in the end than fortune in the world.”

Right smile, which I never saw on, died away, even while I thought of it, and how familiar it had once and she asked me, with a quick presison (we were drawing very ins), if I knew how the reverse in my instances had been brought about. No, she had not told me yet, thoughtfully, and I fancied I felt her mine.

My aunt alone, in a state of some difference of opinion had aisen and Mrs. Crupp, on an abstract propriety of chambers being inhabiting sex; and my aunt, utterly in-

different to spasms on the part of Mrs. Crupp, had cut the dispute short, by informing that lady that she smelt of my brandy, and that she would trouble her to walk out. Both of these expressions Mrs. Crupp considered actionable, and had expressed her intention of bringing before a "British Jury"—meaning, it was supposed, the bulwark of our national liberties.

My aunt, however, having had time to cool, while Peggotty was out showing Mr. Dick the soldiers at the Horse Guards—and being, besides, greatly pleased to see Agnes—rather plumed herself on the affair than otherwise, and received us with unimpaired good-humor. When Agnes laid her bonnet on the table, and sat down beside her, I could not but think, looking on her mild eyes and her radiant forehead, how natural it seemed to have her there: how trustfully, although she was so young and inexperienced, my aunt confided in her; how strong she was, indeed, in simple love and truth.

We began to talk about my aunt’s losses, and I told them what I had tried to do that morning.

"Which was injudicious, Trot," said my aunt, "but well meant. You are a generous boy—" I suppose I must say, young man, now—and I am proud of you, my dear. So far so good. Now, Trot and Agnes, let us look the case of Betsey Trotwood in the face, and see how it stands."

I observed Agnes turn pale, as she looked very attentively at my aunt. My aunt, patting her cat, looked very attentively at Agnes.

"Betsey Trotwood," said my aunt, who had always kept her money matters to herself: "—I don’t mean your sister, Trot, my dear, but myself—had a certain property. It don’t matter how much; enough to live on. More; for she had saved a little, and added to it. Betsey funded her property for some time, and then, by the advice of her man of business, laid it out on landed security. That did very well, and returned very good interest, till Betsey was paid off. I am talking of Betsey as if she was a man-of-war. Well! Then, Betsey had to look about her, for a new investment. She thought she was wiser, now, than her man of business, who was not such a good man of business by this time, as he used to be—I am alluding to your father, Agnes—and she took it into her head to lay it out for herself. So she took her pigs," said my aunt, "to a foreign market; and a very bad market it turned out to be. First, she lost in the mining way, and then she lost in the diving way—dashing up treasure, or some such Tom Titler nonsense," explained my aunt, rubbing her nose; "and then she lost in the mining way again, and, last of all, to set the thing entirely to rights, she lost in the banking way. I don’t know what the Bank shares were worth for a little while," said my aunt; "cent per cent was the lowest of it, I believe; but the Bank was at the other end of the world, and tumbled into space, for what I know; anyhow, it fell to pieces, and never will and never can pay sixpence; and Betsey’s sixpence was..."
all there, and there's an end of them. Least
said, soonest mended!"

My aunt concluded this philosophical summary
by fixing her eyes with a kind of triumph on
Agnes, whose color was gradually returning.

"Dear Miss Trotwood, is that all the his-
tory?" said Agnes.

"I hope it's enough, child," said my aunt.
"If she had had a more easy way to lose, it wouldn't
have been all, I dare say. Betsey would have
contrived to throw that after the rest, and make
another chapter, I have little doubt. But, there
was no more money, and there's no more story."

Agnes had listened at first with suspended
breath. Her color still came and went, but she
breathed more freely. I thought I knew why.
I thought she had had some fear that her unhappy
father might be in some way to blame for what
had happened. My aunt took her hand in hers,
and laughed.

"Is that all?" repeated my aunt. "Why,
yes, that's all, except, 'And she lived happy ever
afterwards.' Perhaps I may add that of Betsey
yet, one of these days. Now, Agnes, you have a
wise head. So have you, Trot, in some things,
though I can't compliment you always;" and here
my aunt shook her own at me, with an energy
peculiar to herself.

"What's to be done? Here's the
cottage, taking one time with another, will
produce, say seventy pounds a-year. I think we
may safely put it down at that. Well!—That's
all we've got," said my aunt; with which it was
an idiosyncrasy, as it is with some horses, to stop
very short when she appeared to be in a fair way
of going on for a long while.

"Then," said my aunt, after a rest, "there's
Dick. He's good for a hundred a-year, but of
course that must be expended on himself. I
would sooner send him away, though I know I
am the only person who appreciates him, than
have him, and not spend his money on himself.
How can Trot and I do best, upon our means?
What do you say, Agnes?"

"If say, Trot," I interposed, "that I must do
something!"

"Go for a soldier, do you mean?" returned
my aunt, alarmed; "or go to sea? I won't hear
of it. You are to be a proctor. We're not going
to have any knockings on the head in this family,
if you please, sir."

I was about to explain that I was not desirous
of introducing that mode of provision into the
family, when Agnes inquired if my rooms were
held for any long term?

"You come to the point, my dear," said my
aunt. "They are not to be got rid of, for six
months at least, unless they could be underlet,
and that I don't believe. The last man died here.
Five people out of six would die—of course—of
that woman in nankeen with the flannel pettican.
I have a little ready money; and I agree with you,
the best thing we can do is to live the term out
here, and get Dick a bed-room hard by."

I thought it my duty to hint at the discomfort
my aunt would sustain, from living in a state of
guerilla warfare with Mrs. Cr
e; she disposed of that objection summar-
ely, that, on the first demonstration
the rest of the whole remainder of her natural

"I have been thinking, Trotwood," he
said, "that if you had time—"

"I have a good deal of time, Agnes always
disengaged after four or five o'clock have
time early in the morning. In one
another," said I, conscious of rededd
I thought of the hours and hours I had s
flagging about town, and to and fro upon
wood Road, "I have abundance of time."

"I know you would not mind," said
coming to me, and speaking in a low
full of sweet and hopeful consideration,
hear it now, "the duties of a secretary."

"Mind, my dear Agnes?"

"Because," said Agnes, "Doctor
had acted on his intention of retiring,
come to live in London; and he asked
know, if he could recommend him one
think he would rather have his fixed
pupil near him, than anybody else?"

"Dear Agnes!" said I. "What shall
without you! You are always my guide;
I told you so. I never think of you in
light."

Agnes answered with her pleasant
one good Angel (meaning Dora) was sent
going on to remind me that the Doctor
used to occupy himself in his study, ear
morning, and in the evening—and that
my leisure would suit his requirements
I was scarcely more delighted with the
of earning my own bread, than with the
earning it under my old master; in short
the advice of Agnes, I sat down and
letter to the Doctor, stating my object,
pointing to call on him next day at ten
afternoon. This I addressed to Highgate
place, so memorable to me, he went
posted, myself, without losing
Wherever Agnes was, some agreeable
her noiseless presence seemed insepar-
place. When I came back, I found a
birds hanging, just as they had hung at
parlor window of the cottage; and
chair imitating my aunt's much vaster
position at the open window; and even the
green fan, which my aunt had brought av-
her, screwed on to the window-sill. I had
done all this, by its seeming to have
done itself; and I should have known I
ment who had arranged my neglect to
the old order of my school days, even I
supposed Agnes to be miles away, instan-
her busy with them, and smiling at
order into which they had fallen.

My aunt was quite gracious on the
the Thames (it really did look very well
"upper it, though not like this!" was t
she could not relent towards the
ke, which, she said, "peppered
A complete revolution, in which
a prominent part, was being effected
er of my rooms, in regard of this
I was looking on, thinking how
ag-goty seemed to do with a good
, and how much Agnes did without
all, when a knock came at the door.
""I am Agnes," turning pale, "he’s
missed me that he would come," he
door, and admitted, not only Mr.
Uriah Heep. I had not seen Mr.
some time. I was prepared for a
in him, after what I had heard from
appearance shocked me.
that he looked many years older,
cessed with the old scrupulous clean-
t was an unwholesome ruddi-
; or that his eyes were full and
; that there was a nervous trembling
cause of which I knew, and had
seen at work. It was not that he
good looks, or his old bearing of a
or that he had not—but the thing
most was, that with the evidences
uperiority still upon him, he should
 to that crawling impersonation of
Heep. The reversal of the two
positions, Uriah’s of
Wickfield’s of dependence, was a
s unfelt to me than I can express. If I
Ape taking command of a Man, I
have thought it a more degrading
ed to be only too conscious of it
en he came in, he stood still; and
bowed, as if he felt it. This was
ment; for Agnes softly said to him,
Miss Trotwood—and Trotwood,
ve not seen for a long while!” and
ached, and constrainedly gave my
, and shook hands more cordially
the moment’s pause I speak of, I
 tunence form itself into a most
. Agnes saw it too, I think, for
him.
unt saw, or did not see, I defy the
ysiology to have made out, with-
ent. I believe there never was
such an imperceptible countenance
. Her face might have been a
the occasion in question, for any
upon her thoughts; until she broke
her usual abruptness.
wickfield!” said my aunt; and he
er for the first time. "I have been
laughter how well I have been dis-
money for myself, because I couldn’t
as you were growing rusty in busi-
We have been taking counsel to-
etting on very well, all things con-
ies is worth the whole firm, in my
"If I may umblly make the remark," said Uriah
Heep, with a writhe, "I fully agree with Miss
Betsey Trotwood, and should be only too appy if
Miss Agnes was a partner."
"You’re a partner yourself, you know," re-
turned my aunt, "and that’s about enough for
you, I expect. How do you find yourself, sir?"
In acknowledgment of this question, addressed
to him with extraordinary curtness, Mr. Heep,
uncomfortably clutching the blue bag he carried,
replied that he was pretty well, he thanked my
aunt, and hoped she was the same.
"And you, Master—I should say, Mister Cop-
perfield," pursued Uriah. "I hope I see you
well! I am rejoiced to see you, Mister Copper-
field, even under present circumstances." I be-
lieved that; for he seemed to relish them very
much. "Present circumstances is not what your
friends would wish for you, Mister Copperfield,
but it isn’t money makes the man: It’s—I am
really unequal with my umble powers to express
what it is," said Uriah, with a fawning jerk, "but
it isn’t money!"
Here he shook hands with me: not in the com-
mon way, but standing at a good distance from
me, and lifting my hand up and down like a pum-
handle, that he was a little afraid of.
"And how do you think we are looking,
Master Copperfield,—I should say, Mister?" fa-
waded Uriah. "Don’t you find Mr. Wickfield
blooming, sir? Years don’t tell much in our
firm, Master Copperfield, except in raising up the
umble, namely, mother and self—and in develop-
ing," he added, as an after thought, "the beauti-
ful, namely, Miss Agnes."
He jerked himself about, after this compli-
ment, in such an intolerable manner, that my
aunt, who had sat looking straight at him, lost all
patience.
"Dence take the man!" said my aunt, sternly,
"what’s he about? Don’t be galvanic, sir!"
"I ask your pardon, Miss Trotwood," returned
Uriah; "I’m aware you’re nervous."
"Go along with you, sir!" said my aunt, any-
thing but appeased. "Don’t presume to say so!
I am nothing of the sort. If you’re an elo, sir,
contact yourself like one. If you’re a man, con-
trol your limbs, sir! Good God!" said my aunt,
with great indignation, "I am not going to be
serpentined and corkscrewed out of my senses!"
Mr. Heep was rather abashed, as most people
might have been, by this explosion; which de-
vided great additional force from the indignant
manner in which my aunt afterwards moved in
her chair, and shook her head as if she were
making snaps or bounces at him. But, he said to
me aside in a meek voice:
"I am well aware, Master Copperfield, that
Miss Trotwood, though an excellent lady, has a
quick temper (indeed I think I had the pleasure
of knowing her, when I was an umble clerk, be-
fore you did, Master Copperfield), and it’s only
natural, I am sure, that it should be made quicker
by present circumstances. The wonder is, that
DAVID COPPERFIELD.

It isn’t much worse! I only called to say that if there was anything we could do, in present circumstances, mother or self, or Wickfield and Sheer, we should be really glad. I may go so far,” said Uriah, with a sickly smile at his partner.

“Uriah Heep,” said Mr. Wickfield, in a monotonous forced way, “is active in the business, Trotwood.”

“Very so, indeed,” he says, “quite concor in. You know I had an old interest in you. Apart from that, what Uriah says I quite concur in!”

“Oh, what a reward it is,” said Uriah, drawing up one leg, at the risk of bringing down upon himself another visitation from my aunt, “to be so trusted in! But I hope I am able to do something to relieve him from the fatigue of business, Master Copperfield!”

“Uriah Heep is a great relief to me,” said Mr. Wickfield, in the same dull voice. “It’s a load off my mind, Trotwood, to have such a partner.”

The red fox made him say all this, I knew, to exhibit him to me in the light he had indicated on the night when he poisoned my rest. I saw the same ill-favored smile upon his face again, and saw how he watched me.

“You are not going, papa?” said Agnes, anxiously. “Will you not walk back with Trotwood and me?”

He would have looked to Uriah, I believe, before replying, if that worthy had not anticipated him.

“I am bespoken myself,” said Uriah, “on business; otherwise I should have been happy to have kept with my friends. But I leave my partner to represent me. Miss Agnes, ever yours! I wish you good-day, Master Copperfield, and leave my humble respects for Miss Betsey Trotwood.”

With those words, he retired, kissing his great hand, and leering at us like a mask.

We sat there, talking about our pleasant old Canterbury days, an hour or two. Mr. Wickfield, left to Agnes, soon became more like his former self, though there was a settled depression upon him, which he never shook off. For all that, he brightened; and had an evident pleasure in hearing us recall the little incidents of our old life, many of which he remembered very well. He said it was like those times, to be alone with Agnes and me again; and he wished to Heaven they had never changed. I am sure there was an influence in the placid face of Agnes, and in the very touch of her hand upon his arm, that did wonders for him.

My aunt (who was busy nearly all this while with Peggoty, in the inner room) would not accompany us to the place where they were staying, but insisted on my going; and I went. We dined together. After dinner, Agnes sat beside him, as of old, and poured out his wine. He took what she gave him, and no more—a child—and we all three sat together at a window as the evening gathered in. When it was almost dark, he lay down on a sofa, Agnes pillowing his head and bending over him a little while; and when she came back to the window, it was not so I could see tears glittering in her eyes.

I pray Heaven that I never may forget girl in her love and truth, at that time of day, if I should, I must be drawing near and then I would desire to remember her. She filled my heart with such good and strengthening my weakness so, by her so directed—I knew not how, she was too womanly and gentle to advise me in many ways of loving and unsettled purposes, that all the little good I have done, as a harm I have forborne, I solemnly believe to refer to her.

And how she spoke to me of Dora, of the window in the dark; listened to me of her; praised again; and round the house figure shed some glimpse of her own past, that made it yet more precious and more real to me! Oh, Agnes, sister of my boyhood, had known then, what I knew long after.

There was a beggar in the street, who came down; and as I turned my head toward the window, thinking of her calm scrupulousness, made me start with uttering, as if he were of the morning:

“Blind! Blind! Blind!”

CHAPTER XXXVII.
ENTHUSIASM.

I began the next day with another the Roman bath, and then started for Rome. I was not so shabby a mount as I had been in the street. My whole manner of thinking of misfortune was altered. What I had to show my aunt that past goodness had not been thrown away on an insensible grateful object. What I had to show was the patient discipline of my younger days, by going to work with a read steady heart. What I had to do, was, to woodman’s axe in my hand, and clear way through the forest of difficulty, by down the trees until I came to Rome. As soon as I had no habit, and I might be walking.

When I found myself on the familiar road, pursuing such a different errand in old one of pleasure, with which it was new seemed as if it were complete change had my whole life. But that did not disturb With the new life, came new purpose, a resolution. Great was the labor; priceless the Dora was the reward, and Dora must be Rome.

I got into such a transport, that for I was sorry my coat was not a little shabby she wanted to be cutting at those trees in the of difficulty, under circumstances that prove my strength. I had a good mind to old man, in wise spectacles, who was looking stones upon the road, to bend me his head a little while, and let me begin to bear. 
granite. I stimulated myself into and got so out of breath, that I felt seen earning I don't know how much.

, I went into a cottage that I saw was examined it narrowly,—for I felt it to be practical. It would do for me imminently: with a little front garden in about in, and bark at the trades-

ugh the railings, and a capital room my aunt. I came out again, hotter an ever, and dashed up to Highgate, so that I was there an hour too early:

I had not been, should have been roll about to cool myself, before I was table.

care, after putting myself under this curse of preparation, was to find the case. It was not in that part of were Mrs. Steereuor lived, but quiet-" side of the little town. When I its discovery, I went back, in an at-I could not resist, to a lane by Mrs. and looked over the corner of the His room was shut up close. The doors were standing open, and Rosa walking, bareheaded, with a quick im-

up and down a gravel walk on one awn. She gave me the idea of some that was dragging the length of its fro upon a beaten track, and wearing fly away from my place of observa-

bility that part of the neighborhood, I had not gone near it, strolled about ten o'clock. The church with the e, that stands on the top of the hill there then to tell me the time. An mans, used as a school, was in a fine old house it must have been sold at, as I recollect it.

approached the Doctor's cottage—a ace, on which he seemed to have ex-

money, if I might judge from the nts and repairs that had the look of completed—I saw him walking in the se side, gaits and all, as if he had 'walking since the days of my pupil his old companions about him, too; re plenty of high trees in the neigh-

two or three rooks were on the ng after him, as if they had been about him by the Canterbury rooks, observing him closely in conse-

the utter hopelessness of attracting from that distance, I made bold to e, and walk after him, so as to meet shound turn round. When he did, wards me, he looked at me thought-

w moments, evidently without think-
et all; and then his benevolent face extraordinary pleasure, and he took

"Dear Copperfield," said the doctor;

"you are a man! How do you do? I am de-

lighted to see you. My dear Copperfield, how very much you have improved! You are quite—yes—dear me!"

I hoped he was well, and Mrs. Strong too.

"Oh dear, yes!" said the doctor; "Annie's quite well, and she'll be delighted to see you. You were always her favorite. She said so, last night, when I showed her your letter. And—yes, to be sure—you recollect Mr. Jack Maldon, Copperfield?"

"Perfectly, sir."

"Of course," said the Doctor. "To be sure. He's pretty well, too."

"Has he come home, sir?" I inquired.

"From India?" said the Doctor. "Yes. Mr. Jack Maldon couldn't bear the climate, my dear. Mrs. Markleham—you have not forgotten Mrs. Markleham?"

Forgotten the Old Soldier! And in that short time!

"Mrs. Markleham," said the Doctor, "was quite vexed about him, poor thing; so we have got him at home again; and we have bought him a little Patent place, which agrees with him much better."

I knew enough of Mr. Jack Maldon to suspect from this account that it was a place where there was not much to do, and which was pretty well paid. The Doctor, walking up and down with his hand on my shoulder, and his kind face turned encouragingly to mine, went on:

"Now, my dear Copperfield, in reference to this proposal of yours. It's very gratifying and agreeable to me, I am sure; but don't you think you could do better. You achieved distinction, you know, when you were with us. You are qualified for many good things. You have laid a foundation that any edifice may be raised upon: and is it not a pity that you should devote the spring-time of your life to such a poor pursuit as I can offer?"

I became very glowing again, and, expressing myself in a rhapsodial style, I am afraid, urged my request strongly: reminding the Doctor that I had already a profession.

"Well, well," returned the Doctor, "that's true. Certainly, your having a profession, and being actually engaged in studying it, makes a difference. But, my good young friend, what's seventy pounds a-year?"

"It doubles our income, Doctor Strong," said I.

"Dear me!" replied the Doctor. "To think of that! Not that I mean to say it's rigidly limited to seventy pounds a-year, because I have always contemplated making any young friend I might thus employ, a present too. Undoubtedly," said the Doctor, still walking me up and down with his hand on my shoulder. "I have always taken an annual present into account."

"My dear tutor," said I (now, really, without any nonsense), "to whom I owe more obligations already than I ever can acknowledge—"
"No, no," interposed the Doctor. "Pardon me!"

"If you will take such time as I have, and that is my mornings and evenings, and can think it worth seventy pounds a-year, you will do me such a service as I cannot express."

"Dear me!" said the Doctor, innocently. "To think that so little should go for so much! Dear, dear! And when you can do better, you will? On your word, now?" said the Doctor,—which he had always made a very grave appeal to the honor of us boys.

"On my word, sir!" I returned, answering in our old school manner.

"Then be it so," said the Doctor, clapping me on the shoulder, and still keeping his hand there, as we still walked up and down.

"And I shall be twenty times happier, sir," said I, with a little—I hope innocent—flattery, "if my employment is to be on the Dictionary."

The Doctor stopped, smilingly slapped me on the shoulder again, and exclaimed, with a triumph most delightful to behold, as if I had penetrated to the profoundest depths of mortal sagacity; "My dear young friend, you have hit it. It is the Dictionary."

How could it be anything else? His pockets were as full of it as his head. It was sticking out of him in all directions. He told me that since his retirement from scholastic life, he had been advancing with it wonderfully; and that nothing could suit him better than the proposed arrangement for morning and evening work, as it was his custom to walk about in the day-time with his considering cap on. His papers were in a little confusion, in consequence of the Doctor's efforts more troublesome to me than I had expected, as he had not confined himself to making numerous mistakes, but had scribbled so many soldiers, and ladies' heads, over the Doctor's manuscript, that I often became involved in labyrinths of obscurity.

The Doctor was quite happy in the prospect of our going to work together on that wonderful performance, and we settled to begin next morning at seven o'clock. We were to work two hours every morning, and two or three hours every night, except on Saturdays, when I was to rest. On Sundays, of course, I was to rest also, and I considered these very easy terms.

Our plans being thus arranged to our mutual satisfaction, the Doctor took me into the house to present me to Mrs. Strong, whom we found in the Doctor's new study, dusting his books,—a freedom which he never permitted anybody else to take with those sacred favorites.

They had postponed their breakfast on my account, and we sat down to table together. We had not been seated long, when I saw an approach-
I WORK FEROICIUSLY.

looking at her cousin, she then ad-
and asked me about Agnes, and
should see her, and whether she was
come that day; and was so much dis-
I wondered how even the Doctor,
toast, could be blind to what was so

lew nothing. He told her, good-naturedly
she was young and ought to be enter-
teained, and must not allow herself
to be dull by a dull old fellow. More-
he wanted to hear her sing all the
songs to him; and how could she do
ess she went? So the Doctor per-
ring the engagement for her, and Mr.
was to come back to dinner. This
went to his Patent place, I sup-
all events went away on his horse, idle.

ous to find out next morning, whether
. She had not, but had sent into
her cousin off; and had gone out
soon to see Agnes, and had prevailed
ctor to go with her; and they had
by the fields, the Doctor told me,
being delightful. I wondered then,
would have gone if Agnes had not,
, and whether Agnes had some good
reason for her too!

at look very happy, I thought, but it
face, or a very false one. I often
for she sat in the window all the
time at work; and made our breakfast,
by snatches as we were employed.
at nine o'clock, she was kneeling on
at the Doctor's feet, putting on his
letters for him. There was a softened
her face, thrown from some green
glassing the open window of the low
thought all the way to Doctors' Com-

night when I had seen it looking at

ly busy now; up at five in the morn-
get at nine or ten at night. But I had
action in being so closely engaged,
ked slowly on any account, and felt
ly that the more I tired myself, the
longing to deserve Dora. I had not re-
't in my altered character to Dora yet;
was coming to see Miss Mills in a
l I deferred all I had to tell her until
informing her in my letters (all our
oms were secretly forwarded through
hat I had much to tell her. In the
put myself on a short allowance of
, wholly abandoned scented soap and
r, and sold off three waistcoats at a
rs, as being too luxurious for my

ed with all these proceedings, but
impatience to do something more, I
Traddles, now lodging up behind the
house in Castle street, Holborn. Mr.
I been with me to Highgate twice

already, and had resumed his companionship with
the Doctor, I took with me.

I took Mr. Dick with me, because, acutely sen-
sitive to my aunt's reverses, and sincerely believ-
ing that no galley-slave or convict worked as I
did, he had begun to fret and worry himself out
of spirits and appetite, as having nothing useful
to do. In this condition, he felt more incapable
of finishing the Memorial than ever; and the
harder he worked at it, the oftener that unlucky
head of King Charles the First got into it. Se-
riously apprehending that his malady would in-
crease, unless we put some innocent deception
upon him and caused him to believe that he was
useful, or unless we could put him in the way of
being really useful (which would be better), I
made up my mind to try if Traddles could help
us. Before we went, I wrote Traddles a full
statement of all that had happened, and Traddles
wrote me back a capital answer, expressive of his
sympathy and friendship.

We found him hard at work with his inkstand
and papers, refreshed by the sight of the flower-
pot-stand and the little round table in a corner of
the small apartment. He received us cordially,
and made friends with Mr. Dick in a moment.
Mr. Dick professed an absolute certainty of hav-
ing seen him before, and we both said, "Very
likely."

The first subject on which I had to consult
Traddles was this. — I had heard that many men
distinguished in various pursuits had begun life
by reporting the debates in Parliament. Traddles
having mentioned newspapers to me, as one of
his hopes, I had put the two things together, and
told Traddles in my letter that I wished to know
how I could qualify myself for this pursuit. Trad-
dles now informed me, as the result of his in-
quiries, that the mere mechanical acquisition nec-
essary, except in rare cases, for thorough
excellence in it, that is to say, a perfect and entire
command of the mystery of short-hand writing
and reading, was about equal in difficulty to the
mastery of six languages; and that it might per-
haps be attained, by dint of perseverance, in the
course of a few years. Traddles reasonably sup-
posed that this would settle the business; but I,
only feeling that there indeed were a few tall trees
to be hewn down, immediately resolved to work
my way on to Dora through this thicket, axe in
hand.

"I am very much obliged to you, my dear
Traddles!" said I. "I'll begin to-morrow."
Traddles looked astonished, as he well might;
but he had no notion as yet of my rapturous con-
dition.

"I'll buy a book," said I, "with a good scheme
of this art in it; I'll work at it at the Commons,
where I haven't half enough to do; I'll take down
the speeches in our court for practice—Traddles,
my dear fellow, I'll master it!"

"Dear me," said Traddles, opening his eyes,
"I had no idea you were such a determined char-
acter, Copperfield!"
As I bent forward, she put her tumbler on my knee to detain me, and said:

"Oh, Trot, Trot! And so you fancy yourself in love! Do you?"

"Fancy, aunt!" I exclaimed, as red as I could be. "I adore her with my whole soul!"

"Dora, indeed!" returned my aunt. "And you mean to say the least thing is very fascinating, I suppose?"

"My dear aunt," I replied, "no one can form the least idea what she is!"

"Ah! And not silly?" said my aunt.

"Silly, aunt!"

I sincerely believe it had never once entered my head for a single moment, to consider whether she was or not. I resisted the idea, of course; but I was in a manner struck by it, as a new one altogether.

"Not light-headed?" said my aunt.

"Light-headed, aunt!" I could only repeat this daring speculation with the same kind of feeling with which I had repeated the preceding question.

"Well! well!" said my aunt. "I only ask. I don't depreciate her. Poor little couple! And so you think you were formed for one another, and are to go through a party-ropper-table kind of life, like two pretty pieces of confectionery, do you, Trot?"

She asked me this so kindly, and with such a gentle air, half playful and half sorrowful, that I was quite touched.

"We are young and inexperienced, aunt, I know," I replied; "and I dare say we say and think a good deal that is rather foolish. But we love one another truly, I am sure. If I thought Dora could ever love anybody else, or cease to love me; or that I could ever love anybody else, or cease to love her; I don't know what I should do—go out of my mind, I think!"

"Ah, Trot!" said my aunt, shaking her head, and smiling gravely. "blind, blind, blind!"

"Some one that I know, Trot," my aunt pursued, after a pause, "though of a very pious disposition, has an earnestness of affection in him that reminds me of poor Baby. Earnestness is what that Somebody must look for, to sustain him and improve him, Trot. Deep, downright, faithful earnestness."

"If you only knew the earnestness of Dora, aunt!" I cried.

"Oh, Trot!" she said again; "blind, blind!" and without knowing why, I felt a vague unhappy loss or want of something overshadow me like a cloud.

"However," said my aunt, "I don't want to put two young creatures out of conceit with themselves, or to make them unhappy; so, though it is a girl and boy attachment, and girl and boy attachments very often—mind! I don't say always!—come to nothing, still we'll be serious about it, and hope for a prosperous issue one of these days. There's time enough for it to come to anything!"

This was not upon the whole very con to a rapturous lover; but I was glad to aunt in my confidence, and I was mind being fatigued. So I thanked her for this mark of her affection, and for all kindnesses towards me; and after a ten night, she took her nocturne into room.

How miserable I was, when I lay do I thought and thought about my bed. Mr. Spew's eyes; about my not but thought I was, when I proposed to Do the chivalrous necessity of telling Dora worldly condition was, and releasing her engagement if she thought fit; about how contrive to live, during the long ter articles, when I was earning nothing doing something to assist my aunt, and way of doing anything; about coming have no money in my pocket, and a shabby coat, and to be able to carry Dora presents, and to ride no gallant grey show myself in no agreeable light; & selfish as I knew it was, and as I took by knowing that it was, to let my own my own distress so much, I was so do Dora that I could not help it. I knew not base in me not to think more of my own of myself; but, so far, selfishness was it from Dora, and I could not put Dora on for any mortal creature. How ex miserable I was, that night!

As to sleep, I had dreams of pretty sorts and shapes, but I seemed to dream the previous ceremony of going to sleep was not only, wanting to sell Dora marble bundles for a halfpenny; now I was at in a night-gown and boots, remonstrating by Mr. Spew's on appearing before the that alry attire; now I was hungrily pulling the crumps that fell from old Lifsey's cult, regularly eaten when St. Paul's was, and I was hopelessly endeavoring to get to marry Dora, having nothing but one Keep's gloves to offer in exchange, whole Commons rejected; and still, no in consious of my own room, I was always about like a distressed ship in a sea clothes.

My aunt was restless, too, for I heard her walking to and fro. Two times in the course of the night, attired flannel wrapper in which she looked rather high, she appeared, like a disturbed ghost, and came to the side of the sofa I lay. On the first occasion I started up to learn that she inferred from a particular the sky, that Westminster Abbey was and to be consulted in reference to the plan of its burning Buckingham Street, in wind changed. Lying so still, after that she came down near me, whispering "Poor boy!" And then it made it times more wretched, to know how
she was of me, and how selfishly mindful myself.

It is difficult to believe that a night so long could be short to anybody else. This con-
nection set me thinking and thinking of an evening party where people were dancing the
night away, until that became a dream too, and I fell asleep incessantly playing one tune,
Dora incessantly dancing one dance, taking the least notice of me. The man
was being harped all night, was tried
to cover it with an ordinary-sized guitar when I woke; or I should rather say,
told off trying to go to sleep, and saw the thing in through the window at last.

was an old Roman bath in those days at
one of the streets out of the Strand to
be there still—in which I have been many
a time. Dressing myself as quietly as I could leaving Peggotty to look after my
humbled head foremost into it, and then
walk a walk to Hampstead. I had a hope
brisk treatment might freshen my wits a
lot. I think it did them good, for I soon
concluded that the first step I ought
was to try if my articles could be can-
tained the premium recovered. I got some
on the Heath, and walked back to Commons, along the watered roads and
a pleasant smell of summer flowers.
In gardens and carried into town on
heads, intent on this first effort to meet
ed at the office so soon, after all, that I
an hour's loitering about the Commons, I Tiffey, who was always first, appeared
key. Then I sat down in my shady cor-
ging up at the sunlight on the opposite
pots, and thinking about Dora; until
low came in, crisp and curvy.

"are you, Copperfield?" said he. "Fine
day of a stifling morning, sir," said I. "Could I
do to you before you go into Court?"
"all means," said he. "Come into my
wed him into his room, and he began
to be his gown, and touching himself up be-
to glass he had, hanging inside a closet

sad to say," said I, "that I have some
shattering intelligence from my aunt."
"said he. "Dear me! Not paralysis,
no reference to her health, sir," I re-
Sh равes met with some large losses. In
has very little left, indeed."

as found me, Copperfield!" cried Mr.
and my head. "Indeed, sir," said I, "her
so changed, that I wish to ask you
it would be possible—at a sacrifice on
port of the premium, of
of the premium, of
of the premium, of

What I cost me to make this proposal, nobody
knows. It was like asking, as a favor, to be sent-
tenced to transportation from Dora.

"To cancel your articles, Copperfield. Can-
cel?"

I explained with tolerable firmness, that I
really did not know where my means of subsis-
tence were to come from, unless I could earn
them for myself. I had no fear for the future, I
said—and I laid great emphasis on that, as if to
imply that I should still be decidedly eligible for a
son-in-law one of these days—but, for the present,
I was thrown upon my own resources.

"I am extremely sorry to hear this, Copper-
field," said Mr. Spenlow. "Extremely sorry. It
is not usual to cancel articles for any such reason.
It is not a professional course of proceeding. It
is not a convenient precedent at all. Far from
it. At the same time—"

"You are very good, sir," I murmured, antici-
pating a concession.

"Not at all. Don't mention it," said Mr.
Spenlow. "At the same time, I was going to
say, if it had been my lot to have my hands un-
shackled—if I had not a partner—Mr. Jorkins—"
My hopes were dashed in a moment, but I
made another effort.

"Do you think, sir," said I, "if I were to
mention it to Mr. Jorkins—"

Mr. Spenlow shook his head discouragingly.

"Heaven forbid, Copperfield," he replied, "that
I should do any man an injustice; still less, Mr.
Jorkins. But I know my partner, Copperfield.
Mr. Jorkins is not a man to respond to a propos-
tion of this peculiar nature. Mr. Jorkins is very
difficult to move from the beaten track. You
know what he is!"

I am sure I knew nothing about him, except
that he had originally been alone in the business,
and now lived by himself in a house near Montagu
Square, which was fearfully in want of painting;
that he came very late of a day, and went away
very early; that he never appeared to be consult-
ed about anything; and that he had a dingy little
black-hole of his own up-stairs, where no busi-
ness was ever done, and where there was a yellow
old cartridge-paper pad upon his desk, unsullied
by ink, and reported to be twenty years of age.

"Would you object to my mentioning it to
him, sir?" I asked.

"By no means," said Mr. Spenlow. "But I
have some experience of Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield.
I wish it were otherwise, for I should be happy
to meet your views in any respect. I cannot
have the least objection to your mentioning it to
Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield, if you think it worth
while.

Availing myself of this permission, which was
given with a warm shake of the hand, I sat think-
ing about Dora, and looking at the sunlight streak-
ing from the chimney-pots down the wall of the
opposite house, until Mr. Jorkins came. I then
went up to Mr. Jorkins's room, and evidently astonished Mr. Jorkins very much by making my appearance there.

"Come in, Mr. Copperfield," said Mr. Jorkins. "Come in!"

I went in, and sat down; and stated my case to Mr. Jorkins pretty much as I had stated it to Mr. Spenlow. Mr. Jorkins was not by any means the awful creature one might have expected, but a large, mild, smooth-faced man of sixty, who took so much snuff that there was a tradition in the Commons that he lived principally on that stimulant, having little room in his system for any other article of diet.

"You have mentioned this to Mr. Spenlow, I suppose?" said Mr. Jorkins, when he had heard me, very restlessly, to an end.

I answered Yes, and told him that Mr. Spenlow had introduced his name.

"He said I should object?" asked Mr. Jorkins.

I was obliged to admit that Mr. Spenlow had considered it probable.

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Copperfield, I can't advance your object," said Mr. Jorkins, nervously. "The fact is—but I have an appointment at the Bank, if you'll have the goodness to excuse me."

With that he rose in a great hurry, and was going out of the room, when I made bold to say that I feared, then, there was no way of arranging the matter.

"No!" said Mr. Jorkins, stopping at the door to shake his head. "Oh, no! I object, you know," which he said very rapidly, and went out. "You must be aware, Mr. Copperfield," he added, looking restlessly in at the door again, "if Mr. Spenlow objects—"

"Personally, he does not object, sir," said I. "Oh! Personally!" repeated Mr. Jorkins, in an impatient manner. "I assure you there's an objection, Mr. Copperfield. Hopeless! What you wish to be done, can't be done. I—I really have got an appointment at the Bank." With that he fairly ran away; and to the best of my knowledge it was three days before he showed himself in the Commons again.

Being very anxious to leave no stone unturned, I waited until Mr. Spenlow came in, and then described what had passed; giving him to understand that I was not hopeless of his being able to soften the adamantine Jorkins, if he would undertake the task.

"Copperfield," returned Mr. Spenlow, with a gracious smile, "you have not known my partner, Mr. Jorkins, as long as I have. Nothing is farther from my thoughts than to attribute any degree of artifice to Mr. Jorkins. But Mr. Jorkins has a way of stating his objections which often deceive people. No, Copperfield!" shaking his head. "Mr. Jorkins is not to be moved, believe me!"

I was completely bewitched between Mr. Spenlow and Mr. Jorkins, as to which of them really was the objecting partner; but I was sufficiently clearness that there was somewhere in the firm, and that there my aunt's thousand pounds was out of action. In a state of despondency, which her with anything but satisfaction, for I had still had too much reference to myself. I always in connexion with Dom, I left and went homeward.

I was trying to familiarise my mind worst, and to present myself the arm we should have to make for the fair sex at the aspect, when a buckle-chap after me, and stopping at my very elbow, to ask me to look up. A fair hand was forth to me from the window, and the face never seen without a feeling of serenity piness, from the moment when it was back the old oak staircase with the great balustrade, and when I associated its beauty with the stained glass window church, was smiling on me.

"Agnes!" I joyfully exclaimed. "Dear Agnes, of all people in the world, pleasure to see you!"

"Is it, indeed?" she said, in her calm and unemotional way. "I want to talk to you so much. "It's such a lightening of my heart, one of you! If I had had a confidant's confidence, no one I should have wished for but you."

"What?" returned Agnes.


"Certainly, Dom first, I hope," she said, laughing.

"But you next!" said I. "Where going?"

She was going to my rooms to see. The day being very fine, she was glad out of the chariot, which smelt (I had had all this time) like a stable put under her frame. I dismissed the coachman took my arm, and we walked on together but like Finland, embolden, to me. Hour I felt in one short minute, having Agnes is side!

My aunt had written her one of abrupt notes—very little longer than a—a—to which her epistolary efforts were unlimited. She had stated therein that fallen into adversity, and was leaving good, but had quite made me the mind was so well that nobody need be made about her. Agnes had come to London my aunt, between whom and herself been a mutual liking these many years; dated from the time of my taking up my in Mr. Wickfield's house. She was not said. Her papa was with her—and Un

"And now they are partners," said Agnes. "They have a mess here; and I took advantage of the time to come too. You must not think..."
DEAR AGNES!

udly and disinterested, Trotwood, for—I am
td I may be cruelly prejudiced—I do not like
t papa go away alone, with him."

"Does he exercise the same influence over
Wickfield still, Agnes?"

Agnes shook her head. "There is such a
age at home," said she, "that you would
tely know the dear old house. They live
us now."

"They?" said I.

"Mr. Heep and his mother. He sleeps in
old room," said Agnes, looking up into my

"I wish I had the ordering of his dreams,"

I. "He wouldn't sleep there long.

"I keep my own little room," said Agnes,
here I used to learn my lessons. How the
ge? You remember? The little panelled
that opens from the drawing-room?"

"Remember, Agnes? When I saw you, for
first time, coming out at the door, with your
nt little basket of keys hanging at your side?"

"It is just the same," said Agnes, smiling.

am glad you think of it so pleasantly. We
be very happy."

"We were, indeed," said I.

"I keep that room to myself still; but I can-
avways desert Mr. Heep, you know. And
said Agnes, quietly, "I feel obliged to bear
company, when I might prefer to be alone.
I have no other reason to complain of her,
as tares me, sometimes, by her praises of her
it is only natural in a mother. He is a very
son to her."

looked at Agnes when she said these words,
out detecting in her any consciousness of
th's design. Her mild but earnest eyes met
with their own beautiful frankness, and
was no change in her gentle face.

"The chief evil of their presence in the
se," said Agnes, "is that I cannot be as
papa as I could wish—Uriah Heep's being so
between us—and cannot watch over him, if
is not too bold a thing to say, as closely as I
id. But, if any fraud or treachery is prac-
ng against him, I hope that simple love and
will be stronger, in the end. I hope that
love and truth are stronger in the end than
evil or misfortune in the world."

A certain bright smile, which I never saw on
other face, died away, even while I thought
well it was, and how familiar it had once
w to me; and she asked me, with a quick
age of expression (we were drawing very
my street), if I knew how the reverse in my
's circumstances had been brought about.
my replying no, she had not told me yet,
became thoughtful, and I fancied I felt her
mble in mine.

We found my aunt alone, in a state of some
lement. A difference of opinion had arisen
wen herself and Mrs. Crupp, on an abstract
ion (the property of chambers being inhab-
by the gentler sex); and my aunt, utterly in-
different to spasms on the part of Mrs. Crupp,
had cut the dispute short, by informing that lady
that she smelt of my brandy, and that she would
trouble her to walk out. Both of these expres-
sions Mrs. Crupp considered actionable, and had
expressed her intention of bringing before a
"British Judy"—meaning, it was supposed, the
bulwark of our national liberties.

My aunt, however, having had time to cool,
while Peggoty was out showing Mr. Dick the
soldiers at the Horse Guards—and being, besides,
greatly pleased to see Agnes—rather puzzled her-
self on the affair than otherwise, and received us
with unimpaired good-humor. When Agnes laid
her bonnet on the table, and sat down beside her,
I could not but think, looking on her mild eyes
and her radiant forehead, how natural it seemed
to have her there: how trustfully, although she
was so young and inexperienced, my aunt con-
fided in her; how strong she was, indeed, in sim-
ple love and truth.

We began to talk about my aunt's losses, and
I told them what I had tried to do that morning.

"Which was injudicious, Trot," said my aunt,
"but well meant. You are a generous boy—I
suppose I must say, young man, now—and I am
proud of you, my dear. So far so good. Now,
Trot and Agnes, let us look the case of Betsey
Trotwood in the face, and see how it stands."

I observed Agnes turn pale, as she looked
very attentively at my aunt. My aunt, putting
her cat, looked very attentively at Agnes.

"Betsey Trotwood," said my aunt, who had
always kept her money matters to herself: "—I
don't mean your sister. Trot, my dear, but my-
self—had a certain property. It don't matter
how much; enough to live on. More; for she
had saved a little, and added to it. Betsey fund-
ed her property for some time, and then, by the
advice of her man of business, laid it out on
landed security. That did very well, and re-
turned very good interest, till Betsey was paid
off. I am talking of Betsey if she was a man-
of-war. Well! Then, Betsey had to look about
her, for a new investment. She thought she was
wiser, now, than her man of business, who was
not such a good man of business by this time, as
he used to be—I am alluding to your father, Ag-
nes—and she took it into her head to lay it out
for herself. So she took her pigs," said my aunt,
"to a foreign market; and a very bad market, it
turned out to be. First, she lost in the mining
way, and then she lost in the diving way—flashing
up treasure, or some such Tom Titler nonsense,"
explained my aunt, rubbing her nose; "and then
she lost in the mining way again, and, last of all,
to set the thing entirely to rights, she lost in the
banking way. I don't know what the Bank
shares were worth for a little while," said my
aunt; "at cent per cent was the lowest of it, I be-
lieve; but the Bank was at the other end of the
world, and tumbled into space, for what I know.
anyhow, it fell to pieces, and never will and never
can pay sixpence; and Betsey's sixpences were
all there, and there's an end of them. Least said, soonest mended!"

My aunt concluded this philosophical summary by fixing her eyes with a kind of triumph on Agnes, whose color was gradually returning.

"Dear Miss Trotwood, is that all the history?" said Agnes.

"I hope it's enough, child," said my aunt. "If there had been more money to lose, it wouldn't have been all, I dare say. Betsey would have contrived to throw that after the rest, and make another chapter, I have little doubt. But, there was no more money, and there's no more story."

Agnes had listened at first with suspended breath. Her color still came and went, but she breathed more freely. I thought I knew why. I thought she had had some fear that her unhappy father might be in some way to blame for what had happened. My aunt took her hand in hers, and laughed.

"Is that all?" repeated my aunt. "Why, yes, that's all, except, 'And she lived happy ever afterwards.' Perhaps I may add that of Betsey yet, one of these days. Now, Agnes, you have a wise head. So have you, Trot, in some things, though I can't compliment you always," and here my aunt shook her own at me, with an energy peculiar to herself. "What's to be done? Here's the cottage, taking one time with another, will produce, say seventy pounds a year. I think we may safely put it down at that. Well!—That's all we've got," said my aunt; with whom it was an idiosyncrasy, as it is with some horses, to stop very short when she appeared to be in a fair way of going on for a long while.

"Then," said my aunt, after a rest, "there's Dick. He's good for a hundred a-year, but of course that must be expended on himself. I would sooner send him away, though I know I am the only person who appreciates him, than have him, and not spend his money on himself. How can Trot and I do best, upon our means? What do you say, Agnes?"

"If you say, aunt," I interposed, "that I must do something!"

"Go for a soldier, do you mean?" returned my aunt, alarmed; "or go to sea? I won't hear of it. You are to be a proctor. We're not going to have any knockings on the head in this family, if you please, sir."

I was about to explain that I was not desirous of introducing that mode of provision into the family, when Agnes inquired if my rooms were held for any long term?

"You come to the point, my dear," said my aunt. "They are not to be got rid of, for six months at least, unless they could be unleased, and that I don't believe. The last man died here. Five people out of six would die—of course—of that woman in nankeen with the funnel petticoat. I have a little ready money; and I agree with you, the best thing we can do is to live the term out here, and get Dick a bed-room hard by."

I thought it my duty to hint at the discomfort my aunt would sustain, from living in a state of guerrilla warfare with Mrs. Cr as she disposed of that objection. Clarifying, that, on the first demonstration of illimes, she was prepared to astonish Mr. Pecksniff for the whole remainder of her natural life. "I have been thinking, Trotwood," said diffidently, "that if you had time—"

"I have a good deal of time, Agnes always disengaged after four or five o'clock have time early in the morning. In one another," said I, conscious of reddening. I thought of the hours and hours I had doffing about town, and to and fro upon wood Road, "I have abundance of time."

"I know you would not mind," said coming to me, and speaking in a low full of sweet and hopeful consideration, "I hear it now, "the duties of a secretary."

"Mind, my dear Agnes?"

"Because," continued Agnes, "Doc has acted on his intention of retiring, come to live in London; and he asks me, if he could recommend me to think he would rather have his own pupil near him, than anybody else."

"Dear Agnes," I said. "What she without you! You are always my goat. I told you so. I never think of you in a light."

Agnes answered with her pleasant in one good Angel (meaning Doras) was set went on to remind me that the Doctor used to occupy himself in his study, ear morning, and in the evening—and that my leisure would suit his requirements. I was scarcely more delighted with the of earning my own bread, than with the earning it under my old mast; in short the advice of Agnes. I sat down and letter to the Doctor, stating my object, pointing to call on him next day at to afternoon. This I addressed to Highgate that place, so unmentionable to me, he went and posted, myself, without losing time, Wherever Agnes was, some agreeable her noiseless presence seemed inseparable place. When I came back, I found hir hanging, just as they had hung in the parlor window of the cottage; and chair imitating my aunt's much easier the position at the open window; and even green fan, which my aunt had brought over her, screwed on to the window-sill. I had done all this, by its seeming to have done itself; and I should have known ment who had arranged my neglected the old order of my school days, even supposed Agnes to be miles away, instag her busy with them, and smiling at order into which they had fallen. 

My aunt was quite gracious on the way the Thames, as really did look very well upon it, though not that the was
"If I may umibly make the remark," said Uriah Heep, with a writhe, "I fully agree with Miss Betsey Trotwood, and should be only too appy if Miss Agnes was a partner."

"You're a partner yourself, you know," returned my aunt, "and that's about enough for you, I expect. How do you find yourself, sir?"

In acknowledgment of this question, addressed to him with extraordinary cuteness, Mr. Heep, uncomfortably clutching the blue bag he carried, replied that he was pretty well, he thanked my aunt, and hoped she was the same.

"And you, Master—I should say, Mister Copperfield," pursued Uriah. "I hope I see you well! I am rejoiced to see you, Mister Copperfield, even under present circumstances." I believed that; for he seemed to relish them very much. "Present circumstances is not what your friends would wish for you, Mister Copperfield, but it isn't money makes the man: it's—I am really unequal with my humble powers to express what it is," said Uriah, with a fawning jerk, "but it isn't money!"

Here he shook hands with me: not in the common way, but standing at a good distance from me, and lifting my hand up and down like a pump-handle, that he was a little afraid of.

"And how do you think we are looking, Master Copperfield,—I should say, Mister?" fawned Uriah. "Don't you find Mr. Wickfield blooming, sir? Years don't tell much in our firm, Master Copperfield, except in raising up the umble, namely, mother and self—and in developing," he added, as an after thought, "the beautiful, namely, Miss Agnes."

He jerked himself about, after this compliment, in such an intolerable manner, that my aunt, who had sat looking straight at him, lost all patience.

"Dence take the man!" said my aunt, sternly, "what's he about? Don't be galvanic, sir!"

"I ask your pardon, Miss Trotwood," returned Uriah; "I'm aware you're nervous."

"Go along with you, sir!" said my aunt, anything but appeased. "Don't presume to say so! I am nothing of the sort. If you're an eel, sir, conduct yourself like one. If you're a man, control your limbs, sir! Good God!" said my aunt, with great indignation, "I am not going to be serpentinized and corkscrewed out of my senses!"

Mr. Heep was rather abashed, as most people might have been, by this explosion; which derived great additional force from the indignant manner in which my aunt afterwards moved in her chair, and shook her head as if she were making snares or bounces at him. But, he said to me aside in a meek voice:

"I am well aware, Master Copperfield, that Miss Trotwood, though an excellent lady, has a quick temper (indeed I think I had the pleasure of knowing her, when I was an umble clerk, before you did, Master Copperfield), and it's only natural, I am sure, that it should be made quicker by present circumstances. The wonder is, that
It isn't much worse! I only called to say that if there was anything we could do, in present circumstances, mother or self, or Wickfield and Heep, we should be really glad. I may go so far!" said Uriah, with a sickly smile at his partner.

"Uriah Heep," said Mr. Wickfield, in a monotonous forced way, "is active in the business, Trotwood. What he says, I quite concur in. You know I had an old interest in you. Apart from that, what Uriah says I quite concur in!"

"Oh, what a reward it is," said Uriah, drawing up one leg, at the risk of bringing down upon himself another visitation from my aunt, "to be so trusted in! But I hope I am able to do something to relieve him from the fatigues of business, Master Copperfield!"

"Uriah Heep is a great relief to me," said Mr. Wickfield, in the same dull voice, "It's a load off my mind, Trotwood, to have such a partner."

The red fox made him say all this, I knew, to exhibit him to me in the light he had indicated on the night when he poisoned my rest. I saw the same ill-flavored smile upon his face again, and saw how he watched me.

"You are not going, papa?" said Agnes, anxiously. "Will you not walk back with Trotwood and me?"

He would have looked to Uriah, I believe, before replying, if that worthy had not anticipated him.

"I am bespoke myself," said Uriah, "on business; otherwise I should have been appy to have kept with my friends. But I leave my partner to represent the firm. Miss Agnes, ever yours! I wish you good-day, Master Copperfield, and leave my humble respects for Miss Betsey Trotwood."

With those words, he retired, kissing his great hand, and leering at us as like a mask.

We sat there, talking about our pleasant old Canterbury days, an hour or two. Mr. Wickfield, left to Agnes, soon became more like his former self; though there was a settled depression upon him, which he never shook off. For all that, he brightened; and had an evident pleasure in hearing us recall the little incidents of our old life, many of which he remembered very well. He said it was like those times, to be alone with Agnes and me again; and he wished to Heaven they had never changed. I am sure there was an influence in the placid face of Agnes, and in the very touch of her hand upon his arm, that did wonders for him.

My aunt (who was busy nearly all this while with Peggotty, in the inner room) would not accompany us to the place where they were staying, but insisted on my going; and I went. We dined together. After dinner, Agnes sat beside him, as of old, and poured out his wine. He took what she gave him, and no more—like a child—and we all three sat together at a window as the evening gathered in. When it was almost dark, he lay down on a sofa, Agnes pillowing his head and bending over him a little while; and when she came back to the window, it was not so I could see tears glittering in her eyes.

I pray Heaven that I never may forget the girl in her love and truth, at that time of life; if I should, I must be drawing near it and then I would desire to remember her. She filled my heart with such good recollections strengthening my weakness so, by her very sad example. I knew not how, she was too good and gentle to advise me in many when wandering about and unsettled purposes I, that all the little good I have done, to harm I have forbore, I solemnly believe refer to her.

And how she spoke to me of Dora, in the window in the dark; listened to me of her; praised again; and round the little figure shed some glimpse of her own that made it yet more precious and more to me! Oh, Agnes, sister of my boy! how she had known then, what I knew long after.

There was a beggar in the street, who now and then turned his face toward me; and when I turned my head toward the window, thinking of her calm, serene, made me start by muttering, as if he were of the morning:

"Blind! Blind! Blind!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.
ENTHUSIASM.

I began the next day with another view of the Roman bath., and then started for it: I was not displeased. I was not a shabby coat, and had no yearnings after greys. My whole manner of thinking of misfortune was changed. I what I had to do, was the painful discipline of my younger day count, by going to work with a real steady heart. What I had to do, was to woodman's axe in my hand, and clear way through the forest of difficulty, by down the trees until I came to Dora. An on at a mighty rate, as it could be:

When I found myself on the familiar road, pursuing such a different errand it old one of pleasure, with which it was seen as if a complete change had my whole life. But that did not discoun. With the new life, came new purposes, and Great was the labor; priceless was the Dora was the reward, and Dora must be:

I got into such a transport, that I to sorry my coat was not a little shabby she wanted to be cutting at those trees in it of difficulty, under circumstances that prove my strength. I had a good mind to old man, a wire espalier, who was his stones upon the road, to lead me his law a little while, and let me begin to work.
granite. I stimulated myself into
and got so out of breath, that I felt
enormous I don’t know how much.
I went into a cottage that I saw was
examined it narrowly—for I felt it
be practical. It would do for me
miraculously: with a little front garden
about in, and barks at the traden-
gh the railings, and a capital room
my aunt. I came out again, hotter
an ever, and dashed up to Highgate,
that I was there an hour too early;
I had not been, should have been
oll about to cool myself, before I was
able.
so, after putting myself under this
ourse of preparation, was to find the
use. It was not in that part of
ere Mrs. Steerforth lived, but quite
side of the little town. When I
covery, I went back, in an at-
could not resist, to a lane by Mrs.
looked over the corner of the
His room was shut up close. The
doors were standing open, and Rosa
alking, bareheaded, with a quick im-
ap up and down a gravel walk on one
own. She gave me the idea of some
that was dragging the length of its
fro upon a beaten track, and wearing
ily away from my place of observa-
lding that part of the neighborhood,
had not gone near it, strolled about
ten o’clock. The church with the
that stands on the top of the hill
there then to tell me the time. An
ansion, used as a school, was in
a fine old house it must have been
ol at, as I recollect it.
approached the Doctor’s cottage—a
ice, on which he seemed to have ex-
oney, if I might judge from the
ats and repairs that had the look of
pleted—I saw him walking in the
e side, guttered and all, as if he had
alking since the days of my pupil-
his old companions about him, too;
re plenty of high trees in the neigh-
wo or three rocks were on the
ng after him, as if they had been
nt him by the Canterbury rocks,
erving him closely in conse-
the utter hopelessness of attracting
from that distance, I made bold to
, and walk after him, so as to meet
should turn round. When he did,
wards me, he looked at me thought-
 moments, evidently without think-
at all; and then his benevolent face
traneous pleasure, and he took
ends.
’d dear Copperfield,” said the doctor;
“you are a man! How do you do? I am
deighted to see you. My dear Copperfield, how
very much you have improved! You are quite—
yes—dear me!”
I hoped he was well, and Mrs. Strong too.
“Oh dear, yes!” said the doctor; “Annie’s
quite well, and she’ll be delighted to see you.
You were always her favorite. She said so, last
ight, when I showed her your letter. And—yes,
to be sure—you recollect Mr. Jack Maldon,
Copperfield?”
“Perfectly, sir.”
“Of course,” said the Doctor. “To be sure.
He’s pretty well, too.”
“Has he come home, sir?” I inquired.
“From India?” said the Doctor. “Yes. Mr.
Jack Maldon couldn’t bear the climate, my dear.
Mrs. Markleham—you have not forgotten Mrs.
Markleham?”
Forgotten the Old Soldier! And in that short
time!
“Mrs. Markleham,” said the Doctor, “was
quite vexed about him, poor thing; so we have
got him at home again; and we have bought him
a little Patent place, which agrees with him much
better.”
I knew enough of Mr. Jack Maldon to suspect
from this account that it was a place where there
was not much to do, and which was pretty well
paid. The Doctor, walking up and down with his
hand on his shoulder, and his kind face turned
encouragingly to mine, went on:
“Now, my dear Copperfield, in reference to
this proposal of yours. It’s very gratifying and
agreeable to me, I am sure; but don’t you think
you could do better. You achieved distinction,
you know, when you were with us. You are
quired for many good things. You have laid a
foundation that any edifice may be raised upon:
and is it not a pity that you should devote the
spring-time of your life to such a poor pursuit as I
can offer?”
I became very glowing again, and, expressing
myself in a rhapsodical style, I am afraid, urged
my request strongly: reminding the Doctor that I
had already a profession.
“Well, well,” returned the Doctor, “that’s
ture. Certainly, your having a profession, and
being actually engaged in studying it, makes a
difference. But, my good young friend, what’s
seventy pounds a-year?”
“It doubles our income, Doctor Strong,”
said I.
“Dear me!” replied the Doctor. “To think
of that! Not that I mean to say it’s rigidly limited
to seventy pounds a-year, because I have always
contemplated making any young friend I might
thus employ, a present too. Undoubtedly,” said
the Doctor, stil walking me up and down with his
hand on my shoulder. “I have always taken an
annual present into account.”
“My dear tutor,” said I (now, really, without
any nonsense), “to whom I owe more obligations
already than I ever can acknowledge—”
always forgetting herself, and taking care of the other nine."

"Is she the eldest?" I inquired.

"Oh dear, no," said Traddles. "The eldest is a Beauty."

He saw, I suppose, that I could not help smiling at the simplicity of this reply; and added, with a smile upon his own ingenuous face:

"Not, of course, but that my Sophy—pretty name, Copperfield, I always think."

"Very pretty!" said I.

"Not, of course, but that Sophy is beautiful. She is beautiful in her eyes, and would be one of the dearest girls that ever was, in everybody's eyes (I should think). But when I say the eldest is a Beauty, I mean she really is—" he seemed to be describing clouds about himself, with both hands. "Splendid, you know," said Traddles, energetically.

"Indeed!" said I.

"Oh, I assure you," said Traddles, "something very uncommon, indeed! Then, you know, being formed for society and admiration, and not being able to enjoy much of it in consequence of their limited means, she naturally gets a little irritable and exacting, sometimes. Sophy puts her in good-humor!"

"Is Sophy the youngest?" I hazarded.

"Oh dear, no!" said Traddles, stroking his chin. "The two youngest are only nine and ten. Sophy's the third."

"The second daughter, perhaps?" I hazarded.

"No," said Traddles. "Sarah's the second. Sarah has something the matter with her spine, poor girl. The unlucky will wear out by-and-by, the doctors say, but in the meantime she has to lie down for a twelvemonth. Sophy nurses her. Sophy's the fourth."

"Is the mother living?" I inquired.

"Oh yes," said Traddles, "she is alive. She is a very superior woman indeed, but the clump country is not adapted to her constitution, and—in fact, she has lost the use of her limbs."

"Dear me!" said I.

"Very sad, is it not?" returned Traddles.

"But in a merely domestic view it is not so bad as it might be, because Sophy takes her place. She is quite as much a mother to her mother, as she is to the other nine."

I felt the greatest admiration for the virtues of this young lady; and, honestly with the view of doing my best to prevent the good-nature of Traddles from being imposed upon, to the detriment of their joint prospects in life, inquired how Mr. Micawber was?

"He is quite well, Copperfield, thank you," said Traddles. "I am not living with him at present."

"No?"

"No. You see the truth is," said Traddles, in a whisper, "he has changed his name to Mortimer, in consequence of his temporary embarrassments; and he don't come out till after dark—and then in spectacles. There was an execution put into our house, for rent. Mrs. Micawber was in such a dreadful state that I really couldn't call giving my name to that second bill we spoke of here. You may imagine how delightful it was to my feelings, Copperfield, to see the matter settled with it, and Mrs. Micawber recover her spirits."

"Hum!" said I.

"Not that her happiness was of long duration," pursed Traddles, "for, unfortunately, within a week another execution came to break up the establishment. I have been living in a furnished apartment since then, and the letters have been very private indeed. Happily, I won't think it old-fashioned, Copperfield, if I mention that the broker carried off my little round hat with the marble top, and Sophy's flowerpot to stand there!"

"What a hard thing!" I exclaimed indignantly.

"It was a——It was a pull," said Traddles, with his usual wince at that expression. "I don't mention it reproachfully, however, but with a sly, malicious, sly expression. The fact is, Copperfield, I was made to supplement them at the time of their seizure, the first place, because the broker, having nothing that I wanted them, ran the price up to an extraordinary extent; and, in the second place, because I hadn't any money. Now, I have kept my word, upon the broker's shop," said Traddles, with a great enjoyment of his mystery, "which is up at the top of Tottenham Court Road, and last to-day I found them put out for sale. I have only noticed them from over the way, because the broker saw me, bless you, he'd ask any price for them! What has occurred to me, having to pay the money, is, that perhaps you wouldn't wish to ask that good nurse of yours to come with me to the shop—I can show it her from round the corner of the next street—and make the best bargain for them, as if they were for herself, that she can!"

The delight with which Traddles proposed this plan to me, and the sense he had of its common artfulness, are among the freshest things in my remembrance.

I told him that my old nurse would be delighted to assist him, and that we would all three take field together, but on one condition. That condition was, that he should make a solemn resolution to grant no more loans of his name, or anything else, to Mr. Micawber.

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, "I have already done so, because I begin to feel that it is not only unconsiderate, but that I have been positively unjust to Sophy. My worst self passed to myself, there is no longer any apprehension; but I pledge it to you, too, with the greatest readiness. That first unlucky obligation I have paid. I have no doubt Mr. Micawber would have paid it if he could, but he couldn't. One thing I ought to mention, which I like to re-mention in Mr. Micawber, Copperfield. It relates to the second obligation, which is not yet, as I
money, nor could I exact any promise
at she would do so at another time. I
to her that Mr. Peggotty could not be
one in his condition, poor; and that
her engaging in this search, while de-
hers own resources, shocked us both,
and steadfast. In this particular, his
upon her was equally powerless with
gratefully thanked him, but remained
may be work to be got," she said.
stake some assistance," I returned,
not do what I have promised, for
replied, "I could not take it, if I
To give me money would be to
take away the object that
me, to take away the only certain
its name of the great Judge," said I,
tom you and all of us must stand at
me, dismiss that terrible idea! We
some good, if we will!"
bled, and her lip shook, and her face
as she answered:
been put into your hearts, perhaps, to
tched creature for repentance. I am
ink so; it seems too bold. If any good
me, I might begin to hope; for
harm has ever come of my deeds yet.
trusted, for the first time in a long
my miserable life, on account of what
iven me to try for. I know no more,
ay no more."
repressed the tears that had begun
d, putting out her trembling hand, and
nor Peggotty, as if there were some
in him, went away along the des-
She had been ill, probably for a long
erved, upon that closer opportunity
on, that she was worn and haggard,
r sunken eyes expressed privation and
owed her at a short distance, our
in the same direction, until we came
the lighted and populous streets. I
licit confidence in her declaration,
put it to Mr. Peggotty, whether it
soon, in the onset, like distracting
over her any further. He being the
and equally reliant on her, we suffered
her own road, and took ours, which
d Highgate. He accompanied me a
of the way; and when we parted, with
the success of this fresh effort, there
thoughtful compassion in him that
loss to interpret.
midnight when I arrived at home. I
d my own gate, and was standing lis-
he deep bell of Saint Paul’s, the sound
ought had been borne towards me
multitude of striking clocks, when I
surprised to see that the door of my
 aunt’s cottage was open, and that a faint light in
the entry was shining out across the road.
Thinking that my aunt might have relapsed
into one of her old alarms, and might be watching
the progress of some imaginary configuration in
the distance, I went to speak to her. It was with
very great surprise that I saw a man standing in
her little garden.
He had a glass and bottle in his hand, and was
in the act of drinking. I stopped short, among
the thick foliage outside, for the moon was up
now, though obscured; and I recognised the man
whom I had once supposed to be a nephew of Mr.
Dick’s, and had once encountered with my aunt
in the streets of the city.
He was eating as well as drinking, and seemed
to eat with a hungry appetite. He seemed curi-
ous regarding the cottage, too, as if it were the
first time he had seen it. After stooping to put
the bottle on the ground, he looked up at the win-
dows, and looked about; though with a covert
and impatient air, as if he was anxious to be
gone.
The light in the passage was obscured for a
moment, and my aunt came out. She was agi-
tated, and told some money into his hand. I
heard it clink.
"What’s the use of this?" he demanded.
"I can spare no more," returned my aunt.
"Then I can’t go," said he. "Here! You
may take it back!"
"You had man," returned my aunt, with great
emotion: "how can you use me so? But why do
I ask? It is because you know how weak I am!
What have I to do, to free myself for ever of your
visits, but to abandon you to your deserts?"
"And why don’t you abandon me to my
deserts?" said he.
"You ask me why!" returned my aunt.
"What a heart you have must have!"

He stood moodily rattling the money, and
shaking his head, until at length he said:
"Is this all you mean to give me, then?"
"It is all I can give you," said my aunt. "You
know I have had losses, and am poorer than I
used to be. I have told you so. Having got it,
why do you give me the pain of looking at you
for another moment, and seeing what you have
become?"

"I have become shabby enough, if you mean
that," he said. "I lead the life of an owl."

"You stripped me of the greater part of all I
ever had," said my aunt. "You closed my heart
against the whole world, years and years. You
treated me falsely, ungratefully, and cruelly. Go,
and repent of it. Don’t add new injuries to the
long, long list of injuries you have done me!"

"Aye!" he returned. "It’s all very fine!—
Well! I must do the best I can, for the present,
I suppose."

In spite of himself, he appeared ashamed by my
aunt’s indignant tears, and came stooping over at
the garden. Taking two or three quick steps, as
if I had just come up, I met him at the gate, and
**CHAPTER XXXV.**

**DEPRESSION.**

As soon as I could recover my presence of mind, which quite deserted me in the first overpowering shock of my aunt’s intelligence, I posed to Mr. Dick to come round to the chandlery, and take possession of the bed which Peggotty had lately vacated. The chandler’s being in Hungerford Market, and Hunger Market being a very different place in those days, there was a low wooden colonnade before the door (not very unlike that before the house where the little man and woman used to sit in the old weather-glass), which pleased Dick mightily. The glory of lodging over structure would have compensated him, I say, for many inconveniences; but, as there really was so little beyond the compound of vats I had already mentioned, and perhaps want of a little more elbow-room, he was pretty charmed with his accommodation. Mr. G. had indignantly assured him that there was no room to swing a cat there; but, as Mr. Dick observed to me, sitting down on the foot of bed, nursing his leg, “You know, Trotwood, we don’t want to swing a cat. I never do swing a cat. Therefore, what does that signify to me?”

I tried to ascertain whether Mr. Dick had any understanding of the causes of this sudden great change in my aunt’s affairs. As I have expected, he had none at all. The only count he could give of it, was, that my aunt said to him, the day before yesterday, “O Dick, are you really and truly the philosopher take you for?” That then he had said, “I am ruined.” That when he had said “I am ruined,” that then he had said, “I am deceased.” That then my aunt had praised highly, which he was very glad of. And that they had come to me, and had had bottle and sandwiches on the road.

Mr. Dick was so very complacent, sitting the foot of the bed, nursing his leg, and telling this, with his eyes wide open and a smile, that I am sorry to say I was provoked explaining to him that ruin meant distress, and starvation; but, I was soon bitterly repaid for this harshness, by seeing his face turn and tears come down his lengthened cheek, while he fixed upon me a look of such unsatisfied woe, that it might have softened a heart of stone. I took infinitely greater delight to cheer him up again than I had taken to do him; and I soon understood (as I ought to have been known at first) that he had been so顶层设计ly and merely because of his faith in the wisest and wonderful of women, and his unbounded trust on my intellectual resources. The latter, however, he considered a match for any kind of matter not absolutely moral.

“‘What can we do, Trotwood?’ said Dick. ‘There’s the Memorial.’

‘To be sure there is,’ said I. ‘Be
MY AUNT'S GENTLENESS.

now, Mr. Dick, is to keep a cheerful heart, and not let my aunt see that we are out of it."

I adapted to this in the most earnest manner, and if I should see him wander out of the right course, to recall him to my aunt's face, and to that superior method which is at my command. But I regret to say that I had given him too many attempts at concealment. All his eyes wandered to my aunt's face, and on of the most dismal apprehensions was her growing thin on the spot. Scorns of this, and put an expression on the food which happened all one, as if nothing else stood between me and my aunt insisting on his custom. I detected in pocketing fragments of his bread. I have no doubt for the purpose of with those savings, when we should have an advanced stage of attenuation.

On the other hand, was in a composed fashion, which was a lesson to all not to go away. She was extremely gracious to accept when I inadvertently called her name; and strange as I knew she felt in compared quite at home. She was to lie and I was to lie in the sitting-room, and over her. She made a great point near the river, in case of a confin...suppose really did find some satisfaction."

"My dear," said my aunt, when she saw preparations for compounding her draught, "No!"

"I, aunt?"

"I see, my dear. Ale."

"There is wine here, aunt. And you always made wine."

"That, in case of sickness," said my aunt; "mustn't use it carelessly. Trot. Ale if a pint."

"Mr. Dick would have fallen, insane and being resolved, I went out and got it. As it was growing late, Peggotty took that opportunity of repairing dier's shop together. I parted from him, at the corner of the street, with him at his back, a very monument of my.

was walking up and down the room, crimping the borders of her th her fingers. I warmed the ale and cast on the usual infallible principles. is ready for her, she was ready for it, ghtcap on, and the skirt of her gown on her knees."

"That," said my aunt, after taking a spoonful, "is a great deal better than wine. Not so."

I suppose I looked doubtful, for she added:

"Tut, tut, child. If nothing worse than Ale happens to us, we are well off."

"I should think so myself, aunt, I am sure," said I.

"Well, then, why don't you think so?" said my aunt.

"Because you and I are very different people," I returned.

"Stuff and nonsense, Trot!" replied my aunt.

My aunt went on with a quiet enjoyment, in which there was very little affection, if any; drinking the warm ale with a teaspoon, and soaking her strips of toast in it.

"Trot," said she, "I don't care for strange faces in general, but I rather like that Barkis of yours, do you know!"

"It's better than a hundred pounds to hear you say so!" said I.

"It's a most extraordinary world," observed my aunt, rubbing her nose; "how that woman ever got into it with that name, is unaccountable to me. It would be much more easy to be born a Jackson, or something of that sort, one would think."

"Perhaps she thinks so, too; it's not her fault," said I.

"I suppose not," returned my aunt, rather grudging the admission; "but it's very aggravating. However, she's Barkis now. That's some comfort. Barkis is uncommonly fond of you, Trot."

"There is nothing she would leave undone to prove it," said I.

"Nothing, I believe," returned my aunt.

"Here, the poor fool has been begging and praying about handing over some of her money—because she has got too much of it! A simpleton!"

My aunt's tears of pleasure were positively trickling down into the warm ale.

"She's the most ridiculous creature that ever was born," said my aunt. "I knew, from the first moment when I saw her with that poor dear blessed baby of a mother of yours, that she was the most ridiculous of mortals. But there are good points in Barkis!"

Affecting to laugh, she got an opportunity of putting her hand to her eyes. Having availed herself of it, she resumed her toast and her discourse together.

"Ah! Mercy upon us!" sighed my aunt. "I know all about it, Trot! Barkis and myself had quite a gossip while you were out with Dick. I know all about it. I don't know where these wretched girls expect to go to, for my part. I wonder they don’t knock out their brains against —against mantelpieces," said my aunt; an idea which was probably suggested to her by her contemplation of mine.

"Poor Emily!" said I.

"Oh, don't talk to me about poor," returned my aunt. "She should have thought of that, before she caused so much misery! Give me a kiss, Trot. I am sorry for your early experience."
"As I bent forward, she put her tumbler on my knee to detain me, and said:

"Oh, Trot, Trot! And so you fancy yourself in love! Do you?"

"Fancy, aunt!" I exclaimed, as red as I could be. "I adore her with my whole soul!"

"Dora, indeed!" returned my aunt. "And you mean to say the little thing is very fascinating, I suppose?"

"My dear aunt," I replied, "no one can form the least idea what she is!"

"Ah! And not silly?" said my aunt.

"Silly, aunt!"

I seriously believe it had never once entered my head for a single moment, to consider whether she was or not. I resented the idea, of course; but I was in a manner struck by it, as a new one altogether.

"Not light-headed?" said my aunt.

"Light-headed, aunt!" I could only repeat this daring speculation with the same kind of feeling with which I had repeated the preceding question.

"Well! well!" said my aunt. "I only ask. I don't depreciate her. Poor little couple! And so you think you were formed for one another, and are to go through a party supper-table kind of life, like two pretty pieces of confectionery, do you, Trot?"

She asked me this so kindly, and with such a gentle air, half playful and half sorrowful, that I was quite touched.

"We are young and inexperienced, aunt, I know," I replied; "and I dare say we say and think a good deal that is rather foolish. But we love one another truly, I am sure. If I thought Dora could ever love anybody else, or cease to love me; or that I could ever love anybody else, or cease to love her; I don't know what I should do—go out of my mind, I think!"

"Ah, Trot!" said my aunt, shaking her head, and smiling gravely, "blind, blind, blind!"

"Some one that I know, Trot," my aunt pursued, after a pause, "though of a verypliant disposition, has an earnestness of affection in him that reminds me of poor Baby. Earnestness is what that somebody must look for, to sustain him and improve him, Trot. Deep, downright, faithful earnestness."

"If you only knew the earnestness of Dora—" aunt!" I cried.

"Oh, Trot!" she said again; "blind, blind!" and without knowing why, I felt a vague unhappy loss or want of something overshadow me like a cloud.

"However," said my aunt, "I don't want to put two young creatures out of conceit with themselves, or to make them unhappy; so, though it is a girl and boy attachment, and girl and boy attachments very often—mind! I don't say always—come to nothing, still we'll be serious about it; and hope for a prosperous issue of these days. There's time enough for it to come to anything!"

This was not upon the whole very con to a rapturous lover; but I was glad to let my aunt in my confidence, and I was mindful being blamed. So I thanked her for this mark of her affection, and for all her kindnesses towards me; and after a tedious night, she took her nightcap into her room.

How miserable I was, when I lay down! I thought and thought about my baby! Mr. Spenlow's eyes! about my not being thought I was, when I proposed to Dora the chivalrous necessity of telling Dora's worldly condition was, and releasing her into engagement if she thought fit; about how contrive to live, during the long term articles, when I was earning nothing; about doing something to assist my aunt, and so of doing anything; about coming to have no money in my pocket, and to shabby coat, and to be able to carry Dora presents, and to ride no gallant grey, show myself in no agreeable light; so selfish as I knew it was, and as I tortured by knowing that it was, to let my mind drink of my own distress so much, I was so out of Dora that I could not help it. I knew the base in me not to think more of my aunt, of myself; but, so far, selfishness was lost from Dora, and I could not put Dora on for any mortal creature. How exa miserable I was, that night!

As to sleep, I had dreams of poverty, sorts and shapes, but I seemed to dream the previous ceremony of going to sleep. was ragged, wanting to sell Dora matches for a halfpenny; now I was at the in a night-gown and boots, conducted by Mr. Spenlow on appearing before the that airy attire; now I was hungryly pl the crumbs that fell from old Tiffey's cut, regularly eaten when St. Paul's sir; now I was hopelessly endeavoring to set to marry Dora, having nothing but one of Hep's gloves to offer in exchange, a whole Commons rejected; and still, more conscious of my own room, I was always about like a distressed eel in a sea of clothes.

My aunt was restless, too, for I heard her walking to and fro. Two or times in the course of the night, stirred a flannel wrapper in which she looked so high, she appeared, like a disturbed ghost, in the room, and came to the side of the sofa on which I lay. On the first occasion I started up to learn that she inferred from a particular the sky, that Westminster Abbey was and to be consulted in reference to the pros of its igniting Buckingham Street, in wind changed. Lying still, after that, she sat down near me, whispering in "Poor boy!" And then it made me times more wretched, to know how
THE INEXORABLE JORKINS.

It was difficult to believe that a night so long as of myself.

...and of myself.

It was difficult to believe that a night so long me, could be short to anybody else. This con-
traction set me thinking and thinking of an
ving party where people were dancing the
ay away, until that became a dream too, and I
ed the music incessantly playing one tune,
aw Dora incessantly dancing one dance,
out the least notice of me. The man
had been playing the harp all night, was try-
in vain to cover it with an ordinary-sized
nap, when I awoke; or I should rather say,
I left off trying to go to sleep, and saw the
shining in through the window at last.

There was an old Roman bath in those days at
bottom of one of the streets out of the Strand
be there still—in which I have had many
plunge. Dressing myself as quietly as I
d, and leaving Pegotty to look after my
I tumbled head foremost into it, and then
for a walk to Hampstead. I had a hope
this brisk treatment might freshen my wits a
; and I think it did them good, for I soon
the conclusion that the first step I ought
take was to try if my articles could be can-
and the premium recovered. I got some
est on the Heath, and walked back to
Sons' Commons, along the watered roads and
g a pleasant smell of summer flowers,
wing in gardens and carried into town on
kesters' heads, intent on this first effort to meet
altered circumstances.

I arrived at the office so soon, after all, that I
half an hour's loitering about the Commons,
old Tiffey, who was always first, appeared
his key. Then I sat down in my shady cor
looking up at the sunlight on the opposit
mey-pots, and thinking about Dora; until
Spenlow came in, crisp and curly.

"How are you, Copperfield?" said he. "Fine
ning!"

"Beautiful morning, sir," said I. "Could I
a word to you before you go into Court?"

"By all means," said he. "Come into my
.

I followed him into his room, and he began
ting on his gown, and touching himself up be-
s a little glass he had, hanging inside a clos-

"I am sorry to say," said I, "that I have some
er disheartening intelligence from my aunt."

"Not!" said he. "Dear me! Not paralysis,
pe?"

"It has no reference to her health, sir," I re-
ed. "She has met with some large losses. In
, she has very little left, indeed."

"You as-tound me, Copperfield!" cried Mr.
slow.

I shook my head. "Indeed, sir," said I, "her
rs are so changed, that I wish to ask you
ther it would be possible—at a sacrifice on
part of some portion of the premium, of
me," I put in this on the spur of the moment,

warned by the blank expression of his face—"to
cancel my articles?"

What it cost me to make this proposal, nobody
knows. It was like asking, as a favor, to be sen-
tenced to transportation from Dora.

"To cancel your articles, Copperfield. Can-
?"

I explained with tolerable firmness, that I
really did not know where my means of subsis-
tence were to come from, unless I could earn
them for myself. I had no fear for the future, I
said—and I laid great emphasis on that, as if to
imply that I should still be decidedly eligible for
a son-in-law one of these days—but, for the pres-
ent, I was thrown upon my own resources.

"I am extremely sorry to hear this, Copper-
field," said Mr. Spenlow. "Extremely sorry. It
is not usual to cancel articles for any such reason.
It is not a professional course of proceeding. It
is not a convenient precedent at all. Far from
it. At the same time—"

"You are very good, sir," I murmured, antici-
pating a concession.

"Not at all. Don't mention it," said Mr.
Spenlow. "At the same time, I was going to
say, if it had been my lot to have my hands un-
fettered—if I had not a partner—Mr. Jorkins—"

My hopes were dashed in a moment, but I
made another effort.

"Do you think, sir," said I, "if I were to
mention it to Mr. Jorkins—"

Mr. Spenlow shook his head discouragingly.
"Heaven forbids, Copperfield," he replied, "that
I should do any man an injustice; still less, Mr.
Jorkins. But I know my partner, Copperfield.
Mr. Jorkins is not a man to respond to a proposi-
tion of this peculiar nature. Mr. Jorkins is very
difficult to move from the beaten track. You
know what he is!"

I am sure I knew nothing about him, except
that he had originally been alone in the business,
and now lived by himself in a house near Montagu
Square, which was fearfully in want of painting;
that he came very late of a day, and went away
very early; that he never appeared to be consult-
about anything; and that he had a dingy little
black-hole of his own up-stairs, where no bna-
ness was ever done, and where there was a yellow
old cartridge-paper pad upon his desk, unsold
by ink, and reported to be twenty years of age.

"Would you object to my mentioning it to
him, sir?" I asked.

"By no means," said Mr. Spenlow. "But I
have some experience of Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield.
I wish it were otherwise, for I should be happy
to meet your views in any respect. I cannot
have the least objection to your mentioning it to
Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield, if you think it worth
while."

Availing myself of this permission, which was
given with a warm shake of the hand, I sat think-
ing about Dora, and looking at the sunlight stea-
ing from the chimney-pots down the wall of the
opposite house, until Mr. Jorkins came. Then
went up to Mr. Jorkins's room, and evidently astonished Mr. Jorkins very much by making my appearance there.

"Come in, Mr. Copperfield," said Mr. Jorkins. "Come in!"

I went in, and sat down; and stated my case to Mr. Jorkins pretty much as I had stated it to Mr. Spenlow. Mr. Jorkins was not by any means the awful creature one might have expected, but a large, mild, smooth-faced man of sixty, who took so much stuff that there was a tradition in the Commons that he lived principally on that stimulant, having little room in his system for any other article of diet.

"You have mentioned this to Mr. Spenlow, I suppose?" said Mr. Jorkins, when he had heard me, very restlessly, to an end.

I answered "Yes," and told him that Mr. Spenlow had introduced his name.

"He said I should object?" asked Mr. Jorkins.

I was obliged to admit that Mr. Spenlow had considered it probable.

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Copperfield, I can't advance your object," said Mr. Jorkins, nervously. "The fact is—but I have an appointment at the Bank, if you'll have the goodness to excuse me."

With that he rose in a great hurry, and was going out of the room, when I made bold to say that I feared, then, there was no way of arranging the matter.

"No!" said Mr. Jorkins, stopping at the door to shake his head. "Oh, no! I object, you know," which he said very rapidly, and went out. "You must be aware, Mr. Copperfield," he added, looking restlessly in at the door again, "if Mr. Spenlow objects—"

"Personally, he does not object, sir," said I.

"Oh! Personally!" repeated Mr. Jorkins, in an impatient manner. "I assure you there's no objection, Mr. Copperfield. Hopeless! What you wish to have done, can't be done. I—I really have got an appointment at the Bank." With that he fairly ran away; and to the best of my knowledge it was three days before he showed himself in the Commons again.

Being very anxious to leave no stone unturned, I waited until Mr. Spenlow came in, and then described what had passed; giving him to understand that I was not hopeless of his being able to soften the adamantine Jorkins, if he would undertake the task.

"Copperfield," returned Mr. Spenlow, with a gracious smile, "you have not known my partner, Mr. Jorkins, as long as I have. Nothing is farther from my thoughts than to attribute any degree of artifice to Mr. Jorkins. But Mr. Jorkins has a way of stating his objections which often devolve on people. No, Copperfield!" shaking his head. "Mr. Jorkins is not to be moved, believe me!"

I was completely bewildered between Mr. Spenlow and Mr. Jorkins, as to which of them really was the objecting partner; but sufficient clearness that there was somewhere in the firm, and that the result was to my aunt's thousand pounds was out of question. In a state of despondency, which I could not bear with anything but satisfaction, for I still had too much reverence to myself (always in connexion with Dora), I left the house and went homeward.

I was trying to familiarise my mind with A's worst, and to present to myself the air we should have to make for the future, sterner aspect, when a huckster carriage stopped at me, and stopping at my very side, pointed me to look up. A fair hand was sent to me from the window: and the letter not never seen without a feeling of serenity pleased, from the moment when it flung back on the old oak staircase with the great balustrade, and when I associated its beauty with the stained glass window of the church, was smiling on me.

"Agnes!" I joyfully exclaimed. "Dear Agnes, of all people in the world, I have pleasure to see you!"

"Is it, indeed?" she said, in her cold tone. "I want to talk to you so much! It's such a lightening of my heart, out here! If I had had a confidant's confidence, no one I should have wished for but you.

"What?!" returned Agnes.

"Well: perhaps Dora first," I added, with a blush.

"Certainly, Dora first, I hope," she said, laughing.

"But you next!" said I. "Where's going?"

She was going to my rooms to see The day was very fine, she was glad to see the light of the chariot, which she did not think it all this time) like a stable put under a frame. I dismissed the coachman, and took my arm, and we walked on together. It was like Hope embodied, to me. How happy I felt in one short minute, having Agnes with me!

My aunt had written her one of abrupt notes—very little longer than a —to which her epistolary efforts were limited. She had stated therein that she had fallen into adversity, and was leaving her old good, but had quite made up her mind was so well that nobody need be une as, about her. Agnes had come to Lond on my aunt, between whom and herself been a mutual liking these many years: dated from the time of my taking up my residence in Mr. Wickfield's house. She was not said. Her papa was with her—and Dora.

"And now they are partners," said Agnes. "I found him!"

"Yes," said Agnes. "They have come to come too. You must not think..."
DEAR AGNES!

sviewed, Trotwood, for—I am cruelly prejudiced—I do not like way alone, with him."

exercise the same influence over till, Agnes?"
c her head. "There is such a c."

"said she, "that you would the dear old house. They live

id I.

and his mother. He sleeps in slide Agnes, looking up into my

ad the ordering of his dreams," couldn't sleep there long."

y own little room," said Agnes, to learn my lessons. How the u remember? The little panelled s from the drawing-room?"

; Agnes? When I saw you, for coming out at the door, with your ket of keys hanging at your side?" the same," said Agnes, smiling. u think of it so pleasantly. We y.

indeed," said I.

room to myself still; but I cannot Mrs. Heep, you know. And i, quietly, "I feel obliged to hear when I may prefer to be alone.

other reason to complain of her. sometimes, by her praises of her natural in a mother. He is a very 

Agnes when she said these words, ing in her any consciousness of Her mild but earnest eyes met in own beautiful frankness, and range in her gentle face.

evil of their presence in the Agnes. "Is that I cannot be as could wish—Uriah Heep 'being so us—and cannot watch over him, if bold a thing to say, as closely as I fanny fraud or treachery is prac- him, I hope that simple love and stronger, in the end. I hope that truth are stronger in the end than fortune in the world."

right smile, which I never saw on , died away, even while I thought as, and how familiar it had once and she asked me, with a quick pressin we were drawing very i, if I knew how the reverse in my stances had been brought about. ing no, she had not told me yet, thoughtful, and I fancied I felt her mine.

my aunt alone, in a state of some difference of opinion had arisen if and Mrs. Crupp, on an abstract propriety of chambers being inhab...
He acquiescing, we followed at a distance; never losing sight of her, but never caring to come very near, as she frequently looked about. Once she stopped to listen to a band of music; and then we stopped too.

She went on a long way. Still we went on. It was evident, from the manner in which she held her course, that she was going to some fixed destination; and this, and her keeping in the busy streets, and I suppose the strange fascination in the secrecy and mystery of so following any one, made me adhere to my first purpose. At length she turned into a dull, dark street, where the noise and crowd were lost; and I said, "We may speak to her now;" and, mending our pace, we went after her.

CHAPTER XLVII.

MARSHA.

We were now down in Westminster. We had turned back to follow her, having encountered her coming towards us; and Westminster Abbey was the point at which she passed from the lights and noise of the leading streets. She proceeded so quickly, when she got free of the two currents of passengers setting towards and from the bridge, that, between this and the advance she had of us when she struck off, we were in the narrow water-side street by Millbank before we came up with her. At that moment she crossed the road, as if to avoid the footsteps that she heard so close behind; and, without looking back, passed on even more rapidly.

A glimpse of the river through a dull gateway, where some wagons were housed for the night, seemed to arrest my feet. I touched my companion without speaking, and we both forebore to cross after her, and both followed on that opposite side of the way; keeping as quietly as we could in the shadow of the houses, but keeping very near her.

There was, and is when I write, at the end of that low-lying street, a dilapidated little wooden building, probably an obsolete old ferry-house. Its position is just at that point where the street ceases, and the road begins to lie between a row of houses and the river. As soon as she came here, and saw the water, she stopped as if she had come to her destination; and presently went slowly along by the brink of the river, looking intently at it.

All the way here, I had supposed that she was going to some house; indeed, I had vaguely entertained the hope that the house might be in some way associated with the lost girl. But, that one dark glimpse of the river, through the gateway, had instinctively prepared me for her going no farther.

The neighborhood was a dreary one at that time; as oppressive, sad, and solitary by night, as any about London. There were neither wharves nor houses on the melancholy waste of road near the great blank Prison. A sluggish ditch de-
down, crying and moaning. In a little while she sat among the stones, holding her wretched head in both her hands.

"Oh, the river!" she cried passionately. "Oh, the river!"

"Hush, hush!" said I. "Calm yourself!"

But she still repeated the same words, continually exclaiming, "Oh, the river!" over and over again.

"I know it's like me!" she exclaimed, "I know that I belong to it. I know that it's the natural company of such as I am! It comes from country places, where there was once no harm in it—and it creeps through the dismal streets, defiled and miserable—and it goes away, like my life, to a great sea, that is always troubled—and I feel that I must go with it!"

I have never known what despair was, except in the tone of those words.

"I can't keep away from it. I can't forget it. It haunts me day and night. It's the only thing in all the world that I am fit for, or that's fit for me. Oh, the dreadful river!"

The thought passed through my mind that in the face of my companion, as he looked upon her without speech or motion, I might have read the sister's history, if I had known nothing of it. I never saw, in any painting or reality, horror and compassion so impressively blended. He shook as if it would have fallen; and his hand—touched it with my own, for his appearance alarmed me—was deadly cold.

"She is in a state of frenzy," I whispered to him. "She will speak differently in a little time."

I don't know what he would have said in answer. He made some motion with his mouth, and seemed to think he had spoken; but he had only pointed to her with his outstretched hand.

A new burst of crying came upon her now, in which she once more hid her face among the stones, and lay before us, a prostrate image of humiliation and ruin. Knowing that this state must pass, before we could speak to her with any hope, I ventured to restrain him when he would have raised her, and we stood in silence until she became more tranquil.

"Martha," said I then, leaning down, and helping her to rise—she seemed to want to rise as if with the intention of going away, but she was weak, and leaned against a bough. "Do you know who this is, who is with me?"

She said faintly, "Yes."

"Do you know that we have followed you a long way to-night?"

She shook her head. She looked neither at him nor at me, but stood in a humble attitude, holding her bonnet and shawl in one hand, without appearing conscious of them, and pressing the other, clenched, against her forehead.

"Are you composed enough," said I, "to speak on the subject which so interested you—I hope Heaven may remember it—that snowy night?"

Her sobs broke out afresh, and she murmured some inarticulate thanks to me for not having driven her away from the door.

"I want to say nothing for myself," she said, after a few moments, "I am bad, I am lost. I have no hope at all. But tell him, sir," she had shrunk away from him, "if you don't feel too hard to me to do it, that I never was in any way the cause of his misfortune."

"It has never been attributed to you," I returned, earnestly responding to her earnestness.

"It was you, if I don't deceive myself," she said, in a broken voice, "that came into the kitchen, the night she took such pity on me; was so gentle to me; didn't shrink away from me like all the rest, and gave me such kind help! Was it you, sir?"

"It was," said I.

"I should have been in the river long ago," she said, glancing at it with a terrible expression, "if any wrong to her had been upon my mind. I never could have kept out of it a single winter's night, if I had not been free of any share in that!"

"The cause of her flight is too well understood," I said. "You are innocent of any part in it, we thoroughly believe,—we know."

"Oh! I might have been much the better for her, if I had had a better heart!" exclaimed the girl, with more forlorn regret; "for she was always good to me! She never spoke a word to me but what was pleasant and right. Is it likely I would try to make her what I am myself, knowing what I am myself so well? When I lost everything that makes life dear, the worst of all my thoughts was that I was parted for ever from her!"

Mr. Peggotty, standing with one hand on the gunwale of the boat, and his eyes cast down, put his disengaged hand before his face.

"And when I heard what had happened before that snowy night, from some belonging to our town," cried Martha, "the bitterest thought in all my mind was, that the people would remember she once kept company with me, and would say I had corrupted her! When, Heaven knows, I would have died to have brought back her good name!"

Long unused to any self-control, the piercing agony of her remorse and grief was terrible.

"To have died, would not have been much—what can I say?—I would have lived!" she cried. "I would have lived to be old, in the wretched streets—and to wander about, avoided, in the dark—and to see the day break on the ghastly line of houses, and remember how the same sun used to shine into my room, and wake me once—I would have done even that to save her!"

Sinking on the stones, she took some in each hand, and clenched them up, as if she would have ground them. She writhed into some new posture constantly; stiffening her arms, twisting them before her face, as though to shut out from her eyes the little light there was, and drooping her head, as if it were heavy with unexpressed recollections.
It isn't much worse! I only called to say that if there was anything we could do, in present circumstances, mother or self, or Wickfield and Heep, we should be really glad. I may go so far!'' said Uriah, with a sickly smile at his partner.

``Uriah Heep,'' said Mr. Wickfield, in a monotonous forced way, ``is active in the business, Trotwood. But he says, I quote correctly, you know I had an old interest in you. Apart from that, what Uriah says I quite concur in!''

``Oh, what a reward it is!'' said Uriah, drawing up one leg, at the risk of bringing down upon himself another visitation from my aunt, ``to be so trusted in! But I hope I am able to do something to relieve him from the fatigues of business, Master Copperfield!''

``Uriah Heep is a great relief to me,'' said Mr. Wickfield, in the same dull voice. ``It's a head off my mind, Trotwood, to have such a partner!''

The red fox made him say all this, I knew, to exhibit him to me in the light he had indicated on the night when he poisoned my rest. I saw the same ill-favored smile upon his face again, and saw how he watched me.

``You are not going, papa?'' said Agnes, anxiously. ``Will you not walk back with Trotwood and me?''

He would have looked to Uriah, I believe, before replying, if that worthy had not anticipated him.

``I am bespoke myself,'' said Uriah, ``on business; otherwise I should have been agreeable to have kept with my friends. But I leave my partner to represent the firm. Miss Agnes, ever yours! I wish you good-day, Master Copperfield, and leave my humble respects for Miss Betsey Trotwood.''

With those words, he retired, kissing his great hand, and leering at us like a mask.

We sat there, talking about our pleasant old Canterbury days, an hour or two. Mr. Wickfield, left to Agnes, soon became more like his former self; though there was a settled depression upon him, which he never shook off. For all that, he brightened; and had an evident pleasure in hearing us recall the little incidents of our old life, many of which he remembered very well. He said it was like those times, to be alone with Agnes and me again; and he wished to Heaven they had never changed. I am sure there was an influence in the placid face of Agnes, and in the very touch of her hand upon his arm, that did wonders for him.

My aunt (who was busy nearly all this while with Peggotty, in the inner room) would not accompany us to the place where they were staying, but insisted on my going; and I went. We dined together. After dinner, Agnes sat beside him, as of old, and poured out his wine. He took what she gave him, and no more-like a child—and we all three sat together at a window as the evening gathered in. When it was almost dark, he lay down on a sofa, Agnes pillowing his head and bending over him a little while; and when she came back to the window, it was not so dark I could see tears glittering in her eyes.

I pray Heaven that I never may forget that girl in her love and truth, at that time of all others for if I should, I must draw near her, and then I would desire to remember her. She filled my heart with such good recollections, strengthening my weakness so, by her contrived direction— I know not how, she was cool and gentle to advise me in many wandering and unsettled purposes, that all the little good I have done, had harm I have borne, I solemnly believe to refer to her.

And how she spoke to me of Dora, sitting in the window in the dark; listened to my story of her; praised again; and round the little figure shed some glimpse of her own past, that made it yet more precious and more dear to me! Oh, Agnes, sister of my broken heart! You had known then, what I knew long after.

There was a beggar in the street, when we went down; and as I turned my head toward the window, thinking of her calm serenity and grace, made me start by muttering, as if he were of the morning:

``Blind! Blind! Blind!''

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CHAPTER XXXVI

ENTHUSIASM.

I began the next day with another visit to the Roman bath, and then started for Delhi. I was not dispirited now. I was not afraid; I had a shabby coat, and had no yearnings after greys. My whole manner of thinking of misfortune was changed. What I had to do was to show my aunt that her past goodness had not been thrown away on an insensible grateful object. What I had to do was, with the painful discipline of my younger days, count, by going to work with a resolute steady heart. What I had to do was, to throw away the woodman's axe in my hand, and clear a way through the forest of difficulty, by passing down the trees until I came to Dora. And then on at a mighty rate, as if it could be done by walking.

When I found myself on the familiar high road, pursuing such a different errand to the old one of pleasure, with which it was used to seem as if it were a complete change had come in my whole life. But that did not discount With the new life, came new purpose, new ambition. Great was the labor; priceless was the reward; Dora was the reward, and Dora must be worth it.

I got into such a transport, that I felt sorry my coat was not a little shabby and old, wanted to be cutting at these trees in the forest of difficulty, under circumstances that would prove my strength. I had a good mind to throw stones upon the road, to lend me his hands a little while, and let me begin to walk at a mighty rate, as if it could be done by walking.
anita. I stimulated myself into a sort of delirium, that I felt I got so out of breath, that I felt I was going to faint, I don’t know how much. I went into a cottage that I saw was painted white, and it was near by. It was a little house, with a little garden in it, and a little dog barking, and a little boy running about. I came out again, hotter and sweeter, and dashed up Highgate, for I was there an hour too early; had not been, should have been about to cool myself, before I was a. 

, after putting myself under this state of preparation, was to find the place. It was not in that part of the town where Mrs. Steerforth lived, but quite a small part of the town. When I discovered, I went back, in an attempt not to resist, to a lane by Mrs. Steerforth’s, which I had looked over the corner of the lane was shut up close. The door was standing open, and Rosa ing, bar-headed, with a quick movement, and down a gravel walk on one side. She gave me the idea of some it was dragging the length of its path, and wearing away from my place of observing that part of the neighborhood, not gone near it, strolled about a little later. The church with the hat stands on the top of the hill, and then to tell me the time. An ancient, used as a school, was in the old house it must have been. I passed it, as I recollect it, roached the Doctor’s cottage—a cottage, on which he seemed to have exored, if I might judge from the repairs that had been made to it—I saw him walking in the shade, gaiters and all, as if he had been walking since the days of my pupil’s old companions, and his leisurely ways. Plenty of high trees in the neighborhood or three rocks were on the after him, as if they had been hit by the Canterbury rocks, giving him closely in conse-

“you are a man! How do you do? I am delighted to see you. My dear Copperfield, how very much you have improved! You are quite—yes—dear me!”

I hoped he was well, and Mrs. Strong too.

“Oh, dear, yes!” said the doctor; “Annie’s quite well, and she’ll be delighted to see you. You were always her favorite. She said so, last night, when I showed her your letter. And—yes, you recollect Mr. Jack Maldon, Copperfield?”

“Perfectly, sir.”

“Of course,” said the Doctor. “To be sure. He’s a pretty man, too.”

“Has he come home, sir?” I inquired.

“From India?” said the Doctor. “Yes. Mr. Jack Maldon couldn’t bear the climate, my dear. Mrs. Markleham—you have not forgotten Mrs. Markleham?”

Forgotten the Old Soldier! And in that short time!

“Mrs. Markleham,” said the Doctor, “was quite vexed about him, poor thing; so we have got him home again; and we have bought him a little Patent place, which agrees with him much better.”

I knew enough of Mr. Jack Maldon to suspect from this account that it was a place where there was not much to do, and which was pretty well paid. The Doctor, walking up and down with his hand on my shoulder, and his kind face turned encouragingly to mine, went on:

“Now, my dear Copperfield, in reference to this proposal of yours. It’s very gratifying and agreeable to me, I am sure; but don’t you think you could do better. You achieved distinction, you know, when you were with us. You are qualified for many good things. You have laid a foundation that any edifice may be raised upon; and if we are not very picky, you should devote the spring-time of your life to such a poor pursuit as I can offer?”

I became very glowing again, and, expressing myself in a rhetorical style, I am afraid, urged my request strongly: reminding the Doctor that I had already a profession.

“Well, well,” returned the Doctor, “that’s true. Certainly, your having a profession, and being actually engaged in studying it, makes a difference. But, my young friend, what’s seventy pounds a-year?”

“It doubles our income, Doctor Strong,” said I.

“Dear me!” replied the Doctor. “To think of that! Not that I mean to say it’s rigidly limited to seventy pounds a-year, because I have always contemplated making any young friend I might thus employ, a present too. Undoubtedly,” said the Doctor, still walking me up and down with his hand on my shoulder. “I have always taken an annual present into account.”

“My dear tutor,” said I (now, really, without any nonsense), “to whom I owe more obligations already than I ever can acknowledge—”
always forgetting herself, and taking care of the other nine."

"Is she the eldest?" I inquired.

"Oh dear, no!" said Traddles. "The eldest is a Beauty."

He saw, I suppose, that I could not help smiling at the simplicity of this reply; and added, with a smile, upon his own ingenuous face:

"Not, of course, but that my Sophy—pretty name, Copperfield, I always think?"

"Very pretty!" said I.

"Not, of course, but that Sophy is beautiful too in my eyes, and would be one of the dearest girls that ever was, in anybody's eyes (I should think). But when I say the eldest is a Beauty, I mean she really is a—" he seemed to be describing clouds about himself, with both hands: "Splendid, you know," said Traddles, energetically.

"Indeed!" said I.

"Oh, I assure you," said Traddles, "something very uncommon, indeed! Then, you know, being formed for society and admiration, and not being able to enjoy much of it in consequence of their limited means, she naturally gets a little irritable and exacting, sometimes. Sophy puts her in good-humour!"

"Is Sophy the youngest?" I hazarded.

"Oh dear, no!" said Traddles, striking his chin. "The two youngest are only nine and ten. Sophy educates 'em."

"The second daughter, perhaps?" I hazarded.

"No," said Traddles. "Sarah's the second. Sarah has something the matter with her spine, poor girl. The malady will wear out by-and-by, the doctors say, but in the meantime she has to lie down for a twelvemonth. Sophy nurses her. Sophy's the fourth."

"Is the mother living?" I inquired.

"Oh yes," said Traddles, "she is alive. She is a very superior woman indeed, but the damp country is not adapted to her constitution, and—in fact, she has lost the use of her limbs."

"Dear me!" said I.

"Very sad, is it not?" returned Traddles. "But in a merely domestic view it is not so bad as it might be, because Sophy takes her place. She is quite as much a mother to her mother, as she is to the other nine."

I felt the greatest admiration for the virtues of this young lady; and, honestly with the view of doing my best to prevent the good-nature of Traddles from being imposed upon, to the detriment of their joint prospects in life, inquired how Mr. Micawber was?

"He is quite well, Copperfield, thank you," said Traddles. "I am not living with him at present."

"No?"

"No. You see the truth is," said Traddles, in a whisper, "he has changed his name to Mortimer, in consequence of his temporary embarrassments; and he can't come out till after dark—and then in speckless. There was an execution put into our house, for rent. Mrs. Micawber, such a dreadful state that I really could not give my name to that second bill we here. You may imagine how delight to my feelings, Copperfield, to see the settled with it, and Mrs. Micawber恢复 spirit."

"Hum!" said I.

"Not that her happiness was of importance," pursed Traddles, "for, unless within a week another execution can break up the establishment, I have been in a furnished apartment since then, and time has been very private indeed, won't think it selfish, Copperfield, if I that the broker carried off my little room with the marble top, and Sophy's stove stand?"

"What a hard thing!" I exclaimed.

"It was a— it was a pull," said Traddles, with his usual wince at that expression, mention it reproachfully, however, but without. The fact is, Copperfield, I was a repurchase them at the time of their sale for the first place, because the broker, having that I wanted them, ran the price up to a great extent; and, in the second place, I didn't any money. Now, I have kept, since, upon the broker's shop," said Traddles, with a great enjoyment of his mystery, the top of Tottenham Court Road, last, to-day I found them out for sale, only noticed them from over the way, but the broker saw me, bless you, he'd ask a lot for them! What has occurred to me, having the money, is, that perhaps you would wish to ask that good nurse of yours to come to the shop—I can show it her from the corner of the next street—and make the gain to them, as if they were for herself can!"

The delight with which Traddles pressed this plan on me, and the sense he had of common artfulness, are among the freshest in my remembrance.

I told him that my old nurse would be willing to assist him, and that we would all the field together, but on one condition. The condition was, that he should make a solemn oath to grant no more loans of his name, or to Mr. Micawber.

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, "already done so, because I begin to feel that not only was inconsiderate, but that I was positively unjust to Sophy. My was passed to myself, there is no longer no time; but I pledge it to you, too, greatest readiness. That first unlucky of I have paid. I have no doubt Mr. Micawber would have paid it if he could, but he can't. One thing I ought to mention, which is, much in Mr. Micawber's Copperfield. It the second obligation, which is not yet

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cordially shook hands; and Mrs. Crupp, who was
busy making tea, and could not be too attentive,
cordially said she had known well as Mr. Copper
full would have his heart in his mouth, when he
see his dear relations.

"Halloa!" said my aunt to Peggotty, who
qualified before her awful presence. "How are
you?"

"You remember my aunt, Peggotty?" said I.

"For the love of goodness, child," exclaimed
my aunt, "don't call the woman by that South
Sea Island name! If she married and got rid of it,
which was the best thing she could do, why don't
you give her the benefit of the change? What's
your name now,—P?" said my aunt, as a compro-
mise for the obnoxious appellation.

"Barkis, ma'am," said Peggotty, with a curtis
ey.

"Well! That's human," said my aunt. "It
sounds less as if you wanted a Missionary. How
d'ye do, Barkis? I hope you're well?"

Encouraged by these gracious words, and by
my aunt's extending her hand, Barkis came for-
ward, and took the hand, and curtsied her ac-
knowledgments.

"We are older than we were, I see," said my
aunt. "We have only met each other once before,
you know. A nice business we made of it then! I
Trot, my dear, another cup.

I handed it dutifully to my aunt, who was in
her usual inflexible state of figure; and ventured
a remonstrance with her on the subject of her sit-
ing on a box.

"Let me draw the sofa here, or the easy-chair,
aunt," said I. "Why should you be so uncom-
fortable?"

"Thank you, Trot," replied my aunt, "I pre-
fer to sit upon my property." Here my aunt
looked hard at Mrs. Crupp, and observed, "We
needn't trouble you to wait, ma'am."

"Shall I put a little more tea in the pot afore I
get, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp.

"No, I thank you, ma'am," replied my aunt.

"Would you let me fetch another pat of butter,
ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp. "Or would you be
persuaded to try a new-laid hagg? or should I
brile a rasher? Ain't there nothing I could do for
your dear aunt, Mr. Copperfull?"

"Nothing, ma'am," returned my aunt. "I
shall do very well, I thank you."

Mrs. Crupp, who had been incessantly smiling
to express sweet temper, and incessantly holding
her head on one side, to express a general feebl-
ness of constitution, and incessantly rubbing her
hands, to express a desire to be of service to all
deserving objects, gradually smiled herself, one-
sided herself, and rubbed herself, out of the room.

"Dick!" said my aunt. "You know what I
told you about time-servers and wealth-worship-
pers?"

Mr. Dick—with rather a scared look, as if he
had forgotten it—returned a hasty answer in the
affirmative.

"Mrs. Crupp is one of them," said my aunt.
"Barkis, I'll trouble you to look after the tea, and let me have another cup, for I don't fancy that woman's pouring-out!"

I knew my aunt sufficiently well to know that she had something of importance on her mind, and that there was far more matter in this arrival than a stranger might have supposed. I noticed how her eye lighted on me, when she thought my attention otherwise occupied; and what a curious process of hesitation appeared to be going on within her, while she preserved her outward stiffness and composure. I began to reflect whether I had done anything to offend her; and my conscience whispered me that I had not yet told her about Dora. Could it by any means be that, I wondered?

As I knew she would only speak in her own good time, I sat down near her, and spoke to the birds and played with the cat, and was as easy as I could be. But I was very far from being really easy; and I should still have been so, even if Mr. Dick, leaning over the great kites behind my aunt, had not taken every possible opportunity of shaking his head darkly at me, and pointing at her.

"Trot," said my aunt at last, when she had finished her tea, and carefully smoothed down her dress, and wiped her lips—"you needn't go, Barkis!—Trot, have you got to be firm, and self-reliant?"

"I hope so, aunt."

"What do you think?" inquired Miss Betsey."

"I think so, aunt."

"Then why, my love," said my aunt, looking earnestly at me, "why do you think I prefer to sit upon this property of mine to-night?"

I shook my head, unable to guess.

"Because," said my aunt, "it's all I have. Because I'm ruined, my dear!"

If the house, and every one of us, had tumbled out into the river together, I could hardly have received a greater shock.

"Dick knows it," said my aunt, laying her hand calmly on my shoulder. "I am ruined, my dear Trot! All I have in the world is in this room, except the cottage; and that I have left Janet to let. Barkis, I want to get a bed for this gentleman to-night. To save expense, perhaps you can make up something here for myself. Anything will do. It's only for to-night. We'll talk about this, more, to-morrow."

I was roused from my amazement, and concern for her—I am sure, for her—by her falling on my neck for a moment, and crying that she only grieved for me. In another moment she suppressed this emotion; and said with an aspect more triumphant than dejected:

"We must meet reverses boldly, and not suffer them to frighten us, my dear. We must learn to set the play out. We must live misfortune down, Trot!"

CHAPTER XXXV.

DEPRESSION.

As soon as I could recover my presence of mind, which quite deserted me in the first overpowering shock of my aunt's intelligence, I posed to Mr. Dick to come round to the coal shop, and take possession of the bed while Peggotty had lately vacated. The chandler's being in Hungerford Market, and Hunger Market being a very different place in those days, there was a low wooden colonnade before door (not very unlike that before the one where the little man and woman used to be in the old weather-glass), which pleased Dick mightily. The glory of lodging over structure would have compensated him, I say, for many inconveniences; but, as there really few to bear, beyond the compendium of vices I have already mentioned, and perhaps want of a little more elbow-room, he was greatly charmed with his accommodation. Mr. C. had indignantly assured him that there was a room to swing a cat there; but, as Mr. Dick observed to me, sitting down on the fender, nursing his leg, "You know, Trot, I don't want to swing a cat. I never do swing a cat. Therefore, what does that signify to me?"

I tried to ascertain whether Mr. Dick's understanding of the causes of this sudden great change in my aunt's affairs, as I have expected, he had none at all. The account he could give of it, was, that my aunt said to him, the day before yesterday, "Dick, are you really and truly the philanthropist, take you for!" That then he had said, I hoped so. That then my aunt had said, "I am ruined!" That then he had said, "Heed!" That then my aunt had praised highly, which he was very glad of. And that they had come to me, and had had bottled ale and sandwiches on the road.

Mr. Dick was so very complacent, with the foot of the bed, nursing his leg, and telling this, with his eyes wide open and a sun smile, that I am sorry to say I was provoke explaining to him that ruin meant distress and starvation; but, I was soon bitterly re for this harshness, by seeing his face turn and tears course down his lengthened lid, while he fixed upon me a look of such unmit woe, that it might have softened a heart mine. I took infinitely greater to cheer him up again than I had taken to him; and I soon understood (as I ought to known at first) that he had been so cut merely because of his faith in the wisest and wonderful of women, and his unbounded est on my intellectual resources. The latter, have, he considered a match for any kind aster not absolutely mortal.

"What can we do, Trotwood," said Dick. "There's the Memorial."

"To be sure there is," said I. "I
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My aunt's gentleness.

I do just now, Mr. Dick, is to keep a cheerful

I suppose I looked doubtful, for she added:

untinct, and not let my aunt see that we are

"Tut, tut, child. If nothing worse than Ale

looking about it." he assented to this in the most earnest man-

happens to us, we are well off."

try; and improved me, if I should see him want-

"I should think so myself, aunt, I am sure,"

ing an inch out of the right course, to recall

said I.

by some of those superior methods which

"Well, then, why don't you think so?" said

I always at my command. But I regret to

my aunt.

say that the fright I had given him proved too

"Because you and I are very different people," 

sh for his best attempts at concealment. All

I returned.

evening his eyes wandered to my aunt's face, 

"Stuff and nonsense, Trot!" replied my aunt.

in an expression of the most dismal apprehen-

My aunt went on with a quiet enjoyment, in

sion, as if he saw her growing thin on the spot.

which there was very little affection, if any; 

was conscious of this, and put a constraint

drinking the warm ale with a teaspoon, and soak-

in his head; but his keeping that immovable,

ing her strips of toast in it.

sitting rolling his eyes like a piece of maz-

"Trot," said she, "I don't care for strange

ery, did not mend the matter at all. I saw

faces in general, but I rather like that Barkis of

look at the loaf at supper (which happened
yours, do you know!"

happened to a small one), as if nothing else stood

"It's better than a hundred pounds to hear 

between us and famine; and when my aunt insisted

you say so!" said I.

in making his customary repast, I detected

"It's a most extraordinary world," observed

in the act of pocketing fragments of his bread

my aunt, rubbing her nose; "how that woman 

cheese; I have no doubt for the purpose of

ever got into it with that name, is unaccount-

vying us with those savings, when we should

some comfort. Barkis is uncommonly fond of you, 

reached an advanced stage of attenuation.

I would be much more easy to be born a

My aunt, on the other hand, was in a composed 

Jackson, or something of that sort, one would

state of mind, which was a lesson to all of us— 

think.

as I am sure. She was extremely gracious to 

Perhaps she thinks so, too; it's not her

Gotty, except when I inadvertently called her 

fault," said I.

that name; and, strange as I knew she felt in

"I suppose not," returned my aunt, rather 

Don, appeared quite at home. She was to 

grudging the admission: "but it's very aggrava-

my bed, and I was to lie in the sitting-room, 

me. That's some comfort. Barkis is uncommonly fond of you, 

clip guard over her. She made a great point 

Trot."

I there, the river near the river, in case of a confuga-

"There is nothing she would leave undone to 

; and I suppose really did find some satisfac-

ition in that circumstance.

prove it," said I.

'Trot, my dear," said my aunt, when she saw

"Nothing, aunt?"

"Nothing, I believe," returned my aunt. 

'making preparations for compounding her 

"Not wine, my dear. Ale."" 

"Here, the poor fool has been begging and prying 

'make night-draught, "No!"

'But there is wine here, aunt. And you al-

about handing over some of her money—because

'Nothing, aunt?"

"You mustn't make wine, Trot. Ale 

she has got too much of it! A simpleton!"

'thought Mr. Dick would have fallen, Insensi-

told her. Half a pint."

My aunt's tears of pleasure were positively 

My aunt was resolute, I went out and got 

thought Mr. Dick would have fallen, Insensi-

trickling down into the warm ale.

ale myself. As it was growing late, Peggotty 

'My dear," said my aunt, after taking a spoon-

She's the most ridiculous creature that ever 

Mr. Dick took that opportunity of repairing 

Mr. Dick took that opportunity of repairing 

My aunt was walking up and down the room 

I returned, crimping the borders of her 

I don't know that these wretched girls expect to go to, for my part. I

She and chandler's shop together. I parted from 

the chandler's shop together. I parted from 

I returned, crimping the borders of her 

I wonder they don't knock out their brains against

poor fellow, at the corner of the street, with 

the corners of the wall, and I made a 

the toast on the usual infallible principles. 

against—against mantelpieces," said my aunt; an idea

my knee. I returned, crimping the borders of her 

the nightcap on, and the skirt of her gown 

which was probably suggested to her by her con-

say she caused so much misery! Give me a Kiss, 

"My dear," said my aunt, after taking a spoon-

"It's a great deal better than wine. Not 

Trot. I am sorry for your early experience."
"As I bent forward, she put her tambour on my knee to detain me, and said: "Oh, Trot, Trot! And so you fancy yourself in love? Do you?"

"Fancy, aunt!" I exclaimed, as red as I could be. "I adore her with my whole soul!"

"Dora, indeed!" returned my aunt. "And you mean to say the little thing is very fascinating, I suppose?"

"My dear aunt," I replied, "no one can form the least idea what she is!"

"Ah! And not silly?" said my aunt.

"Silly, aunt!"

I seriously believe it had never once entered my head for a single moment, to consider whether she was or not. I resented the idea, of course; but I was in a manner struck by it, as a new one altogether.

"Not light-headed?" said my aunt.

"Light-headed, aunt!" I could only repeat this daring speculation with the same kind of feeling with which I had repeated the preceding question.

"Well! well!" said my aunt. "I only ask, I don't depreciate her. Poor little couple! And so you think you were formed for one another, and are to go through a party-supper-table kind of life? I suppose two pretty pieces of confectionery, do you, Trot?"

She asked me this so kindly, and with such a gentle air, half playful and half sorrowful, that I was quite touched.

"We are young and inexperienced, aunt, I know," I replied; "and I dare say we say and think a good deal that is rather foolish. But we love one another truly, I am sure. If I thought Dora could ever love anybody else, or cease to love me; or that I could ever love anybody else, or cease to love her; I don't know what I should do—go out of my mind, I think!"

"Ah, Trot!" said my aunt, shaking her head, and smiling gravely, "blind, blind, blind!"

"Some one that I know, Trot," my aunt pursued, after a pause, "though of a very plain disposition, has an earnestness of affection in him that reminds me of poor Baby. Earnestness is what that Somebody must look for, to sustain him and improve him, Trot. Deep, downright, faithful earnestness."

"If you only knew the earnestness of Dora, aunt!" I cried.

"Oh, Trot!" she said again: "blind, blind!" and without knowing why, I felt a vague unhappy loss or want of something overshadow me like a cloud.

"However," said my aunt, "I don't want to put two young creatures out of conceit with themselves, or to make them unhappy; so, though it is a girl and boy attachment, and girl and boy attachments very often—mind! I don't say always!—come to nothing, still we'll be serious about it, and hope for a prosperous issue one of these days. There's time enough for it to come to anything!"

This was not upon the whole very much to a rapturous lover; but I was glad to know in my confidence, and I was much being tired. So I thanked her still, and mark of her affection, and for all kindnesses towards me; and after a few minutes, she took her nightscap into room.

How miserable I was, when I lay down, and thought about my being Mr. Spenlow's eyes; about my not being thought I was, when I proposed to Dora, worldly condition was, and releasing her engagement if she thought fit; about how contrives to live, during the long ten articles, when I was earning nothing doing something to assist my aunt, and way of doing anything; about coming have no money in my pocket, and shabby coat, and to be able to carry Dora, presents, and to ride no gallant grey show myself in no agreeable light! So selfish as I knew it was, and as I tortured by knowing that it was, to let my mind my own distress so much, I was so Dora that I could not help it. I know it was in me not to think more of my aunt of myself; but, so far, selfishness was left from Dora, and I could not put Dora on for any mortal creature. How ex- miserable I was, that night!

As to sleep, I had dreams of poverty, sorts and shapes, but I seemed to dream the previous ceremony of going to sleep was ragged, wanting to sell Dora mat bundles for a halfpenny; now I was in a night-gown and boots, announced by Mr. Spenlow on appearing before that lady attire; now I was hungrily pung the crumbs that fell from old Tiffey's cut, regularly eaten when St. Paul's st now I was hopelessly endeavoring to get to marry Dora, having nothing but one Heep's gloves to offer in exchange, to the whole Commons rejected; and still, my conscience of my own room, I was always about like a distressed ship in a sea clothes.

My aunt was restless, too, for I heard her walking to and fro. Two times in the course of the night, attired in flannel wrapper in which she looked higher, she appeared, like a disturbed ghost, and came to the side of the sofa I lay. On the first occasion I started up to learn that she inferred from a particular the sky, that Westminster Abbey was and to be consulted in reference to the roof of its igniting Buckingham Street, in wind changed. Lying still, after that that she sat down near me, whispering "Poor boy!" And then I was a on clothes more wretched, to which was
adful she was of me, and how selfishly mindful was of myself.

It was difficult to believe that a night so long me, could be short to anybody else. This conversation set me thinking and thinking of an imaginary party where people were dancing all away, until that became a dream too, and I tried the music incessantly playing one tune, I saw Dora incessantly dancing one dance, without the least notice of me. The man who had been playing the harp all night, was tryi; in vain to cover it with an ordinary-sized sheet, when I awoke; or I should rather say, so I left off trying to go to sleep, and saw the shining in through the window at last.

There was an old Roman bath in those days at the bottom of one of the streets out of the Strand, and may be there still—in which I have had many bold plunges. Dressing myself as quietly as I could, and leaving Pegotty to look after my sit, I tumbled head foremost into it, and then all for a walk to Hampstead. I had a hope this brisk treatment might freshen my wits a bit, and I thought it did them good, for so soon as to the conclusion that the first step I ought to take was to try if my articles could be cancelled and the premium recovered. I got some fresh air on the Heath, and walked back to Worm Commissaries, along the watered roads and through a pleasant smell of summer flowers, winging in gardens and carried into town on baskets' heads. Intent on this first effort to meet altered circumstances.

I arrived at the office so soon, after all, that I had an hour's loitering over the Commons, ere old Tiffy, who was always first, appeared in his key. Then I sat down in my shady corner, looking up at the sunlight on the opposite wine-pots, and thinking about Dora; until Mr. Spenlow came in, creased and curly.

"How are you, Copperfield?" said he. "Fine morning!"

"Beautiful morning, sir," said I. "Could I take a word to you before you go into Court?"

"By all means," said he. "Come into my office." I followed him into his room, and he beganzing on his gown, and touching himself up behind a little glass he had, banging inside a closet.

"I am sorry to say," said I, "that I have some disharmonious intelligence from my aunt."

"No!" said he. "Dear me! Not paralysis, sirs?"

"It has no reference to her health, sir," I replied. "She has met with some large losses. In t, she has very little left, indeed."

"You astonish me, Copperfield!" cried Mr. Spenlow.

I shook my head. "Indeed, sir," said I, "her drs are so changed, that I wish to ask you whether it would be possible—at a sacrifice on part of some portion of the premium, of me," I put this on the spur of the moment, warned by the blank expression of his face—"to cancel my articles?"

What it cost me to make this proposal, nobody knows. It was like asking, as a favor, to be sentenced to transportation from Dora.

"To cancel your articles, Copperfield. Cancel?"

I explained with tolerable firmness, that I really did not know where my means of subsistence were to come from, unless I could earn them for myself. I had no fear for the future, I said—and I laid great emphasis on that, as if to imply that I should still be decidedly eligible for a son-in-law one of these days—but, for the present, I was thrown upon my own resources.

"I am extremely sorry to hear this, Copperfield," said Mr. Spenlow. "Extremely sorry. It is not usual to cancel articles for any such reason. It is not a professional course of proceeding. It is not a convenient precedent at all. Far from it. At the same time—"

"You are very good, sir," I murmured, anticipating a concession.

"Not at all. Don't mention it," said Mr. Spenlow. "At the same time, I was going to say, if it had been my lot to have my hands unfettered—if I had not a partner—Mr. Jorkins—"

My hopes were dashed in a moment, but I made another effort.

"Do you think, sir," said I, "if I were to mention it to Mr. Jorkins—"

Mr. Spenlow shook his head discouragingly.

"Heaven forbid, Copperfield," he replied, "that I should do any man an injustice; still less, Mr. Jorkins. But I know my partner, Copperfield. Mr. Jorkins is not a man to respond to a proposition of this peculiar nature. Mr. Jorkins is very difficult to move from the beaten track. You know what he is!"

I am sure I knew nothing about him, except that he had originally been alone in the business, and now lived by himself in a house near Montagu Square, which was fearfully in want of painting; that he came very late of a day, and went away very early; that he never appeared to be consulted about anything; and that he had a dingy little black-hole of his own up-stairs, where no business was ever done, and where there was a yellow old cartridge-paper pad upon his desk, unsold by ink, and reported to be twenty years of age.

"Would you object to my mentioning it to him, sir?" I asked.

"By no means," said Mr. Spenlow. "But I have some experience of Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield. I wish it were otherwise, for I should be happy to meet your views in any respect. I cannot have the least objection to your mentioning it to Mr. Jorkins, Copperfield, if you think it worth while."

Availing myself of this permission, which was given with a warm shake of the hand, I sat thinking about Dora, and looking at the sunlight streaming from the chimney-pot down the wall of the opposite house, until Mr. Jorkins came.
tion concerning of me and all at home, to-morrow. When my child," he said aloud, and with an energy of gratitude that shook him from head to foot, "stood upon the brink of more than I can say or think on—Martha, true to her promise, saved her!"

I could not repress a cry of joy.

"Maa'r Davy!" he said, gripping my hand in that strong hand of his, "it was you at first made mention of her to me. I thank you, sir! She was arrest. She had know'd of her bitter knowledge where to watch and what to do. She had done it. And the Lord was above all! She come, white and hurried, upon Emly in her sleep. She says to her, 'Else up from worse than death, and come with me!' Them belonging to the house would have stopped her, but they might as soon have stopped the sea. 'Stand away from me,' she says, 'I am a ghost that calls her from beside her open grave!' She told Emly she had seen me, and know'd I loved her, and forgiv her. She wrapped her, hasty, in her clothes. She took her, faint and trembling, on her arm. She heeded no more what they said, than if she had no cars. She walked among 'em with my child, minidg only her; and brought her safe out, in the dead of the night, from that black pit of ruin!"

"She attended on Emly," said Mr. Peggotty, who had released my hand, and put his own hand on his heaving chest; "sheattended to my Emly, lying wearied out, and wandering betwixt whiles, till late next day. Then she went in search of me; then in search of you, Maa'r Davy. She didn't tell Emly what she come out far, lest her 'art should fall, and she should think of hiding of herself. How the cruel lady know'd of her being there, I can't say. Whether him as I have spoke so much of, chanced to see 'em going theer, or whether (which is most like to my thinking) he had heerd it from the woman, I don't greatly ask myself. My niece is found.

"All night long," said Mr. Peggotty, "we have been together, Emly and me. 'Tis little (considering the time) as she has told, in warders, through them broken-hearted tears; 'tis less as I have seen of her dear face, as crowd'd into a woman's at my heart. But, all night long, her arms has been about my neck; and her head has laid here; and we knows full well, as we can put our trust in one another ever more."

He ceased to speak, and his hand upon the table rested there in perfect repose, with a resolution in it that might have conquered lions.

"It was a gleam of light upon me, Trot," said my aunt, drying her eyes, "when I formed the resolution of being godmother to your sister Betsey Trotwood, who disappointed me; but, next to that, hardly anything would have given me greater pleasure, than to be godmother to that good young creature's baby!"

Mr. Peggotty nodded his understanding of my aunt's feelings, but could not trust himself with any verbal reference to the subject of her commendation. We all remained elict, and occu-

plied with our own reflections (my aunt with her eyes, and now sobbing convulsively, and now laughing and calling herself a fool); still spoke.

"You have quite made up your mind," said to Mr. Peggotty, "as to the future, god-mother; I need scarcely ask you."

"Quite, Maa'r Davy," he returned; "and Emly. There's mighty countries, far from us. Our future life lays over the sea."

"They will emigrade together, aunt," said.

"Yes!" said Mr. Peggotty, with a smile. "No one can't reproach my dying in Australia. We will begin a new life over there!"

I asked him if he yet proposed to himself any time for going away.

"I was down at the Docks early this morning, sir," he returned, "to get information concerning of them ships. In about six weeks or two months from now, there'll be one sailing—I see for this morning—went aboard—and we shall take our passage in her."

"Quite alone?" I asked.

"Aye, Maa'r Davy!" he returned. "My sister, you see, she's that fond of you and yours, and that accustomed to think only of her own country, that it wouldn't be hardly fair to let her go. Besides which, there's one she has charge, Maa'r Davy, as doesn't ought to be forgot."

"Poor Ham!" said I.

"My good sister takes care of his house, you see, ma'am, and he takes kindly to her," Mr. Peggotty explained for my aunt's better information. "He'll set and talk to her, with a calm spirit, wen it's like he couldn't bring himself to open his lips to another. Poor fellow!" said Mr. Peggotty, shaking his head, "there's so much left him, that he could spare the little as he has!"

"And Mrs. Gummidge?" said I.

"Well, I've had a sort of contrit-eation, I do tell you," returned Mr. Peggotty, with a perplext look, which gradually cleared as he went on. "Concerning of Missis Gummidge. For wen Missis Gummidge falls a thinking of the old 'un, she ain't what you may call good company. Betwixt you and me, Maa'r Davy—and you, ma'am,—wen Missis Gummidge takes to whimicking, 'an old country way for crying,—she's liable to be considered to be, by them as didn't know the old 'un, peevish-like. Now I did know the old 'un," said Mr. Peggotty, "and I know'd his merits, so I understand her; but, 'tain't entirely so, you see, with others—naturally can't be!"

My aunt and I both acquiesced.

"Wheerby," said Mr. Peggotty, "my sister might—I don't say she would, but might—and Missis Gummidge give her a leetle trouble now and again. Therer'll 'tain't my intentions to move Missis Gummidge long with them, but to find a Bein' fur her whose she can submissive, see herself (A Bein' signifies, in that district, a house, whi
Dear Agnes!

disinterested, Trotwood, for—I am too cruelly prejudiced—I do not like to pass away alone, with him."
"Exercise the same influence over Agnes!"
looked at her head. "There is such a one," said she, "that you would see in the dear old house. They live"
said I.
and his mother. He sleeps in Agnes, looking up into my room, he said Agnes, ed to learn my lessons. How do you remember? The little panelled
er, Agnes? When I saw you, for coming out at the door, with your basket of keys hanging at your side?"
the same," said Agnes, smiling. you think of it so pleasantly. We

"Indeed," said I.
set room to myself still; but I cannot desert Mrs. Heep, you know. And as, quietly, "I feel obliged to bear
, when I might prefer to be alone. To other reason to complain of her.

sometimes, by her praises of her nature in a mother. He is a very er.

Agnes when she said these words, sitting in her any consciousness of n. Her mild but earnest eyes met heir own beautiful frankness, and change in her gentle face.

self evil of their presence in the Agnes, "is that I cannot be as I could wish—Uriah Heep being so
us—and cannot watch over him, if or bold a thing to say, as closely as I
If any fraud or treachery is pract
him, I hope that simple love and
stronger, in the end. I hope that

truth are stronger in the end than infortune in the world."
bright smile, which I never saw on ce, died away, even while I thought was, and so familiar it had once;
and she asked me, with a quick expression (we were drawing very st), If I knew how the reverse in my
stances had been brought about. ing no, she had not told me yet, o thoughtful, and I fancied I felt her in mine.

my aunt alone, in a state of some A difference of opinion had arisen self and Mrs. Crupp, on an abstract
property of chambers being inhab
uler sex); and my aunt, utterly in
different to spasms on the part of Mrs. Crupp, had cut the dispute short, by informing that lady that she smelt of my brandy, and that she would trouble her to walk out. Both of these expres
ions Mrs. Crupp considered actionable, and had expressed her intention of bringing before a "British Jury"—meaning, it was supposed, the bulwark of our national liberties.

My aunt, however, having had time to cool, while Peggotty was out showing Mr. Dick the soldiers at the Horse Guards—and being, besides, greatly pleased to see Agnes—rather plumed herself on the affair than otherwise, and received us with unimpaired good-humor. When Agnes laid her bonnet on the table, and sat down beside her, I could not but think, looking on her mild eyes and her radiant forehead, how natural it seemed to have her there: how trustfully, although she was so young and inexperienced, my aunt confided in her; how strong she was, indeed, in simple love and truth.

We began to talk about my aunt’s losses, and I told them what I had tried to do that morning.

"Which was injudicious, Trot," said my aunt, "but well meant. You are a generous boy—I suppose I must say, young man, now—and I am proud of you, my dear. So far so good. Now, Trot and Agnes, let us look the case of Betsey Trotwood in the face, and see how it stands."

I observed Agnes turn pale, as she looked very attentively at my aunt. My aunt, patting her cat, looked very attentively at Agnes.

"Betsey Trotwood," said my aunt, who had always kept her money matters to herself: "—I don’t mean your sister, Trot, my dear, but myself—had a certain property. It don’t matter how much; enough to live on. More; for she had saved a little, and added to it. Betsey fund
her property for some time, and then, by the advice of her man of business, laid it out on landed security. That did very well, and returned very good interest, till Betsey was paid off. I am talking of Betsey as if she was a man
of-war. Well! Then, Betsey had to look about her, for a new investment. She thought she was wiser, now, than her man of business, who was not such a good man of business by this time, as he used to be—I am alluding to your father, Agnes—and she took it into her head to lay it out for herself. So she took her pigs," said my aunt, "to a foreign market; and a very bad market it turned out to be. First, she lost in the mining way, and then she lost in the diving way—flashing up treasure, or some such Tom Titler nonsense," explained my aunt, rubbing her nose; "and then she lost in the mining way again, and, last of all, to set the thing entirely to rights, she lost in the banking way. I don’t know what the Bank shares were worth for a little while," said my aunt; "cent per cent was the lowest of it, I believe; but the Bank was at the other end of the world, and tumbled into space, for what I know; anyhow, it fell to pieces, and never will and never can pay sixpence; and Betsey’s sixpences were
all there, and there's an end of them. Least said, soonest mended!"

My aunt concluded this philosophical summary by fixing her eyes with a kind of triumph on Agnes, whose color was gradually returning.

"Dear Miss Trotwood, is that all the history?" said Agnes.

"I hope it's enough, child," said my aunt.

"If there had been more money to lose, it wouldn't have been all, I dare say. I should have contrived to throw that after the rest, and make another chapter, I have little doubt. But, there was no more money, and there's no more story."

Agnes had listened at first with suspended breath. Her color still came and went, but she breathed more freely. I thought I knew why. I thought she had had some fear that her unhappy father might be in some way to blame for what had happened. My aunt took her hand in hers, and laughed.

"Is that all?" repeated my aunt. "Why, yes, that's all, except, 'And she lived happy ever afterwards.' Perhaps I may add that of Betsey yet, one of these days. Now, Agnes, you have a wise head. So have you, Trot, in some things, though I can't compliment you always;" and here my aunt shook her own at me, with an energy peculiar to herself. "What's to be done? Here's the cottage, taking one time with another, will produce, say seventy pounds a-year. I think we may safely put it down at that. Well!—That's all we've got," said my aunt; with whom it was an idiosyncrasy, as it is with some horses, to stop very short when she appeared to be in a fair way of going on for a long while.

"Then," said my aunt, after a rest, "there's Dick. He's good for a hundred a-year, but of course that must be expended on himself. I would sooner send him away, though I know I am the only person who appreciates him, than have him, and not spend his money on himself. How can Trot and I do best, upon our means? What do you say, Agnes?"

"Every aunt," I interposed, "that I must do something!"

"Go for a soldier, do you mean?" returned my aunt, alarmed; "or go to sea? I won't hear of it. You are to be a procetor. We're not going to have any knockings on the head in this family, if you please, sir."

I was about to explain that I was not desirous of introducing that mode of provision into the family, when Agnes inquired if my rooms were held for any long term?

"You come to the point, my dear," said my aunt. "They are not to be got rid of, for six months at least, unless they could be underlet, and that I don't believe. The last man died here. Five people out of six would die—of course—of that woman in nankeen with the flannel petticoat. I have a little ready money; and I agree with you, the best thing we can do is to live the term out here, and get Dick a bed-room hard by."

I thought my duty to hint at the discomfort my aunt would sustain, from living in a state of guerilla warfare with Mrs. Gm; she disposed of that objection summarily, declaring, that, on the first demonstration of illiberality, she was prepared to astonish her for the whole remainder of her natural life.

"I have been thinking, Trotwood," said diffidently, "that if you had time—"

"I have a good deal of time, Agnes always disengaged after four or five o'clock have time early in the morning. In one another," said I, conscious of redherring my case, I thought of the hours and hours I had been flagging about town, and to and fro upon wood Road, "I have abundance of time."

"I know you would not mind," said coming to me, and speaking in a low, full of sweet, and hopeful consideration of the duties of a secretary."

"Mind, my dear Agnes?"

"Because," continued Agnes, "Doctor has acted on his intention of retiring, come to live in London; and he asked me, if I could recommend him one. You think he would rather have his law pupil near him, than anybody else?"

"Dear Agnes!" said I. "What should I say? You are always my good friend, I told you so. I never think of you in any light."

Agnes answered with her pleasant face, one good Angel (meaning Dora) was one went on to remark to the Doctor that he was ready to occupy himself in his study, eat morning, and in the evening—and that if my leisure would suit his requirements he was scarcely more delighted with the idea of earning my own bread, than with the earning it under my old master; to short, on the advice of Agnes, I sat down and wrote to the Doctor, stating my object, pointing to call on him next day at ten forenoon. This I addressed to Highgate, that place, so measurable to me, he lived and posted, myself, without losing a word.

Wherever Agnes was, some agreeable to her, her good-natured presence seemed inseparable the place. When I came back, I found at the door, two birds hanging, just as they had hung on the parlor window of the cottage; and a chair, unoccupied, my aunt's much easier chair, in position at the open window; and even the green fan, which my aunt had brought away, screws on to the window-sill. I had done all this, by its seeming to have done itself; and I should have known a man who had arranged my neglected bed the whole order of my school days, even the supposed Agnes to be miles away, insterilizing her busy with them, and smiling at the idea of order into which they had fallen.

My aunt was quite gracious on the end of the Thames Street, and really very well in a nice manner, though not very well in a nice manner, though not very well.
it she cou'd not relent towards the joke, which, she said, "peppered" A complete revolution, in which a prominent part, was being effected in my rooms, in regard of this. I was looking on, thinking how Peggoty seemed to do it and, how much Agnes did without it. I turned to the door. "I have promised me that he would come," said Agnes, turning pale, "It's promised me that he would come."

the door, and admitted, not only Mr. Uriah Heep. I had not seen Mr. or some time. I was prepared for a who I had heard from his appearance shocked me.

ot that he looked many years older, dressed with the old scrupulous cleanliness there was an unwholesome ruddiness on his face; or that his eyes were full and or that there was a nervous trembling the cause of which I knew, and had seen at work. It was not that he's good looks, or his old bearing of a-for that he had not—but the thing he most was, that with the evidences of superiority still upon him, he should self to that crawling impression of Uriah Heep. The reversal of the two their relative positions, Uriah's of Mr. Wickfield's of dependence, was a painful to me than I can express. If I Ape taking command of a Man, I ly have thought it a more degrading

ared to be only too conscious of it then he came in, he stood still; and ad bowed, as if he felt it. This was moment; for Agnes softly said to him, 'I'm Miss Trotwood—and Trotwood, have not seen for a long while!' and proached, and constrainedly gave my and, shook hands more cordially in the moment's pause I speak of, I countenance form itself into a most mile. Agnes saw it too, I think, for from him.

y aunt saw, or did not see, I defy the physiognomy to have made out, with a conceit. I believe there never was th such an imperturbable countenance those. Her face might have been a in the occasion in question, for any w upon her thoughts; until she broke her usual abruptness. Wickfield" said my aunt; and he fter for the first time. "I have been daughter how well I have been disy money for myself, because I couldn't ou, as you were growing rusty in busi- us. We have been taking counsel to-getting on very well, all things con- gnes is worth the whole firm, in my

"If I may umbly make the remark," said Uriah Heep, with a writh, "I fully agree with Miss Betsey Trotwood, and should be only too appy if Miss Agnes was a partner."

"You're a partner yourself, you know," returned my aunt, "and that's about enough for you, I expect. How do you find yourself, sir?"

in acknowledgment of this question, addressed to him with extraordinary curtsey. Mr. Heep, uncomfortably clutching the blue bag he carried, replied that he was pretty well, he thanked my aunt, and hoped she was the same.

"And you, Master—I should say, Mister Copperfield," pursued Uriah. "I hope I see you well! I am rejoiced to see you, Mister Copperfield, even under present circumstances." I believed that; for he seemed to relish them very much. "Present circumstances is not what your friends would wish for you, Mister Copperfield, but it isn't money makes the man: it's—I am really unequal with my humble powers to express what it is," said Uriah, with a fawning jerk, "but it isn't money!"

Here he shook hands with me: not in the common way, but standing at a good distance from me, and lifting my hand up and down like a pump-handle, that he was a little afraid of.

"And how do you think I am looking, Master Copperfield,—I should say, Mister?" fawned Uriah. "Don't you find Mr. Wickfield blooming, sir? Years don't tell much in our firm, Master Copperfield, except in raising up the humble, namely, mother and self—and in developing," he added, as an after thought, "the beautiful, namely, Miss Agnes."

He jerked himself about, after this compliment, in such an intolerable manner, that my aunt, who had sat looking straight at him, lost all patience.

"Deuce take the man!" said my aunt, sternly, "what's he about? Don't be galvanic, sir!"

"I ask your pardon, Miss Trotwood," returned Uriah; "I'm aware you're nervous."

"Go along with you, sir!" said my aunt, anything but appeased. "Don't presume to say so! I am nothing of the sort. If you're an eel, sir, conduct yourself like one. If you're a man, control your limbs, sir! Good God!" said my aunt, with great indignation, "I am not going to be serpentined and corkscrewed out of my senses!"

Mr. Heep was rather abashed, as most people might have been, by this explosion; which derived great additional force from the indignant manner in which my aunt afterwards moved in her chair, and shook her head as if she were making snips or bounces at him. But, he said to me aside in a meek voice:

"I am well aware, Master Copperfield, that Miss Trotwood, though an excellent lady, has a quick temper (indeed I think I had the pleasure of knowing her, when I was an humble clerk, before you did, Master Copperfield), and it's only natural, I am sure, that it should be made quicker by present circumstances. The wonder is, that
With a slight wave of his hand, as though to explain to me that he could not enter the old place, he turned away. As I looked after his figure, crossing the waste in the moonlight, I saw him turn his face towards a strip of silvery light upon the sea, and pass on, looking at it, until he was a shadow in the distance.

The door of the boat-house stood open when I approached; and, on entering, I found it emptied of all its furniture, saving one of the old lockers, on which Mrs. Gummidge, with a basket on her knee, was seated, looking at Mr. Peggotty. He leaned his elbow on the rough chimney-piece, and gazed upon a few expiring embers in the grate; but he raised his head, hopefully, on my coming in, and spoke in a cheering manner.

"Come, according to promise, to bid farewell to 't, eh, Mas'r Davy," he said, taking up the candle. "Bare enough now, ain't it?"

"Indeed you have made good use of the time," said I.

"Why, we have not been idle, sir. Missis Gummidge has worked like a — I don't know what Missis Gummidge an't worked like," said Mr. Peggotty, looking at her, at a loss for a sufficiently approving simile.

Mrs. Gummidge, leaning on her basket, made no observation.

"Herc's the very locker that you used to sit on, long with Emly!" said Mr. Peggotty, in a whisper. "I'm going to carry it away with me, last of all. And her's your own little bed-room, sec, Mas'r Davy? A'most as bleak to-night, as 'art could wish!"

In truth, the wind, though it was low, had a solemn sound, and crept around the deserted house with a whispered wailing that was very mournful. Everything was gone, down to the little mirror with the oyster-shell frame. I thought of myself, lying here, that first great change was being wrought at home. I thought of the blue-eyed child who had enchanted me. I thought of Steerforth; and a foolish, fearful fancy came upon me of his being near at hand, and liable to be met at any turn.

"Tis like to be long," said Mr. Peggotty, in a low voice, "'fore the boat finds new tenants. They look upon 't down here, as being unfortunate now!"

"Does it belong to anybody in the neighborhood?" I asked.

"To a mustard-maker up town," said Mr. Peggotty. "I'm going to give the key to him to-night."

We looked into the other little room, and came back to Mrs. Gummidge, sitting on the locker, whom Mr. Peggotty, putting the light on the chimney-piece, requested to rise, that he might carry it outside the door before extinguishing the candle.

"Dain't," said Mrs. Gummidge, suddenly deserting her basket, and clinging to his arm, "my dear Dain't, the parting words I speak in this house is, I mustn't be left behind. Dain't ye think of leaving me behind, Dain't! Oh, don't ye ever do it!"

Mr. Peggotty, taken aback, looked from Mr. Gummidge to me, and from me to Mrs. Gummidge, as if he had been awakened from a sleep.

"Dain't, ye, dearest Dain't, don't ye!" cried Mrs. Gummidge, fervently. "Take me long, you, Dain't, take me long with you and Emly! I'll be your servant, constant and true. I hope I ain't of them parts where you're a-going! I'm bound to you for one, and happy, but don't leave me behind, Dain't! That's a dear word!"

"My good soul," said Mr. Peggotty, shaking his head, "you don't know what a long ways, and what a hard life 'tis!"

"Yes I do, Dain't! I can guess!" cried Mrs. Gummidge. "But my parting words under the roof is, I shall go into the house and die, if I do not take. I can dig, Dain't! I can work. I can live hard. I can be loving and patient now more than you think, Dain't, if you'll only say. I wouldn't touch the 'lowance, not if I was 'fraid of want, Dain't Peggotty; but I'll go with you and Emly, if you'll only let me, to the world's end! I know how 'tis; I know you think that I am long and lorn; but, deary love, 'taint so no'! I ain't set here, so long, a watching, and a thinking of your trials, without some good being done me. Mas'r Davy, speak to him for me! I know his ways, and Emly's, and I knows their sarcasms, and can be a comfort to 'em, same times, and labor for 'em alone! Dain't, deary Davy, let me go long with you!"

And Mrs. Gummidge took his hand, and kissed it with a homely pathos and affection, his homely rapture of devotion and gratitude, that he well deserved.

We brought the locker out, extinguished the candle, fastened the door on the outside, and left the old boat close shut up, a dark speck in the cloudy night. Next day, when we were returning to London outside the coach, Mrs. Gummidge and her basket were on the seat behind, and Mrs. Gummidge was happy.

CHAPTER LII.
I ASIST AT AN EXPLOSION.

When the time Mr. Micawber had appointed so mysteriously was within four-and-twenty hours of being come, my aunt and I consulted how we should proceed; for my aunt was very unwilling to leave Dora. Ah! how easily I carried Dora up and down-stairs, now!

We were disposed, notwithstanding Mr. Micawber's stipulation for my aunt's attendance, to arrange that she should stay at home, and be represented by Mr. Dick and me. In short, we had resolved to take this course, when Dora again unsettled us by declaring that she never would forgive herself, and never would forgive her bad boy, if my aunt remained behind on any pretense.

"I won't speak to you," said Dora.
ra out of granite. I stumblized myself into
a heat, and got so out of breath, that I felt
if I had been earning I don't know how much.
This state, I went into a cottage that I saw was
let, and examined it narrowly—for I felt it
casary to be practical. It would do for me.
Dora admirably: with a little front garden
p to run about in, and bark at the trades-
ples through the railings, and a capital room
stairs for my aunt. I came out again, hotter
faster than ever, and dashed up to Highgate,
uch a rate that I was there an hour too early;
though I had not been, should have been
ged to stroll about to cool myself, before I was
ill presentable.
My first care, after putting myself under this
casary course of preparation, was to find the
m's house. It was not in that part of
abe where Mrs. Steerforth lived, but quite
the opposite side of the little town. When I
made this discovery, I went back, in an at-
tion I could not resist, to a lane by Mrs.
forth's, and looked over the corner of the
man. His room was shut up close. The
ervatory doors were standing open, and Rosa
le was walking, bareheaded, with a quick mum-
ous step, up and down a gravel walk on one
of the lawn. She gave me the idea of some
ce thing, that was dragging the length of its
in to and fro upon a beaten track, and wearing
heart out.
I came softly away from my place of observa-
a, and avoiding that part of the neighborhood,
s wishing I had not gone near it, strolled about
it was ten o'clock. The church with the
ader spire, that stands on the top of the hill
was not there then to tell me the time. An
ed-brick mansion, used as a school, was in
place; and a fine old house must have been
go to school at, as I recollect it.
When I approached the Doctor's cottage—a
ly old place, on which he seemed to have ex-
led some money, if I might judge from the
ellishments and repairs that had the look of
just completed—I saw him walking in the
t at the side, gaiters and all, as if he had
ver left off walking since the days of my pupil-
. He had his old companions about him, too;
there were plenty of high trees in the neigh-
hood, and two or three rocks were on the
long after him, as if they had been
en to about him by the Canterbury rocks,
were observing him closely in conse-
.
Knowing the utter hopelessness of attracting
attention from that distance, I made bold to
on the gate, and walk after him, so as to meet
when he should turn round. When he did,
de towards me, he looked at me thought-ly for a few moments, evidently without think-
g about me at all; and then his benevolent face
pressed extraordinary pleasure, and he took
by both hands.
"Why, my dear Copperfield," said the doctor;
"you are a man! How do you do? I am de-
lighted to see you. My dear Copperfield, how
very much you have improved! You are quite—
yes—dear me!"
I hoped he was well, and Mrs. Strong too.
"Oh dear, yes!" said the doctor; "Annie's
quite well, and she'll be delighted to see you.
You were always her favorite. She said so, last
night, when I showed her your letter. And—yes,
to be sure—you recollect Mr. Jack Maldon,
Copperfield?"
"Perfectly, sir."
"Of course," said the Doctor. "To be sure.
He's pretty well, too."
"Has he come home, sir?" I inquired.
"From India?" said the Doctor. "Yes. Mr.
Jack Maldon couldn't bear the climate, my dear.
Mrs. Markleham—you have not forgotten Mrs.
Markleham?"
Forgotten the Old Soldier! And in that short
time!
"Mrs. Markleham," said the Doctor, "was
quite vexed about him, poor thing; so we have
got him at home again; and we have bought him
a little Patent place, which agrees with him much
better."
I knew enough of Mr. Jack Maldon to suspect
from this account that it was a place where there
was not much to do, and which was pretty well
paid. The Doctor, walking up and down with his
hand on my shoulder, and his kind face turned
encouragingly to mine, went on: "Now, my dear Copperfield, in reference to this
proposal of yours. It's very gratifying and
agreeable to me, I am sure; but don't you think
you could do better. You achieved distinction,
you know, when you were with us. You are
qualifed for many good things. You have laid a
foundation that any office may be raised upon:
and if not a pity that you should devote the
spring-time of your life to such a poor pursuit as I
can offer?"
I became very glowing again, and, expressing
myself in a rhapsodical style, I am afraid, urged
my request strongly: reminding the Doctor that I
had already a profession.
"Well, well," returned the Doctor, "that's
true. Certainly, your having a profession, and
being actually engaged in studying it, makes a
difference. But, my good young friend, what's
seventy pounds a-year?"
"It doubles our income, Doctor Strong,"
said I.
"Dear me!" replied the Doctor. "To think
of that! Not that I mean to say it's rigidly limited
to seventy pounds a-year, because I have always
contemplated making any young friend I might
thus employ, a present too. Undoubtedly," said
the Doctor, still walking me up and down with his
hand on my shoulder. "I have always taken an
annual present into account."
"My dear tutor," said I "now, really, without
any nonsense, "to whom I owe more obliga-
tions already than I ever can acknowledge—"
"No, no," interposed the Doctor. "Pardon me!"

"If you will take such time as I have, and that is my mornings and evenings, and can think it worth seventy pounds a-year, you will do me such a service as I cannot express."

"Dear me!" said the Doctor, innocently. "To think that so little should go for so much! Dear, dear! And when you can do better, you will? On your word, now?" said the Doctor,—which he had always made a very grave appeal to the honor of us boys.

"On my word, sir!" I returned, answering in our old school manner.

"Then be it so," said the Doctor, clapping me on the shoulder, and still keeping his hand there, as we still walked up and down.

"And I shall be twenty times happier, sir," said I, with a little—I hope innocent—flattery, "if my employment is to be on the Dictionary."

The Doctor stopped, smilingly clapped me on the shoulder again, and exclaimed, with a triumph most delightful to behold, as if I had penetrated to the profoundest depths of mortal sagacity, "My dear young friend, you have hit it. It is the Dictionary."

How could it be anything else! His pockets were as full of it as his head. It was sticking out of him in all directions. He told me that since his retirement from scholastic life, he had been advancing with it wonderfully; and that nothing could suit him better than the proposed arrangements for morning and evening work, as it was his custom to walk about in the day-time with his considering cap on. His papers were in a little confusion, in consequence of Mr. Jack Maldon having lately proffered his occasional services as an amanuensis, and not being accustomed to that occupation; but we should soon put right what was amiss, and go on swimmingly. Afterwards, when we were fairly at our work, I found Mr. Jack Maldon's efforts more troublesome to me than I had expected, as he had not confined himself to making numerous mistakes, but bad sketched so many soldiers, and ladies' heads, over the Doctor's manuscript, that I often become involved in labyrinths of obscurity.

The Doctor was quite happy in the prospect of our going to work together on that wonderful performance, and we settled to begin next morning at seven o'clock. We were to work two hours every morning, and two or three hours every night, except on Saturdays, when I was to rest. On Sundays, of course, I was to rest also, and I considered these very easy terms.

Our plans being thus arranged to our mutual satisfaction, the Doctor took me into the house to present me to Mrs. Strong, whom we found in the Doctor's new study, dusting his books,—a freedom which he never permitted anybody else to take with those sacred favorites.

They had postponed their breakfast on my account, and we sat down to table together. We had not been seated long, when I saw an approaching arrival in Mrs. Strong's face, before it sound of it. A gentleman on horseback entered the gate, and leading his horse into the yard, with the bridge over his arm, as if he were home, tied him to a ring in the empty wall, and came into the breakfast parlour. It was Mr. Jack Maldon; and Maldon was not all improved by his thoughts. I was in a state of fertoes; however, as to young men who were a down the trees in the forest of difficulty impression must be received with due

"Mr. Jack!" said the Doctor. "Copy Mr. Jack!"

Mr. Jack Maldon shook hands with not very warmly, I believed; and with languid patronage, at which I secretly grieved. But his langur or altogether a wonderful sight; except when he addressed himself to his cousin Annie.

"Have you breakfasted this morning, Jack?" said the Doctor.

"I hardly ever take breakfast, sir," he with his head thrown back in an easy to find it bores me."

"Is there any news to-day?" inquired the Doctor.

"Nothing at all, sir," replied Mr. Maldon, "There's an account about the poor hungry and discontented down in the town they are always being hungry and discontented somewhere."

The Doctor looked grave, and said, that he wished to change the subject. "There's no news at all; and no news, they say, news."

"There's a long statement in the paper about a murder," observed Mr. Maldon, "somebody is always being murdered, now read it.""

A display of indifference to all the passions of mankind was not supposed to a distinguished quality at that time, I have observed it to be considered such a known is it very fashionable indeed, I thought displayed with such success, that I have	tered some fine ladies and gentlemen as well have been born caterpillars. It impressed me the more then, because it to me, but it certainly did not tend to the opinion of, or to strengthen my confidence in Jack Maldon.

"I came out to inquire whether you like to go to the opera to-night," said Mr. Maldon, turning to her. "It's the last good night there will be, this season; and there's a solo whom she really ought to hear. She is exquisite. Besides which, she is so dignified," relapsing into languor.

The Doctor, ever pleased with what he like to hear his young wife, turned to her and said, "You must go, Annie. You must go."

"I would rather not," she said to it.

"I prefer to remain at home," she said to the Doctor.
I work ferociously.

looking at her cousin, she then ad
and asked me about Agnes, and
should see her, and whether she was
come that day; and was so much dis
I wondered how even the Doctor,
a toast, could be blind to what was so
saw nothing. He told her, good-nat
she was young and ought to be en
terained, and must not allow her
side dull by a dull old fellow. More-
ly, he wanted to hear her sing all the
songs to him; and how could she do
less she went? So the Doctor per
king the engagement for her, and Mr.
was to come back to dinner. This
he went to his Patent place, I sup
that all events went away on his horse,
idle.

dions to find out next morning, wheth-
seen. She had not, but had sent into
her cousin off; and had gone out
soon to see Agnes, and had prevailed
ctor to go with her; and they had
y the fields, the Doctor told me,
being delightful. I wondered then,
would have gone if Agnes had not
, and whether Agnes had some good
er her too!
not look very happy, I thought, but it
I face, or a very false one. I often
it, for she sat in the window all the
c at work; and made our breakfast,
ok by snatches as we were employed.
at nine o’clock, she was kneeling on
at the Doctor’s feet, putting on his
alters for him. There was a softened
her face, thrown from some green
anging the open window of the low
thought all the way to Doctors’ Com-
night when I had seen it looking at
nd.
itty busy now; up at five in the morn-
me at nine or ten at night. But I had
faction in being so closely engaged,
talked slowly on any account, and felt
ally that the more I tired myself, the
doing to deserve Dora. I had not re-
f’d in my altered character to Dora yet,
 was coming to see Miss Mills in a
nd I deferred all I had to tell her unti
ly informing her in my letters (all our
ions were secretly forwarded through
that I had much to tell her. In the
put myself on a short allowance of
, wholly abandoned scented soap and
ster, and sold off three waistcoats at a
 sacrifice, as being too luxurious for my
sified with all these proceedings, but
impatience to do something more, I
Traddles, now lodging up behind the
house in Castle Street, Holborn, Mr.
ad been with me to Highgate twice
already, and had resumed his companionship with
the Doctor, I took with me.

I took Mr. Dick with me, because, acutely sen
titive to my aunt’s reverses, and sincerely believ-
ing that no galley-slave or convict worked as I
did, he had begun to fret and worry himself out
of spirits and appetite, as having nothing useful
to do. In this condition, he felt more incapable
of finishing the Memorial than ever; and the
harder he worked at it, the oftener that unlucky
head of King Charles the First got into it. Se-
riously apprehending that his malady would in-
crease, unless we put some innocent deception
upon him and caused him to believe that he was
useful, or unless we could put him in the way of
being really useful (which would be better), I
made up my mind to try if Traddles could help
us. Before we went, I wrote Traddles a full
statement of all that had happened, and Traddles
wrote me back a capital answer, expressive of his
sympathy and friendship.

We found him hard at work with his inkstand
and papers, refreshed by the sight of the flower-
pot-stand and the little round table in a corner of
the small apartment. He received us cordially,
and made friends with Mr. Dick in a moment.
Mr. Dick professed an absolute certainty of hav-
ing seen him before, and we both said, “Very
likely.”

The first subject on which I had to consult
Traddles was this,—I had heard that many men
distinguished in various pursuits had begun life
by reporting the debates in Parliament. Traddles
having mentioned newspapers to me, as one of
his hopes, I had put the two things together, and
told Traddles in my letter that I wished to know
how I could qualify myself for this pursuit. Trad-
dles now informed me, as the result of his in-
quiries, that the mere mechanical acquisition
necessary, except in rare cases, for thorough ex-
cellence in it, that is to say, a perfect and entire
command of the mystery of short-hand writing
and reading, was about equal in difficulty to the
mastery of six languages; and that it might per-
haps be attained, by dint of perseverance, in the
course of a few years. Traddles reasonably sup-
posed that this would settle the business; but I,
only feeling that here indeed were a few tall trees
to be hewn down, immediately resolved to work
my way on to Dora through this thicket, axe in
hand.

“I am very much obliged to you, my dear
Traddles!” said I. “I’ll begin to-morrow.”

Traddles looked astonished, as he well might;
but he had no notion as yet of my rapturous con-
dition.

“I’ll buy a book,” said I, “with a good scheme
of this art in it; I’ll work at it at the Commons,
where I haven’t half enough to do; I’ll take down
the speeches in our court for practice—Traddles,
my dear fellow, I’ll master it!”

“Dear me,” said Traddles, opening his eyes,
“I had no idea you were such a determined char-
acter, Copperfield!”
I don’t know how he should have had, for it was new enough to me. I passed that off, and brought Mr. Dick on the carpet.

“You see,” said Mr. Dick, wistfully, “if I could exert myself, Mr. Traddles—if I could beat a drum—or blow anything!”

Poor fellow! I have little doubt he would have preferred such an employment in his heart to all others. Traddles, who would not have smiled for the world, replied composedly:

“But you are a very good penman, sir. You told me so, Copperfield?”

“Excellent!” said I. And indeed he was. He wrote with extraordinary neatness.

“Don’t you think,” said Traddles, “you could copy writings, sir, if I got them for you?”

Mr. Dick looked doubtfully at me. “Oh, Trotwood!”

I shook my head. Mr. Dick shook his, and sighed. “Tell him about the Memorial,” said Mr. Dick.

I explained to Traddles that there was a difficulty in keeping King Charles the First out of Mr. Dick’s manuscripts; Mr. Dick in the meanwhile looking very deferentially and seriously at Traddles, and sucking his thumb.

“But these writings, you know, that I speak of, are already drawn up and finished,” said Traddles after a little consideration. “Mr. Dick has nothing to do with them. Wouldn’t that make a difference, Copperfield? At all events, wouldn’t it be well to try?”

This gave us new hope. Traddles and I laying our heads together apart, while Mr. Dick anxiously watched us from his chair, we concocted a scheme in virtue of which we got him to work next day with triumphant success.

On a table by the window in Buckingham Street, we set out the work Traddles procured for him—which was to make, I forget how many copies of a legal document about some right of way—and on another table we spread the last unfinished original of the great Memorial. Our instructions to Mr. Dick were that he should copy exactly what he had before him, without the least departure from the original; and that when he felt it necessary to make the slightest allusion to King Charles the First, he should fly to the Memorial. We exhorted him to be resolute in this, and left my aunt to observe him. My aunt reported to us, afterwards, that, at first, he was like a man playing the kettle-drums, and constantly divided his attention between the two; but that, finding this confuse and fatigue him, and having his copy there, plainly before his eyes, he soon sat at it in an orderly business-like manner, and postponed the Memorial to a more convenient time. In a word, although we took great care that he should have no more to do than was good for him, and although he did not begin with the beginning of a week, he earned by the following Saturday night ten shillings and nine pence; and never, while I live, shall I forget his going about to all the shops in the neighborhood to change this treasure into sixpence, or his bringing them to my range in the form of a heart upon a wall, tears of joy and pride in his eyes. He one under the propitious influence of, from the moment of his being usefully set and if there were a happy man in the world, Saturday night, it was the grateful creator thought my aunt the most wonderful creature in existence, and me the most wonderful man.

“No starring now, Trotwood,” said I, shaking hands with me in a corner, “vide for her, sir!” and he flourished fingers in the air, as if they were ten batons.

I hardly know which was the better Traddles or I. “It really,” said Traddles, taking a letter out of his pocket, and putting it to me, “put Mr. Micawber quite out of head!”

The letter (Mr. Micawber never missed the possible opportunity of writing a letter) was addressed to me, “By the kindness of T. Esquire, of the Inner Temple.” It read thus:

“My dear Copperfield,

“You may possibly not be unprepared for the intimation that something is up. I may have mentioned to you on a previous occasion that I was in expectation of event.

“I am about to establish myself in our provincial town of our favoried port (as society may be described as a happy marriage of the agricultural and the clerical), in connexion with one of the learned professions. Mrs. Micawber and our offspring will accompany me. Our ashes, at a future period, will be interred in the cemetery in the same vault to a venerable pile, for which the spot to refer, has acquired a reputation, shall I say, to China or Peru?

“In bidding adieu to the modern age, where we have undergone many violent changes, I trust not ignobly, Mrs. Micawber and myself, that from our minds we part not for years and it may be for ever, with that parting word, which is always linked by strong associations to the future of our domestic life. If, on the eve of departure, you will accompany our victims to Mr. Thomas Traddles, to our present address, you there reciprocate the wishes natural to a separation, you will confer a boon.

“On

“Your humble servant,

“WILKIN MicAWBER.”

I was glad to find that Mr. Micawber had rid of his dust and ashes, and that he really had turned up at last. Mr. Traddles sent the invitation referred to, without the want of awe. I expressed myself as willing to do honor to it, and we went off.
TRADDLES AND I GO TO MR. MICAWBER'S.

I expressed my opinion that this was going in the right direction.

"It may be a sacrifice," said Mrs. Micawber, "to immerse one's self in a Cathedral town; but surely, Mr. Copperfield, if it is a sacrifice in me, it is much more a sacrifice in a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities."

"Oh! You are going to a Cathedral town?" said I.

Mr. Micawber, who had been helping us all out of the wash-hand-stand jug, replied:

"To Canterbury. In fact, my dear Copperfield, I have entered into arrangements, by virtue of which I stand pledged and contracted to our friend Heep, to assist and serve him in the capacity of—and to be—his confidential clerk."

I stared at Mr. Micawber, who greatly enjoyed my surprise.

"I am bound to state to you," he said, with an official air, "that the business habits, and the prudent suggestions, of Mrs. Micawber, have in a great measure conducted to this result. The gauntlet, to which Mrs. Micawber referred upon a former occasion, being thrown down in the form of an advertisement, was taken up by my friend Heep, and led to a mutual recognition. Of my friend Heep," said Mr. Micawber, "who is a man of remarkable shrewdness, I desire to speak with all possible respect. My friend Heep has not fixed the positive remuneration at too high a figure, but he has made a great deal, in the way of extrication from the pressure of pecuniary difficulties, contingent on the value of my services; and on the value of those services, I pin my faith. Such address and intelligence as I chance to possess," said Mr. Micawber, boastfully disparaging himself, with the old genteel air, "will be devoted to my friend Heep's service. I have already some acquaintance with the law—as a defendant on civil process—and I shall immediately apply myself to the Commentaries of one of the most eminent and remarkable of our English Jurists. I believe it is unnecessary to add that I allude to Mr. Justice Blackstone."

These observations, and indeed the greater part of the observations made that evening, were interrupted by Mrs. Micawber's discovering that Master Micawber was sitting on his boot, or holding his head on with both arms as if he felt it loose, or accidentally kicking Traddles under the table, or shuffling his feet over one another, or producing them at distances from himself apparently outrageous to nature, or lying sideways with his hair among the wine-glasses, or developing his restlessness of limb in some other form incompatible with the general interests of society; and by Master Micawber's receiving those discoveries in a resentful spirit. I sat all the while, amazed by Mr. Micawber's disclosure, and wondering what it meant; until Mrs. Micawber resumed the thread of the discourse, and claimed my attention.

"What I particularly request Mr. Micawber to be careful of is," said Mrs. Micawber, "that he..."
does not, my dear Mr. Copperfield, in applying himself to this subordinate branch of the law, place it out of his power to rise, ultimately, to the top of the tree. I am convinced that Mr. Micawber, giving his mind to a profession so adapted to his fertile resources, and his flow of language, must distinguish himself. Now, for example, Mr. Traddles," said Mrs. Micawber, assuming a profound air, "a Judge, or even a Chancellor. Does an individual place himself beyond the pale of those preferments by entering on such an office as Mr. Micawber has accepted?"

"My dear," observed Mr. Micawber—but glancing inquisitively at Traddles, too; "we have time enough before us, for the consideration of those questions."

"Micawber," she returned, "no! Your mistake in life is, that you do not look forward far enough. You are bound, in justice to your family, if not to yourself, to take in at a comprehensive glance the extreme point in the horizon to which your abilities may lead you."

Mr. Micawber congealed, and drank his punch with an air of exceeding satisfaction—still glancing at Traddles, as if he desired to have his opinion.

"Why, the plain state of the case, Mrs. Micawber," said Traddles, mildly breaking the truth to her, "I mean the real prosaic fact, you know—"

"Just so," said Mrs. Micawber, "my dear Mr. Traddles, I wish to be as prosaic and literal as possible on a subject of so much importance."

"Is it," said Traddles, "that this branch of the law, even if Mr. Micawber were a regular solicitor?"

"Exactly so," returned Mrs. Micawber, ("Wilkins, you are squinting, and will not be able to get your eyes back.")

"Has nothing," pursed Traddles, "to do with that. Only a barrister is eligible for such preferments; and Mr. Micawber could not be a barrister, without being entered at an inn of court as a student, for five years."

"Do I follow you?" said Mrs. Micawber, with her most affable air of business. "Do I understand, my dear Mr. Traddles, that at the expiration of that period, Mr. Micawber would be eligible as a Judge or Chancellor?"

"He would be eligible," returned Traddles, with a strong emphasis on that word.

"Thank you," said Mrs. Micawber, "That is quite sufficient. If said in the case, and Mr. Micawber forfeited no privilege by entering on these duties, my anxiety is set at rest. I speak," said Mrs. Micawber, "as a female, necessarily: but I have always been of opinion that Mr. Micawber possesses what I have heard my papa call, when I lived at home, the judicial mind; and I hope Mr. Micawber is now entering on a field where that mind will develop itself, and take a commanding station."

I quite believe that Mr. Micawber saw himself, in his judicial mind's eye, on the woolsock. He passed his hand complacently over his hair and said with ostentations resignation:

"My dear, we will not anticipate the worst of fortune. If I am reserved to women at least prepared, externally, in appearance, for that distinction. I do not regret my hair, and I have been deprived of it for a special purpose. It is my intention, my dear Co..."

"...uncte courtes, to educate my son for the Church; I will that he should be happy, on his account to institutes."

"For the Church?" said I, still pondering the question. "Yes," said Mr. Micawber. "He marks time head-voice, and will come chorister. Our residence at Canterbury is local, in connexion, will, no doubt, enable him to take advantage of any vacancy that may arise in the Cathedral corps."

On looking at Master Micawber again, that he had a certain expression of face and voice behind his eyebrows; when he appeared to be, on his singing, with the aid of his chocks and an air of alternative, between that and that bed," T. Pecker tapping." After many compliments, I fell into some conversation; and as I was too full of my intentions to keep my altered manner of myself, I made them known to Mr. Micawber. I cannot express how enlightened they both were, by the ideas of being in difficulties, and how comfortable I made them.

When we were nearly come to the end of the punch, I addressed myself to Traddles, reminding him that we must not separate without wishing our friends health, happiness, and success in their new career. I begged Mr. Micawber to fill us bungers, and propose the toast of his health and happiness, and kissing Mrs. Micawber, to remark that on that particular, but not on that occasion. Traddles implied a first particular, but did not consider it sufficiently old friend to venture on the subject.

"My dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, raising with one of his thumbs in a coatpocket, "the companion of my youth, if I may be allowed the expression—esteemed friend Traddles: if I may be permitted to call him so—will allow me, on the part of Micawber, myself, and our offspring, them in the warmest and most uncrowded terms of their good wishes. It may be that on the eve of a migration which will lead us to a perfectly new existence," Mr. J. Micawber spoke as if they were going five hundred miles, "I should offer a free applications to two such friends as I see before me, that I have to say in this way, I have said ever since in society, but may attain, the medium of the learned profession of which I am about to become an unworthy member," desirous not to disgrace, and Mrs. Micawber..."
MR. MICAWBER SETTLES HIS AFFAIRS.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A LITTLE COLD WATER.

My new life had lasted for more than a week, and I was stronger than ever in those tremendous practical resolutions that I felt the crisis required. I continued to walk extremely fast, and to have a general idea that I was getting on. I made it a rule to take as much out of myself as I possibly could, in my way of doing everything to which I applied my energies. I made a perfect victim of myself. I even entertained some idea of putting myself on a vegetable diet, vaguely conceiving that, in becoming a granivorous animal, I should sacrifice to Dora.

As yet, little Dora was quite unconscious of my desperate firmness, otherwise than as my letters darkly shadowed it forth. But, another Saturday came, and on that Saturday evening she was to be at Miss Mills's; and when Miss Mills had gone to her whist-club (telegraphed to me in the street, by a bird cage in the drawing-room middle window), I was to go there to tea.

By this time, we were quite settled down in Buckingham Street, where Mr. Dick continued his copying in a state of absolute felicity. My aunt had obtained a signal victory over Mrs. Crupp, by paying her off, throwing the first pitcher she planted on the stairs out of the window, and protecting, in person, up and down the staircase, a supernumerary whom she engaged from the outer world. These vigorous measures struck such terror to the breast of Mrs. Crupp, that she subsided into her own kitchen, under the impression that my aunt was mad. My aunt being supremely indifferent to Mrs. Crupp's opinion and everybody else's, and rather favoring than discouraging the idea, Mrs. Crupp, of late the bold, became within a few days so faint-hearted, that rather than encounter my aunt upon the staircase, she would endeavor to hide her portly form behind doors—leaving visible, however, a wide margin of flannel petticoat—or would shrink into dark corners. This gave my aunt such unspeakable satisfaction, that I believe she took a delight in prowling up and down, with her bonnet insensibly perched on the top of her head, at times when Mrs. Crupp was likely to be in the way.

My aunt, being uncommonly neat and ingenious, made so many little improvements in our domestic arrangements, that I seemed to be richer instead of poorer. Among the rest, she converted the pantry into a dressing-room for me; and purchased and embellished a bedstead for my occupation, which looked as like a bookcase in...
all there, and there’s an end of them. Least said, soonest mended!"

My aunt concluded this philosophical summary by fixing her eyes with a kind of triumph on Agnes, whose color was gradually returning.

"Dear Miss Trotwood, is that all the history?" said Agnes.

"I hope it’s enough, child," said my aunt. "If there had been more money to lose, it wouldn’t have been all, I dare say. Betsey would have contrived to throw that after the rest, and make another chapter, I have little doubt. But, there was no more money, and there’s no more story."

Agnes had listened at first with suspended breath. Her color still came and went, but she breathed more freely. I thought I knew why. I thought she had had some fear that her unhappy father might be in some way to blame for what had happened. My aunt took her hand in hers, and laughed.

"Is that all?" repeated my aunt. "Why, yes, that’s all except, and she lived happy ever afterwards." Perhaps I may add that of Betsey yet. One of these days. Now, Agnes, you have a wise head. So have you, Trot, in some things, though I can’t compliment you always; and here my aunt shook her own at me, with an energy peculiar to herself. "What’s to be done? Here’s the cottage, taking one time with another, will produce, say seventy pounds a-year. I think we may safely put it down at that. Well—that’s all we’ve got," said my aunt; with whom it was an idiosynrasy, as it is with some horses, to stop very short when she appeared to be in a fair way of going on for a long while.

"Then," said my aunt, after a rest, "there’s Dick. He’s good for a hundred a-year, but of course that must be expended on himself. I would sooner send him away, though I know I am the only person who appreciates him, than have him, and not spend his money on himself. How can Trot and I do best, upon our means? What do you say, Agnes?"

"I say, aunt," I interposed, "that I must do something!"

"Go for a soldier, do you mean?" returned my aunt, alarmed; "or to sea? I won’t hear of it. You are to be a proctor. We’re not going to have any knockings on the head in this family, if you please, sir." I was about to explain that I was not desirous of introducing that mode of provision into the family, when Agnes inquired if my rooms were held for any long term?

"You come to the point, my dear," said my aunt. "They are not to be got rid of, for six months at least, unless they could be underlet, and that I don’t believe. The last man died here. Five people out of six would die,—of course,—of that woman in mannequin with the funnel petticoat. I have a little ready money; and I agree with you, the best thing we can do is to live the term out here, and get Dick a bed-room hard by."

I thought it my duty to hint at the discomfort my aunt would sustain, from living in a state of guerilla warfare with Mrs. Crupp; she disposed of that objection summarily, clarifying, that on the first demonstration of the ladies, she was prepared to astound Mrs. Crupp for the whole remainder of her natural life.

"I have been thinking, Trotwood," said diffidently, "that if you had time—"

"I have a good deal of time, Agnes always engaged after four or five o’clock have time early in the morning. In one or another," said I, conscious of reddening a little. I thought of the hours and hours I had dragged about town, and to and fro upon the eight miles of Wood Road, "I have abundance of time."

"I know you would not mind," said coming to me, and speaking in a low tone, with a full of sweet and hopeful consideration; "I hear it now, the duties of a secretary."

"Mind, my dear Agnes?"

"Because," continued Agnes, "Doctor C’s has acted on his intention of retiring, I come to live in London; and he asked me to come, if I could remember him one more. You think he would rather have his few pupils near him, than anybody else?"

"Dear Agnes!" I said, "What does without you! You are always my good friend; I told you so. I never think of you at all."

Agnes answered with her pleasant look; one good Angel (meaning Dora) was enough. I went on to remind her that Doctor C. was used to occupy himself in his study, early in the morning, and in the evening—and that perhaps my leisure would suit his requirements very well. I was more delighted with the possibility of earning my own bread, than with the idea of earning it under my old master; in short, on the advice of Agnes, I sat down and wrote a letter to the Doctor, stating my object; pointing to call on him next day at ten o’clock. This I addressed to Highgate, that place, so memorable to me; he was to have seen me again, and posted myself, without losing a moment.

Wherever Agnes was, some one always in her heels. Her needful presence seemed inseparable. When I came back, I found my books hanging, just as they had hung in the parlor window of the cottage; and the chair imitating my aunt’s much beloved position at the open window; and even the green fan, which my aunt had brought away, screwed on to the window-sill. I had done all this, by its seeming to have been done by herself; and I should have known it had arranged my neglected books in the old order of my school days, even if Agnes had been miles away, instead of being busy with them, and smiling at the order into which they had fallen.

My aunt was quite gracious on the whole; the Thames did look very well when seen upon it, though not as one was to
but she could not relent towards the
smoke, which, she said, "peppered
ning." A complete revolution, in which
bore a prominent part, was being effected
corner of my rooms, in regard of this
and I was looking on, thinking how
 Peggotby seemed to do with a good
able, and how much Agnes did without
s, that at last, when I came at the door,
hink," said Agnes, turning pale, "It's
I promised me that he would come.
\nand the door, and admitted, not only Mr.
but Uriah Heep. I had not seen Mr.
for some time. I was prepared for a
age in him, after what I had heard from
out his appearance shocked me.
not that he looked many years older,
till dressed with the old scrupulous clean-
that there was an unwholesome ruddi-
his face; or that his eyes were full and
or that there was a nervous trembling
and, the cause of which I knew, and had
years seen at work. It was not that he
his good looks, or his old bearing of a
—he had not—but the thing
ick me most was, that with the evidences
'se superfluous still upon him, he should
impose on to that crawling impersonation
Uriah Heep. The reversal of the two
in their respective positions, Uriah's of
Mr. Wickfield's of dependence, was a
reignitary to me than I can express. If I
an Ape taking command of a Man, I
ardly have thought it a more degrading
appeared to be only too conscious of it
When he came in, he stood still; and
head bowed, as if he felt it. This was
moment; for Agnes softly said to him,
here is Miss Trotwood—and Trotwood,
not have seen for a long while!" and
approached, and constrainedly gave my
hand, and shook hands more cordially.
In the moment's pause I speak of, I
be's countenance form itself into a most
d smile. Agnes saw it too, I think, for
ack from him.
my aunt saw, or did not see, I defy the
physiognomy to have made out, with-
consent. I believe there never was
such an imperceptible countenance
 chose. Her face might have been a
on the occasion in question, for any
wreath upon her thoughts; until she broke
with her usual abruptness.
Wickfield!" said my aunt; and he
p at her for the first time. "I have been
our daughter how well I have been dis-
my money for myself, because I couldn't
you, as you were growing rusty in busi-
I have been taking counsel to
nd getting on very well, all things con-
Agnes is worth the whole firm, in my
"If I may humbly make the remark," said Uriah
Heep, with a writh. "I fully agree with Miss
Betsey Trotwood, and should be only too appy if
Miss Agnes was a partner."
"You're a partner yourself, you know," re-
turned my aunt, "and that's about enough for
you, I expect. How do you find yourself, sir?"
In acknowledgment of this question, addressed
to him with extraordinary curvettes, Mr. Heep,
uncomfortably clutching the blue bag he carried,
replied that he was pretty well, he thanked my
aunt, and hoped she was the same.
"And you, Master—I should say, Mister Cop-
perfield," pursued Uriah. "I hope I see you
well! I am rejoiced to see you, Mister Copper-
field, even under present circumstances." I
believed that; for he seemed to relish them very
much. "Present circumstances is not what your
friends would wish for you, Mister Copperfield,
but it isn't money makes the man: It's—I am
really unequal with my humble powers to express
what it is," said Uriah, with a fawning jerk, "but
it isn't money!"

Here he shook hands with me: not in the com-
mon way, but standing at a good distance
from me, and lifting my hand up and down like a
pump-handle, that he was a little afraid of.
"And how do you think we are looking,
Master Copperfield,—I should say, Mister?"
fawned Uriah. "Don't you find Mr. Wickfield
blooming, sir? Years don't tell much in our
firm, Master Copperfield, except in raising up the
unble, namely, mother and self—and in de-
veloping," he added, as an after thought, "the beau-
tiful, namely, Miss Agnes."

He jerked himself about, after this compli-
ment, in such an intolerable manner, that my
aunt, who had sat looking straight at him, lost all
patience.

"Deuce take the man!" said my aunt, sternly,
"what's he about? Don't be galvanic, sir!"
"I ask your pardon, Miss Trotwood," returned
Uriah; "I'm aware you're nervous."
"Go along with you, sir!" said my aunt, any-
thing but appeased. "Don't presume to say so!
I am nothing of the sort. If you're an ele, sir,
conduct yourself like one. If you're a man, con-
trol your limbs, sir! Good God!" said my aunt,
with great indignation, "I am not going to be
serpented and corkscrewed out of my senses!"

Mr. Heep was rather abashed, as most people
might have been, by this explosion; which de-
rivered great additional force from the indignant
manner in which my aunt afterwards moved in
her chair, and shook her head as if she were
making snaps or bounces at him. But, he said to
me aside in a meek voice:

"I am well aware, Master Copperfield, that
Miss Trotwood, though an excellent lady, has a
quick temper (indeed I think I had the pleasure
of knowing her, when I was an umble clerk, be-
fore you did, Master Copperfield), and it's only
natural, I am sure, that it should be made quicker
by present circumstances. The wonder is, that
With a slight wave of his hand, as though to explain to me that he could not enter the old place, he turned away. As I looked after his figure, crossing the waste in the moonlight, I saw him turn his face towards a strip of silvery light upon the sea, and pass on, looking at it, until he was a shadow in the distance.

The door of the boat-house stood open when I approached; and, on entering, I found it emptied of all its furniture, saving one of the old lockers, on which Mrs. Gummidge, with a basket on her knee, was seated, looking at Mr. Peggotty. He leaned his elbow on the rough chimney-piece, and gazed upon a few expiring embers in the grate; but he raised his head, hopefully, on my coming in, and spoke in a cheerful manner.

"Come, according to promise, to bid farewell to 't, eh, Mas'r Davy," he said, taking up the candle. "Bare enough now, an't it?"

"Indeed, you have made good use of the time," said I.

"Why, we have not been idle, sir. Missis Gummidge has worked like a - I don't know what Missis Gummidge an't worked like," said Mr. Peggotty, looking at her, at a loss for a sufficiently approving simile.

Mrs. Gummidge, leaning on her basket, made no observation.

"Heer's the very locker that you used to sit on, long with Emly!" said Mr. Peggotty, in a whisper. "I'm a going to carry it away with me, last of all. And heer's your own little bed-room, see, Mas'r Davy? A'most as bleak to-night, as 'art could wish!"

In truth, the wind, though it was low, had a solemn sound, and crept around the deserted house with a whispered wafting that was very mournful. Everything was gone, down to the little mirror with the oyster-shell frame. I thought of myself, lying here, when that first great change was being wrought at home. I thought of the blue-eyed child who had enchanted me. I thought of Steerforth, and a foolish, fearful fancy came upon me of his being near at hand, and liable to be met at any turn.

"Tis like to be long," said Mr. Peggotty, in a low voice. "'fore the boat finds new tenants. They look upon't down here, as being unfort'nate now!"

"Does it belong to anybody in the neighborhood?" I asked.

"To a mast-maker up town," said Mr. Peggotty. "I'm going to give the key to him to-night."

We looked into the other little room, and came back to Mrs. Gummidge, sitting on the locker, whom Mr. Peggotty, putting the light on the chimney-piece, requested to rise, that he might carry it outside the door before extinguishing the candle.

"Dan'l," said Mrs. Gummidge, suddenly deserting her basket, and clinging to his arm, "my dear Dan'l, the parting words I speak in this house is, I mustn't be left behind. Don't ye think of leaving me behind, Dan'l! Oh, that ye ever do it!"

Mr. Peggotty, taken aback, looked from his Gummidge to me, and from me to Mrs. Gummidge, as if he had been awakened from a dream.

"Doesn't, dear Dan'l, doesn't ye?" said Mrs. Gummidge, fervently. "Take me away, you, Dan'l, take me along with you and all. I'll be your servant, constant and true. If these slaves in them parts where you're a going, I'll bound to you for one, and happy, but don't leave me behind, Dan'l, that's a deary sight!"

"My good soul," said Mr. Peggotty, shaking his head, "you don't know what a long way, and what a hard life 'tis at!"

"Yes, I do, Dan'l! I can guess!" cried Mrs. Gummidge. "But my parting words under the roof is, I shall go into the house and die, if I can't. I can dig, Dan'l, I can work. I can live hard. I can be loving and patient now more than you think, Dan'l, if you'll only let me. I wouldn't touch the 'lowance, not if I was ever want, Dan'l - Peggotty; but I'll go with you and Emly, if you'll only let me to the world's end. I know how 'tis; I know you think that I am lone and lorn; but, deary love, 'tain't so now! I ain't set here, so long, a watching, and a thinking of your trials, without some good being done me. Mas'r Davy, speak to him for me! I know his ways, and Emly's, and I knows their arrows, and can be a comfort to 'em, some old times, and labor for 'em allus! Dan'l, deary Davy, let me go long with you!"

And Mrs. Gummidge took his hand, and kissed it with a homely pathos and affection, in a homely rapture of devotion and gratitude, that he well deserved.

We brought the locker out, extinguished the candle, fastened the door on the outside, and left the old boat close shut up, a dark speck in the cloudy night. Next day, when we were returning to London outside the coach, Mrs. Gummidge and her basket were on the seat behind, and Mrs. Gummidge was happy.

**CHAPTER LII.**

I ASSIST AT AN EXPLOSION.

When the time Mr. Micawber had appointed so mysteriously, was within four-and-twenty hours of being come, my aunt and I consulted how we should proceed; for my aunt was very unwilling to leave Dora. Ah! how easily I carried Dora up and down-stairs, now!

We were disposed, notwithstanding Mr. Micawber's stipulation for my aunt's attendance, to arrange that she should stay at home, and be represented by Mr. Dick and me. In short, we had resolved to take this course, when Dora again unsettled us by declaring that she never would forgive herself, and never would forgive her bad boy, if my aunt remained behind on any pretence.

"I won't speak to you," said Dora, shaking.
THE DOCTOR.

"you are a man! How do you do? I am delighted to see you. My dear Copperfield, how very much you have improved! You are quite—yes—dear me!"

I hoped he was well, and Mrs. Strong too.

"Oh dear, yes!" said the doctor; "Annie's quite well, and she'll be delighted to see you. You were always her favorite. She said so, last night, when I showed her your letter. And—yes, to be sure—you recollect Mr. Jack Maldon, Copperfield?"

"Perfectly, sir."

"Of course," said the Doctor. "To be sure. He's pretty well, too."

"Has he come home, sir?" I inquired.

"From India?" said the Doctor. "Yes. Mr. Jack Maldon couldn't bear the climate, my dear. Mrs. Markleham—you have not forgotten Mrs. Markleham?"

Forgotten the Old Soldier! And in that short time!

"Mrs. Markleham," said the Doctor, "was quite vexed about him, poor thing; so we have got him at home again; and we have bought him a little Patent place, which agrees with him much better."

I knew enough of Mr. Jack Maldon to suspect from this account that it was a place where there was not much to do, and which was pretty well paid. The Doctor, walking up and down with his hand on his shoulder, and his kind face turned encouragingly to mine, went on:

"Now, my dear Copperfield, in reference to this proposal of yours. It's very gratifying and agreeable to me, I am sure; but don't you think you could do better. You achieved distinction, you know, when you were with us. You are qualified for many good things. You have laid a foundation that any edifice may be raised upon: and is it not a pity that you should devote the spring-time of your life to such a poor pursuit as I can offer?"

I became very glowing again, and, expressing myself in a rhapsodical style, I am afraid, urged my request strongly: reminding the Doctor that I had already a profession.

"Well, well," returned the Doctor, "that's true. Certainly, your having a profession, and being actually engaged in studying it, makes a difference. But, my good young friend, what's seventy pounds a-year?"

"It doubles our income, Doctor Strong," said I.

"Dear me!" replied the Doctor. "To think of that! Not that I mean to say it's rigidly limited to seventy pounds a-year, because I have always contemplated making any young friend I might thus employ, a present too. Undoubtedly," said the Doctor, still walking me up and down with his hand on my shoulder. "I have always taken an annual present into account."

"My dear tutor," said I (now, really, without any nonsense), "to whom I owe more obligations already than I ever can acknowledge—"
“No, no,” interposed the Doctor. “Pardon me!”

“If you will take such time as I have, and that is my mornings and evenings, and can think it worth seventy pounds a year, you will do me such a service as I cannot express.”

“Dear me!” said the Doctor, innocently. “To think that so little should go for so much! Dear, dear! And when you can do better, you will? On your word, now?” said the Doctor,—which he had always made a very grave appeal to the honor of us boys.

“On my word, sir!” I returned, answering in our old school manner.

“But be it so,” said the Doctor, clapping me on the shoulder, and still keeping his hand there, as we still walked up and down.

“And I shall be twenty times happier, sir,” said I, with a little—I hope innocent—flattery, “if my employment is to be on the Dictionary.”

The Doctor stopped, smilingly clapped me on the shoulder again, and exclaimed, with a triumph most delightful to behold, as if I had penetrated to the profoundest depths of mortal sagacity, “My dear young friend, you have hit it. It is the Dictionary.”

“Now could it be anything else? His pockets were as full of it as his head. It was sticking out of him in all directions. He told me that since his retirement from scholastic life, he had been advancing with it wonderfully; and that nothing could suit him better than the proposed arrangements for morning and evening work, as it was his custom to walk about in the daytime with his considering cap on. His papers were in a little confusion, in consequence of Mr. Jack Maldon having lately proffered his occasional services as an amanuensis, and not being accustomed to that occupation; but we should soon put right what was amiss, and go on swimmingly. Afterwards, when we were fairly at our work, I found Mr. Jack Maldon’s efforts more troublesome to me than I had expected, as he had not confined himself to making numerous mistakes, but had sketched so many soldiers, and ladies’ heads, over the Doctor’s manuscript, that I often became involved in labyrinths of obscenity.

The Doctor was quite happy in the prospect of our going to work together on that wonderful performance, and we settled to begin next morning at seven o’clock. We were to work two hours every morning, and two or three hours every night, except on Saturdays, when I was to rest. On Sundays, of course, I was to rest also, and I considered these very easy terms.

Our plans being thus arranged to our mutual satisfaction, the Doctor took me into the house to present me to Mrs. Strong, whom we found in the Doctor’s new study, dusting his books,—a freedom which he never permitted anybody else to take with those sacred favors.

They had postponed their breakfast on my account, and we sat down to table together. We had not been seated long, when I saw an approach-
I WORK FEROCIously.

Without looking at her cousin, she then asked me, and the lady, whether she should see her, and whether she was likely to come that day; and was so much dissatisfied, that I wondered how the Doctor, when his toast, could be blind to what was so obvious. 

But she saw nothing. He told her, good-naturedly, that she was young and ought to be sed and entertained, and must not allow herself to be made dull by a dull old fellow. Moreover, he added, he wanted to hear her sing all the singer’s songs to him, and how could she do well, unless she went? So the Doctor persisted in making an engagement for her, and Mr. Maldon was to come back to dinner. This shunted, he went to his Patent place, I suppose; but at all events went away on his horse, looking very idle.

I was curious to find out next morning, whether he had been. She had not, but had sent into the don to put her cousin off; and had gone out in the afternoon to see Agnes, and had prevailed on the Doctor to go with her; and they had walked home by the fields. The Doctor told me, evening being delightful. I wondered then, whether she would have gone if Agnes had not been in town, and whether Agnes had any goodwill towards her too?

She did not look very happy. I thought, but I thought, perhaps, I was a good face, or a very false one. I often met, for I met in the window the first time we were at work, and made our breakfast, as we took by snatchers as we were employed. As I left, at nine o’clock, she was kneeling on the ground at the Doctor’s feet, putting on his mask and garters for him. There was a softened look upon her face, thrown from some green glasses overhanging the open window of the low room; and I thought all the way to Doctors’ Commons, of the night when I had seen it looking at me.

She was pretty busy now; up at five in the morning, and home at nine or ten at night. But I had rite satisfaction in being so closely engaged, never walked slowly on any account, and felt unreasonably that the more I tired myself, the more I was doing to please Dora. I had not read, indeed, in my altered character to Dora yet, until she was coming to see Miss Mills in a day or two, and I deflected all I had to tell her until I had been informing her in my letters (all our communications were secretly forwarded through Mills), that I had much to tell her. In the meantime, I put myself on a short allowance of grease, wholly abandoned scented soap and under water, and sold off three waistcoats at a ridiculous sacrifice, as being too luxurious for my career.

Yet satisfied with all these proceedings, I was impatient to do something more. I was determined to see Traddles, now lodging up behind the pet of a house in Castle Street, Holborn. Mr. ; who had been with me to Highgate twice already, and had resumed his companionship with the Doctor. I took with me.

I took Mr. Dick with me, because, acutely sensitive to my aunt’s reverse, and sincerely believing that no galley-slave or convict worked as I did, he had begun to fret and worry himself out of spirits and appetite, as having nothing useful to do. In this condition, he felt more incapable of finishing the Memorial than ever; and the harder he worked at it, the oftener that unlucky head of King Charles the First got into it. Seriously apprehending that his malady would increase, unless we put some innocent deception upon him and caused him to believe that he was useful, or unless we could put him in the way of being really useful (which would be better), I made up my mind to try if Traddles could help us. Before we went, I wrote Traddles a full statement of all that had happened, and Traddles wrote me back a capital answer, expressive of his sympathy and friendship.

We found him hard at work with his inksand, papered by the sight of the flower-pot-stand and the little round table in a corner of the small apartment. He received us cordially, and made friends with Mr. Dick in a moment. Mr. Dick professed an absolute certainty of having seen him before, and we both said, "Very likely."

The first subject on which I had to consult Traddles was this—"I had heard that many men distinguished in various pursuits had begun life by reporting the debates in Parliament. Traddles having mentioned newspapers to me, as one of his hopes, I had put the two things together, and told Traddles in my letter that I wished to know how I could qualify myself for this pursuit. Traddles now informed me, as the result of his inquiries, that the mere mechanical acquisition necessary, except in rare cases, for thorough excellence in it, that is to say, a perfect and entire command of the mystery of shorthand writing and reading, was about equal in difficulty to the mastery of six languages; and that it might perhaps be attained, by dint of perseverance, in the course of a few years. Traddles reasonably supposed that this would settle the business; but I, only feeling that here indeed were a few tall trees to be hewn down, immediately resolved to work my way on to Dora through this thicket, axe in hand." "I am very much obliged to you, my dear Traddles!" said I. "I'll begin to-morrow." Traddles looked astonished, as he well might; but he had no notion as yet of my rapturous condition. "I'll buy a book," said I, "with a good scheme of this art in it; I'll work at it at the Commons, where I haven't half enough to do; I'll take down the speeches in our court for practice—Traddles, my dear fellow, I'll master it!"

"Dear me," said Traddles, opening his eyes, "I had no idea you were such a determined character, Copperfield!"
all subjects, the one on which perhaps the strangest revelations of human inconsistency are to be met with—but that mine are made?"

I inclined my head in acquiescence.

"I should not allow," said Mr. Spenlow, with an evident increase of pious sentiment, and slowly shaking his head as he poised himself upon his toes and heeled alternately, "my suitable provision for my child to be influenced by a piece of youthful folly like this present. It is mere folly, mere nonsense. In a little while it will weigh lighter than any feather. But I might—I might—if this silly business were not completely relinquished altogether, be induced in some anxious moment to guard her from, and surround her with protections against, the consequences of, any foolish step in the way of marriage. Now Mr. Copperfield, I hope that you will not render it necessary for me to open, even for a quarter of an hour, that closed page in the book of life, and unsettle, even for a quarter of an hour, grave affairs long since composed."

There was a serenity, a tranquillity, a calm, sun-set air about him, which quite affected me. He was so peaceful and resigned—clearly had his affairs in such perfect train, and so systematically wound up—that he was a man to feel touched in the contemplation of. I really think I saw tears rise to his eyes, from the depth of his own feeling of all this.

But what could I do? I could not deny Dora, and my own heart. When he told me I had better take a week to consider of what he had said, how could I say I wouldn't take a week, yet how could I fail to know that no amount of weeks could influence such love as mine?

"In the meantime, confer with Miss Trotwood, or with any person with any knowledge of life," said Mr. Spenlow, adjusting his cravat with both hands. "Take a week, Mr. Copperfield."

I submitted; and, with a countenance as expressive as I was able to make it of dejected and despairing constancy, came out of the room. Miss Murdstone's heavy eyebrows followed me to the door—I say her eyebrows rather than her eyes, because they were much more important in her face—and she looked so exactly as she used to look, at about that hour of the morning, in our parlor at Blunderstone, that I could have fancied I had been breaking down in my lessons again, and that the dead weight on my mind was that horrible old spelling-book with oval woodcuts, shaped to my youthful fancy, like the glasses out of spectacles.

When I got to the office, and, shutting out old Tissey and the rest of them with my hands, sat at my desk, in my own particular nook, thinking of this earthquake that had taken place so unexpectedly, and in the bitterness of my spirit cursing Jip, I fell into such a state of torment about Dora, that I wonder I did not take up my hat and rush insensibly to Norwood. The idea of their frightening her, and making her cry, and of my not being there to comfort her, was so execrable, that it impelled me to write a wild letter to Mr. Spenlow, beseeching him not to visit her the consequences of my awful destiny, plored to spare her gentle nature—crush a fragil flower—and addressed him, slyly, to the best of my remembrance, as if, of being her father, he had been an Ogre, Dragon of Wanley. This letter I sealed up upon his desk before he returned; and when I came in, I saw him, through the half-canvas of his room, take it up and read it.

He said nothing about it all the morning before he went away in the afternoon he came in, and told me that I need not make it all uneasy about his daughter's happiness, he had assured her, he said, that it was all sense; and he had nothing more to say to me. He believed he was an indulgent father (as he was), and I might spare myself any solicitude on her account.

"You may make it necessary, if you are rash or obstinate, Mr. Copperfield," he observed to me, "for me to send my daughter abroad again; term; but I have a better opinion of you. If you will be wiser than that, in a few days, Miss Murdstone, I promise you I will be wiser than that, in a few days, Miss Murdstone," for I had alluded to her in letter, "I respect that lady's vigilance, and obliged to her; but she has strict charge to the subject. All I desire, Mr. Copperfield, is that it should be forgotten. All you have got to do is, to forget it."

All! In the note I wrote to Miss Mills, I solemnly quoted this sentiment. All I had to say, with gloomy sarcasm, was to forget! That was all, and what was that? I wrote Miss Mills to see me, that evening. If it had not been done with Mr. Mills's sanction and concurrence, I besought a clandestine interview in the back kitchen where the Mangle was formed her that my reason was tottering to the skies, and only she, Miss Mills, could prevent it. I signed myself, hers sincerely; and I couldn't help feeling, while I composed this letter, that it was something in the style of Maturbier.

However, I sent it. At night I repaired Miss Mills's street, and walked up and down the streets. I had been furtively fetched up in Miss Murdstone, and taken the same way to the back kitchen I have since seen reason to believe that there was nothing on earth to prevent my going to the front door, and being shown up into the dark room, except Miss Mills's love of the sun and mysteries.

In the back kitchen I raved as became my nature, and I am sure I did it. Miss Mills received a hasty note from Dora, telling her the was discovered, and saying, "Oh pray come me, Julia, do, do!" But Miss Mills, misgiving the acceptability of her presence to the great powers, had not yet gone; and we were all taken in the Desert of Saharan.
had a wonderful flow of words, and
stretched them out. I could not help feeling,
mingle her tears with mine, that
readable luxury in our afflictions. She
, as I may say, and made the most of
keep grief, she observed, had opened
Dora and me, and Love could only spe
rainbow. Love must suffer in this
; it ever had been so, it ever would be
utter, Miss Mills remarked. Heart
r cobwebs would burst at last, and
was avenged.
A small consolation, but Miss Mills
courage fallacious hopes. She made
ore wretched than I was before, and I
d her with the deepest gratitude) that
lead a friend. We resolved that she
Dora the first thing in the morning,
me means of assuring her, either by
words, of my devotion and misery. We
whelmed with grief; and I think
enjoyed herself completely.
d all to my aunt when I got home; and
all she could say to me, went to bed
I got up despairing, and went out
It was Saturday morning; and I went
he Commons,
prised, when I came within sight of
or, to see the ticket-porters standing
king together, and some half-dozen
razing at the windows which were
I quickened my pace, and, passing
, wondering at their looks, went hur
ks were there, but nobody was doing
Old Tiffey, for the first time in his life
ink, was sitting on somebody else’s
all not hung up his hat.
A dreadful calamity, Mr. Copper
e, as I entered.
? ’” I exclaimed. “What’s the mat
you know?” cried Tiffey, and all the
1, coming round me.
said I, looking from face to face.
eamow,” said Tiffey.
about him?”

”
It was the office reeling, and not I,
ere clerks caught hold of me. They sat
a chair, untied my neckcloth, and
some water. I have no idea whether
my time;
” said I.
ed in town yesterday, and drove down
on by himself,” said Tiffey, “having
in grooms home by the coach, as he
did, you know—”

was taken home without him. The
ped at the stable gate. The man went
arted. Nobody in the carriage.”
run away?”
” are not hot,” said Tiffey, putting on
his glasses; “no hotter, I understand, than they
would have been, going down at the usual pace.
The reins were broken, but they had been drag
ning on the ground. The house was roused up
directly, and three of them went out along the
road. They found him a mile off.”

“More than a mile off, Mr. Tiffey,” interposed
a junior.

“Was it? I believe you are right,” said Tiff
ey,—”more than a mile off—not far from the
church—lying partly on the road-side, and partly
on the path, upon his face. Whether he fell out
in a fit, or got out, feeling ill before the fit came
on—or even whether he was quite dead then,
though there is no doubt he was quite insensible—
no one appears to know. If he breathed, cer
tainly he never spoke. Medical assistance was
got as soon as possible, but it was quite use
less.”

I cannot describe the state of mind into which
I was thrown by this intelligence. The shock of
such an event happening so suddenly, and happen
ning to one with whom I had been in any re
spect at variance—the appalling vacancy in the
room he had occupied so lately, where his chair
and table seemed to wait for him, and his hand
writing of yesterday was like a ghost—the indef
inable impossibility of separating him from the
place, and feeling, when the door opened, as if he
might come in—the lazy hush and rest there was
in the office, and the insatiable relish with which
our people talked about it, and other people came
in and out all day, and gorged themselves with
the subject—this is easily intelligible to any one.
What I cannot describe is, how, in the innermost
recesses of my own heart, I had a lurking jealousy
even of Death. How I felt as if its might would
push me from my ground in Dora’s thoughts.
How I was, in a grudging way I have no words
for, envious of her grief. How it made me rest
less to think of her weeping to others, or being
consoled by others. How I had a grasping,
avaricious wish to shut out everybody from her
but myself, and to be all in all to her, at that un
seasonable time of all times.

In the trouble of this state of mind—not exclu
sively my own, I hope, but known to others—I
down to Norwood that night; and finding from
one of the servants, when I made my inquiries at
the door, that Miss Mills was there, got my aunt
to direct a letter to her, which I wrote. I de
plied the untimely death of Mr. Spenlow most
sincerely, and shed tears in doing so. I entreated
her to tell Dora, if Dora were in a state to hear it,
that he had spoken to me with the utmost kind
ness and consideration; and had coupled nothing
but tenderness, not a single harsh or reproachful
word, with her name. I know I did this selfish
ly, to have my name brought before her; but I
tried to believe it was an act of justice to his
memory. Perhaps I did believe it.

My aunt received a few lines next day in re
ply; addressed, outside, to her; within, to me.
Dora was overcome by grief: and when her friend.
had asked her should she send her love to me, had only cried, as she was always crying; "Oh dear papa! oh, poor papa!" But she had not said "No, and that I made the most of.

Mr. Jorkins, who had been at Norwood since the occurrence, came to the office a few days afterwards. He and Tiffey were closeted together for some few moments, and then Tiffey looked out at the door and beckoned me in.

"Oh!" said Mr. Jorkins. "Mr. Tiffey and myself, Mr. Copperfield, are about to examine the desk, the drawers, and other such repositories of the deceased, with the view of settling up his private papers, and searching for a Will. There is no trace of any, elsewhere. It may be as well for you to assist us, if you please."

I had been in agony to obtain some knowledge of the circumstances in which my Dora would be placed—as, in whose guardianship, and so forth—and this was something towards it. We began the search at once; Mr. Jorkins unlocking the drawers and desks, and we all taking out the papers. The office-papers we placed on one side, and the private papers (which were not numerous) on the other. We were very grave; and when we came to a stray seal, or pencil-case, or ring, or any little article of that kind which we associated personally with him, we spoke very low.

We had sealed up several packets; and were still going on dustily and quietly, when Mr. Jorkins said to us, applying exactly the same words to his late partner as his late partner had applied to him:

"Mr. Spenlow was very difficult to move from the beaten track. You know what he was! I am disposed to think he had made no will."

"Oh, I know he had!" said I.

They both stopped and looked at me.

"On the very day when I last saw him," said I, "he told me that he had, and that his affairs were long since settled."

Mr. Jorkins and old Tiffey shook their heads with one accord.

"That looks unpromising," said Tiffey.

"Very unpromising," said Mr. Jorkins.

"Surely you don't doubt—" I began.

"My good Mr. Copperfield!" said Tiffey, laying his hand upon my arm, and shutting up both his eyes as he shook his head: "if you had been in the Commons as long as I have, you would know that there is no subject on which men are so inconsistent, and so little to be trusted."

"Why, bless my soul, he made that very remark!" I replied persistently.

"I should call that almost final," observed Tiffey. "My opinion is—no will."

It appeared a wonderful thing to me, but it turned out that there was no will. He had never so much as thought of making one, so far as his papers afforded any evidence; for there was no kind of hint, sketch, or memorandum, of any testamentary intention whatever. What was scarcely less astonishing to me was, that his affairs were in a most disorderly state, extremely difficult, I heard, to make out, or what he had paid, or of what he possessed. It was considered that he had spent more than his profession which was not a very large one, and his private means, if they ever had (which was exceedingly doubtful), to ebb indeed. There was a sale of the and lease, at Norwood; and Tiffey told me, thinking how interested I was in the payment of all the just debts of the decease, that the share of outstanding bad debts due to the firm, he would thousand pounds for all the asset.

This was at the expiration of about a month I had suffered tortures all the time, and I really must have had violent headaches when Miss Mills still reported ten weeks broken-hearted, and, when Dora was broken-hearted and, when I was mentioned, but "Oh, dear papa!"

Also, that she never had relations with any, that she was pleased to see, or that he had held any other than chance contacts with their brother for many years. Not the ever quarrelled (Miss Mills informed me) that having been, on the occasion of the visit, invited to tea, when they themselves privileged to be invited, they had expressed their opinion in the middle of the story of the happiness of all that they should stay away. Since we had gone our road, and their brother's.

These two ladies now emerged from retirement, and proposed to take Dora and me to Putney. I would, indeed, and I confided, to some other, to prattle about the neighborhood. Miss Mills, for the more exact discharge of the duties of friendship, kept a jolly soul. She used to meet me sometimes, on the railway, and read it, or if she had not time to lend it to me. How I treasured up the book which I subjoin a sample of—

"Monday. My sweet D. still much better. Headache. Called attention to J. as being sick. D. fondled J. Association awakened, opened floodgates of sorrow. J. wrote his mother. (Are tears the dewy heart?—J. M.)"

"Tuesday. D. weak and nervous. J. in pain. (Do we not remember this in the wise?—J. M.) D. J. M. and J. went to visit.
CHAPTER XXXIX.

WICKFIELD AND JEBB.

My aunt, beginning, I imagine, to be made seriously uncomfortable by my prolonged dejection, made a pretence of being anxious that I should go to Dover to see that all was working well at the cottage, which was let; and to conclude an agreement, with the same tenant, for a longer term of occupation. Janet was drafted into the service of Mrs. Strong, where I saw her every day. She had been undecided, on leaving Dover, whether or not to give the finishing touch to that renunciation of mankind in which she had been educated, by marrying a pilot; but she decided against that venture. Not so much for the sake of principle, I believe, as because she happened not to like him.

Although it required an effort to leave Miss Mills, I fell rather willingly into my aunt's presence, as a means of enabling me to pass a few tranquil hours with Agnes. I consulted the good Doctor relative to an absence of three days; and the Doctor wishing me to take that relaxation,—he wished me to take more; but my energy could not bear that,—I made up my mind to go.

As to the Commons, I had no great occasion to be particular about my duties in that quarter. To say the truth, we were getting in no very good odor among the tip-top proctors, and were rapidly sliding down to but a doubtful position. The business had been indifferent under Mr. Jorkins, before Mr. Spenlow's time; and although it had been quickened by the infusion of new blood, and by the display which Mr. Spenlow made, still it was not established on a sufficiently strong basis to bear, without being shaken, such a blow as the sudden loss of its active manager. It fell off very much. Mr. Jorkins, notwithstanding his reputation in the firm, was an easy-going, incapable sort of man, whose reputation out of doors was not calculated to back it up. I was turned over to him now, and when I saw him take his snuff and let the business go, I regretted my aunt's thousand pounds more than ever.

But this was not the worst of it. There were a number of hangers-on and outsiders about the Commons, who, without being proctors themselves, dabbled in common-form business, and got it done by real proctors, who lent their names in consideration of a share in the spoil;—and there were a great many of these too. As our house now wanted business on any terms, we joined this noble band; and threw out lures to the hangers-on and outsiders, to bring their business to us. Marriage licenses and small probates were what we all looked for, and what paid us best; and the competition for these ran very high indeed. Kidnappers and inveiglers were planted in all the avenues of entrance to the Commons, with instructions to do their utmost to cut off all persons in mourning, and all gentlemen with something bashful in their appearance, and entice them to the offices in which their respective employer.
were interested; which instructions were so well observed, that I myself, before I was known by sight, was twice hustled into the premises of our principal opponent. The conflicting interests of theseouting gentlemen being of a nature to irritate their feelings, personal collisions took place; and the Commons was even scandalised by our principal invigilator (who had formerly been in the wine trade, and afterwards in the sworn brokery line) walking about for some days with a black eye. Any one of these scents used to think nothing of politely assisting an old lady in black out of a vehicle, killing any proctor whom she inquired for, representing his employer as the lawful successor and representative of that proctor, and bearing the old lady off (sometimes greatly affected) to his employer’s office. Many captives were brought to me in this way. As to marriage licenses, the competition rose to such a pitch, that a shy gentleman in want of one, had nothing to do but submit himself to the first invigilator, for he fought for and became the prey of the strongest. One of our clerks, who was an outsider, used, in the height of this contest, to sit with his hat on, that he might be ready to rush out and swear before a surrogate any victim who was brought in. The system of invigilating continues, I believe, to this day. The last time I was in the Commons, a civilable-bodied person in a white apron pounced upon me from a doorway, and whispering the word “Marriage-license” in my ear, was with great difficulty prevented from taking me up in his arms and lifting me into a proctor’s.

From this digression, let me proceed to Dover. I found everything in a satisfactory state at the cottage; and was enabled to gratify my aunt exceedingly by reporting that the tenant inherited her farm, and waged incessant war against donkeys. Having settled the little business I had to transact there, and slept there one night, I walked on to Canterbury early in the morning. It was now winter again; and the fresh, cold windy day, on the sweeping downs, heightened my hopes a little.

Coming into Canterbury, I roved through the old streets with a sober pleasure that calmed my spirits, and eased my heart. There were the old signs, the old names over the shops, the old people serving in them. It appeared so long, since I had been a schoolboy there, that I wondered the place was so little changed, until I reflected how little I was changed myself. Strange to say, that quiet influence which was inseparable in my mind from Agnes, seemed to pervade the entire city where she dwelt. The venerable cathedral towers, and the old jackdaws and rooks whose airy voices made them more refined than perfect silence would have done; the bated gateways, once stuck full with statues, long thrown down, and crumbled away, like the reverential pilgrims who had gazed upon them; the still nooks, where the ivied growth of centuries crept over gabled ends and ruined walls; the ancient houses, the pastoral landscape of field, orchard, and garden; everywhere—on everything—I felt the same serener air, the same calm, thoughtful, softening spirit.

Arrived at Mr. Wickfield’s house, I found a little lower room on the ground floor, were Uriah Heep had been of old accustomed to Mr. Micawber plying his pen with great assiduity. He was dressed in a legal-looking suit of black, and loomed, bulky and large, in that small one. Mr. Micawber was extremely glad to see me, but a little confused too. He would have conducted me immediately into the presence of Uriah, but I declined.

“I know the house of old, you recollect,” said I, “and will find my way upstairs. How do you like the law, Mr. Micawber?”

“My dear Copperfield,” he replied, “to a man possessed of the higher imaginative powers, the objection to legal studies is the amount of detail which they involve. Even in our professional correspondence,” said Mr. Micawber, glancing at some letters he was writing, “the mind is not at liberty to soar to any exalted form of expression. Still, it is a great pursuit. A great pursuit!”

He then told me that he had become the tenant of Uriah Heep’s old house; and that Mrs. Micawber would be delighted to receive me, even more, under her own roof.

“It is humble,” said Mr. Micawber, “to give a favorite expression of my friend Heep; but it may prove the stepping-stone to more ambitious domiciliary accommodation.”

I asked him whether he had reason, so far, to be satisfied with his friend Heep’s treatment of him? He got up to ascertain if the door was close shut, before he replied, in a lower voice:

“My dear Copperfield, a man who labors under the pressure of pecuniary embarrassments is, with the generality of people, at a disadvantage. That disadvantage is not diminished, when that pressure necessitates the drawing of stipendary emoluments, before those emoluments are strictly due and payable. All I can say is, that my friend Heep has responded to appeals to which I was not more particularly refer, in a manner calculated to rebound equally to the honor of his head, and of his heart.”

“I should not have supposed him to be very free with his money either,” I observed.

“I am glad your experience is so favorable,” I returned.

“You are very obliging, my dear Copperfield,” said Mr. Micawber; and hummed a tune.

“Do you see much of Mr. Wickfield?” I asked, to change the subject.

“Not much,” said Mr. Micawber, slightly.

“Mr. Wickfield is a man of very excellent intentions, and we are—well, we are—contented.”
PROFESSIONAL RETICENCE OF MR. MICAWBER.

afraid his partner seeks to make him I.

ear Copperfield," returned Mr. Micawber some uneasy evolutions on his stool, to offer a remark! I am here, in a con-

fidence. I am here, in a position of dis- some topics, even with the functions now devolv-

ing on me, I am led to consider, aild therefore take the liberty of suggesting our friendly intercourse—which I trust not be disturbed!—we draw a line. On this line," said Mr. Micawber, represen-

ing the desk with the office ruler, "is the range of the human intellect, with a perfection; on the other, is that perfection; say, the affairs of Messrs. Wickfield and J all belonging and appertaining therto; I give no offence to the companion th, in submitting this proposition to his judgment?"

I saw an uneasy change in Mr. Micaw-

ber sat tightly on him, as if his new duties hit him; I had no right to be offended.

him so, appeared to relieve him; and

hands with me.

charmed, Copperfield," said Mr. Micaw-

ber assured you, with Miss Wickfield, by superior young lady, of very remarkable, gravities, and virtues. Upon my own word, Mr. Micawber, indefinitely kissing and bowing with his genteel air, "I am to Miss Wickfield! Hem!"

not assured us, my dear Copperfield, occasion of that agreeable afternoon. happiness of passing with you, that D. favorite letter," said Mr. Micawber, "I questionsably have supposed that A. had

e all some experience of a feeling, that e occasionally, of what we are saying having been said and done before, in a ise of our having been surrounded, dim the same faces, objects, and circum-

stances; our knowing perfectly what will be as if we suddenly remembered it! I t this mysterious impression more of my life, than before he uttered those

my leave of Mr. Micawber, for the time, him with my best remembrances to all. As I left him, resuming his stool and rolling his head in his stock, to get it in writing order, I clearly perceived that something interposed between him and he had come into his new functions, vented our petting at each other as we , quite altered the character of our care no case in the quaint old drawing-
th it presented tokens of Mrs. Hoop's whereabout. I looked into the room still belonging to Agnes, and saw her sitting by the fire, at a pretty old-fashioned desk she had, writing.

My darkening the light made her look up. What a pleasure to be the cause of that bright change in her attentive face, and the object of that sweet regard and welcome!

"Ah, Agnes!" I said, when we were sitting together side by side; "I have missed you so much, lately!"

"Indeed?" she replied. "Again! And so soon?"

I shook my head.

"I don't know how it is, Agnes; I seem to want some faculty of mind that I ought to have. You were so much in the habit of thinking for me, in the happy old days here, and I came so naturally to you for counsel and support, that I really think I have missed acquiring it!"

"And what is it?" said Agnes, cheerfully.

"I don't know what to call it," I replied. "I think I am earnest and persevering?"

"And I am sure of it," said Agnes.

"And patient, Agnes?" I inquired, with a little hesitation.

"Yes," returned Agnes, laughing. "Pretty well."

"And yet," said I, "I get so miserable and worried, and am so uneasiness and irresolute in my power of assuring myself, that I know I must want—shall I call it—reliance, of some kind?"

"Call it so, If you will," said Agnes.

"Well!" I returned. "See here! You come to London, I rely on you, and I have an object, and a course at once, I am driven out of it, I come here, and in a moment I feel an altered person. The circumstances that distressed me are not changed, since I came into this room; but an influence comes over me in that short interval that alters me, oh, how much for the better! What is it? What is your secret, Agnes?"

Her head was bent down, looking at the fire.

"It's the old story," said I. "Don't laugh, when I say it was always the same in little things as it is in greater ones. My old troubles were nonsense, and now they are serious; but whenever I have gone away from my adopted sister—"

Agnes looked up—with such a Heavenly face!—and gave me her hand, which I kissed.

"Whenever I have not had you, Agnes, to advise and approve me in the beginning, I have seemed to go wild, and to get into all sorts of difficulty. When I have come to you, at last (as I have always done), I have come to peace and happiness. I come home, now, like a tired traveller, and find such a blessed sense of rest!"

I felt so deeply what I had said, it affected me so sincerely, that my voice failed, and I covered my face with my hand, and broke into tears. I write the truth. Whatever contradictions and inconsistencies there were within me, as there are within so many of us; whatever might have been so different, and so much better; whatever I had done, in which I had perversely wandered away
from the voice of my own heart; I knew nothing of. I only knew that I was fervently in earnest, when I felt the rest and peace of having Agnes near me.

In her placid sisterly manner; with her beaming eyes; with her tender voice; and with that sweet composure, which had long ago made the house that bold her quite a sacred place to me; she soon won me from this weakness, and led me on to tell all that had happened since our last meeting.

"And there is not another word to tell, Agnes," said I, when I had made an end of my confidence. "Now, my reliance is on you."

"But it must not be on me, Trotwood," returned Agnes, with a pleasant smile. "It must be on some one else.

"On Dora?" said I.

"Assuredly.

"Why, I have not mentioned, Agnes," said I, a little embarrassed, "that Dora is rather difficult to—I would not, for the world, say, to rely upon; because she is the soul of purity and truth—but rather difficult to—I hardly know how to express it, really, Agnes. She is a timid little thing, and easily disturbed and frightened. Some time ago, before her father's death, when I thought it right to mention to her—but I'll tell you, if you will bear with me, how it was."

Accordingly, I told Agnes about my declaration of poverty, about the cookery-book, the housekeeping accounts, and all the rest of it.

"Oh, Trotwood!" she remonstrated, with a smile. "Just your old headlong way! You might have been in earnest in striving to get on in the world, without being so very sudden with a timid, loving, inexperienced girl. Poor Dora!"

I never heard such sweet forbearing kindness expressed in a voice, as she expressed in making this reply. It was as if I had seen her admiringly and tenderly embracing Dora, and tacitly reproving me, by her considerate protection, for my hot haste in flattering that little heart. It was as if I had seen Dora, in all her fascinating artlessness, caressing Agnes, and thanking her, and coaxingly appealing against me, and loving me with all her childish innocence.

I felt so grateful to Agnes, and admired her so! I saw those two together, in a bright perspective, such well-associated friends, each adorning the other so much!

"What ought I to do then, Agnes?" I inquired, after looking at the fire a little while. "What would it be right to do?"

"I think," said Agnes, "that the honorable course to take, would be to write to those two ladies. Don't you think that any secret course is an unworthy one?"

"Yes. If you think so," said I.

"I am poorly qualified to judge of such matters," replied Agnes, with a modest hesitation, "but I certainly feel—in short, I feel that your being secret and clandestine, is not being like your—self."

"Like myself, in the too high opinion of me, Agnes, I am afraid," said I.

"Like yourself, in the candor of your—self", she returned; "and therefore I would, those two ladies. I would relate, as plainly as openly as possible, all that has taken place, and I would ask their permission to visit them, at their houses. Considering their young, and striving for a place in life, I would be well to say that you would readily see, by any conditions they might impose upon you, I would entreat them not to disclaim your visits, without a reference to Dora; and to disclaim your visits, when they shou ld think the time not proper. I would speak of my fidelity and perseverance—and to Dora, in that manner."

"But if they were to frighten Dora ag nes, by speaking to her," I said, "And I were to cry, and say nothing about me!"

"Is that likely?" inquired Agnes, with some sweet consideration in her face.

"God bless her, she is as easily scared as a bird," said I. "It might be! Or if the two Spenlows (elderly ladies of that sort are of that sort) should not be likely to address in that way!"

"I don't think, Trotwood," returned Agnes, raising her soft eyes to mine. "I would advise that. Perhaps it would be better only to wait, whether it is right to do this; and, if it is, to go on.

I had no longer any doubt on the point. With a lightened heart, though with a present sense of the weighty importance of my position, and devoted the whole afternoon to the composition of the draft of this letter; for which purpose, Agnes relinquished her desk to me. First I went down stairs to see Mr. Wickfield and Uriah Heep.

I found Uriah in possession of a new, scented office, built out in the garden; extraordinarily neat, in the midst of a stock of books and papers. He received me with his usual fawning way, and pretended not to hear of my arrival from Mr. Micawber, with whom I took the liberty of disbelieving. He accompanied me into Mr. Wickfield's room, which was the shadow of its former self—laid waste, divested of a variety of conveniences, for the accommodation of the new partner—and standing before the fire, warming his back, and shading his eyes with his bonny hand, while Mr. Wickfield exchanged greetings.

"You stay with us, Trotwood, while your main in Canterbury?" said Mr. Wickfield, without a glance at Uriah for his approval.

"Is there room for me," said I.

"I am sure, Master Copperfield—I who, Uriah,—I would turn out of your old room; pleasure, if it would be agreeable."

"So, we," said Mr. Wickfield. "Why not be conveniently?" There's another town. There's another town."
"Oh, but you know," returned Uriah, with a
"I should really be delighted!"
To cut the matter short, I said I would have
other room, or none at all; so it was settled
I should have the other room; and, taking
leave of the firm until dinner, I went up
}

I had hoped to have no other companion than
Agnes. But Mrs. Heep had asked permission to
sing herself and her knitting near the fire, in
room; on pretence of its having an aspect
favorable for her rheumatism, as the wind
was, than the drawing-room or dining-par

Though I could almost have consigned her
to the mercies of the wind on the topmost plin
ths of the Cathedral, without remorse, I made
virtue of necessity, and gave her a friendly salu
tation.

"I'm umbly thankful to you, sir," said Mrs.
Heep, in acknowledgment of my inquiries con
cerning her health, "but I'm only pretty well. I
aren't much to boast of. If I could see my Uriah
settle in life, I couldn't expect much more.
"Think. How do you think my Uri looking,
big?"

I thought him looking as villainous as ever,
and I replied that I saw no change in him.

"Oh, don't you think he's changed?" said
Mrs. Heep. "There I must umbly beg leave to
hear from you. Don't you see a thinness in
him?"

"Not more than usual," I replied.

"Don't you though!" said Mrs. Heep. "But
they don't take notice of him with a mother's
eye!"

His mother's eye was an evil eye to the rest of
world, I thought as it met mine, howsoever
epitate to him; and I believe she and her
were devoted to one another. It passed me,
and went on to Agnes.

"Don't you see a wasting and a wearing in
Miss Wickfield?" inquired Mrs. Heep.

"No," said Agnes, quietly pursuing the work
in which she was engaged. "You are too solici
tuous about him. He is very well."

Mrs. Heep, with a prodigious sniff, resumed
her knitting.

She never left off, or left us for a moment. I
eared early in the day, and we had still
more or four hours before dinner; but she sat
plying her knitting-needles as monotonously
as an hour-glass might have poured out its
sand. She sat on one side of the fire; I sat at
the desk in front of it; a little beyond me, on the
other side, sat Agnes. Wheneverslowly pon
dering over my letter, I lifted up my eyes, and
resting the thoughtful face of Agnes, saw it
near, and bowing encouragement upon me, with its
angelic expression, I was conscious present
of the evil eye passing me, and going on to her,
and coming back to me again, and dropping fur
nely upon the knitting. What the knitting was,

I don't know, not being learned in that art; but
looked like a net: and as she worked away
with those Chinese chopsticks of knitting-needles,
she showed in the firelight like an ill-looking en
chantress, banked as yet by the radiant goodness
opposite, but getting ready for a cast of her net
by-and-by.

At dinner she maintained her watch, with the
same unwinking eyes. After dinner, her son
took his turn: and when Mr. Wickfield, himself,
and I were left alone together, leered at me; and
writhed until I could hardly bear it. In the
drawing-room, there was the mother knitting and
watching again. All the time that Agnes sang
and played, the mother sat at the piano. Once
she asked for a particular ballad, which she said
her Ur (who was yawning in a great chair) doted
on; and at intervals she looked round at him, and
reported to Agnes that he was in raptures with
the music. But she hardly ever spoke—I question
if she ever did—without making some mention of
him. It was evident to me that this was the duty
assigned to her.

This lasted until bedtime. To have seen the
mother and son, like two great bats hanging over
the whole house, and darkening it with their ugly
forms, made me so uncomfortable, that I would
rather have remained down-stairs, ugly and
all, than gone to bed. I hardly got any sleep.
Next day the knitting and watching began again,
and lasted all day.

I had not an opportunity of speaking to Agnes,
for ten minutes. I could barely show her my
letter. I proposed to her to walk out with me;
but Mrs. Heep repeated complaining that she
was worse, Agnes charitably remained within, to
bear her company. Towards the twilight I went
out by myself, musing on what I ought to do, and
whether I was justified in withholding from
Agnes, any longer, what Uriah Heep had told me
in London: for that began to trouble me again,
very much.

I had not walked out far enough to be quite
clear of the town, upon the Ramsgate road,
where there was a good path, when I was hailed,
through the dust, by somebody behind me. The
shambling figure, and the scanty great coat, were
not to be mistaken. I stopped, and Uriah Heep
came up.

"Well?" said I.

"How fast you walk!" said he. "My legs
are pretty long, but you've given 'em quite a
job."

"Where are you going?" said I.

"I am coming with you, Master Copperfield.
If you'll allow me the pleasure of a walk with an
old acquaintance." Saying this, with a jerk of
his body, which might have been either propitiatory or derisive, he fell into step beside
me.

"Uriah!" said I, as civilly as I could, after
silence.

"Master Copperfield!" said Uriah.

"To tell you the truth (at which you will not
be offended), I came out to walk alone, because I
have had so much company."

He looked at me sideways, and said with his hardest grin, "You mean mother."
"Why yes, I do," said I.
"Ah! But you know we're so very humble," he returned. "And having such a knowledge of our own insufficiency, we must really take care that we're not pushed to the wall by them as isn't humble. All stragglers are fair in love, sir."

Raising his great hands until they touched his chin, he rubbed them softly, and softly chuckled, looking as like a malevolent baboon, I thought, as anything human could look.

"You see," he said, still hugging himself in that unpleasant way, and shaking his head at me, "you're quite a dangerous rival, Master Copperfield. You always was, you know."

"Do you set a watch upon Miss Wickfield, and make her home no more, because of me?" said I.

"Oh! Master Copperfield! Those are very rough words," he replied.

"Put my meaning into any words you like," said I. "You know what it is, Uriah, as well as I do."

"Oh no! You must put it into words," he said, "Oh, really! I couldn't myself."

"Do you suppose," said I, constraining myself to be very temperate and quiet with him, on account of Agnes, "that I regard Miss Wickfield otherwise than as a very dear sister?"

"Well, Master Copperfield," he replied, "you perceive I am not bound to answer that question. You may not, you know. But then, you see, you may!"

Anything to equal the low cunning of his voice, and of his shadowless eyes without the ghost of an eyelash, I never saw.

"Come then!" said I. "For the sake of Miss Wickfield——"

"My Agnes!" he exclaimed, with a sickly, angular contention of himself. "Would you be so good as call her Agnes, Master Copperfield?"

"For the sake of Agnes Wickfield—Heaven bless her!"

"Thank you for that blessing, Master Copperfield," he interposed.

"I will tell you what I should, under any other circumstances, as soon have thought of telling to—Jack Ratch."n

"To who, sir?" said Uriah, stretching out his neck, and shading his ear with his hand.

"To the hangman," I returned. "The most unlikely person I could think of,—though his own face had suggested the allusion quite as a natural sequence. "I am engaged to another young lady, I hope that comforts you."

"Upon your soul?" said Uriah.

I was about indignant to give my assertion the confirmation he required, when he caught hold of my hand, and gave it a squeeze.

"Oh, Master Copperfield," he said. "If you had only had the condescension to return my confidence when I poured out the fulness of my art, the night I put you so much out of the way by sleeping before your sitting-room fire should have doubted you. As it is, I'm out of mother directly, and only too know you'll excuse the precautions of won't you? What a pity, Master Copperfield, that you didn't condescend to return me! I'm sure I gave you every opportunity of never have condescended to me as I could have wished. I know you had liked me, as I have liked you!"

All this time he was squeezing my hand, his damp fishy fingers, while I made as if I decently could get it away. But quite unsuccessful. He drew it under his mulberry-colored great coat, and on, almost upon compulsion, arm in arm.

"Shall we turn?" said Uriah, wheeling me face about towards the which the early moon was now shining, the distant window.

"Before we leave the subject, you understand," said I, breaking a pause, "that I believe Agnes Wickfield as far above you, and as far removed from your aspirations, as that moon herself."

"Peaceful! Ain't she!" said Uriah. "Now confide, Master Copperfield, that you liked me quite as I have liked you. You've thought me too humble now, I wonder?"

"I am not fond of professions of humility," I returned, "or professions of anything else."

"There now!" said Uriah, looking it lead-colored in the moonlight. "Didn't I? But how little you think of the insufficiency of a person in my station, Master Copperfield! Father and me were both brought up at a public school for boys; and mother likewise brought up at a public, sort of, establishment. They taught us all insufficiency—not much else that I know. Morning to night, we was to be until person, and unable to that; and to pull out here, and to make bows there; and to know our place, and allow ourselves our betters. And we had such a lot of Father got the monitor's medal by being so did I. Father got a sexton's tumbler. He had the character, among the folks, of being such a well-behaved man, that we were determined to bring him in. I'm Uriah," says father to me, and you'll get what was always being done into me at school; it's what goes down well, says father, and you'll do it. And ain't done bad!"

It was the first time I had ever owned to me, that this detestable cant of flattery I might have originated out of the heap he had seen the harvest, and had never been the seed.

"When I was a young man," said I, "I got to know what insufficiency all, s.
VILLANY OF URIAH HEEP.

...umble ple with an appetite. I 
e...umble point of my learning, and 
hard!" When you offered to teach 
...new power!"

d all this—I knew, as I saw his face 
light—that I might understand he 
ted to recompense himself by using his 
new doubted his meanness, his 
se; but I fully comprehended now, 
ge, what a base, unrelenting, and 
irit, must have been engendered by 
I this long, suppression.

nt of himself was so far attended 
cable result, that it led to his with- 
and in order that he might have an- 
...hime under the chin. Once apart 
...as determined to keep apart; and 
...ide, side by side, saying very little 
ay.

is sprits were elevated by the com- 
had made to him, or by his having 
...spective, I don’t know; but 
...ed by some influence. He talked 
...ir than was usual with him; asked 
... duty from the moment of our re- 
...he was not growing 
...achelor; and once looked at Agnes. 
ld have given all I had for leave to 

three males were left alone after 
...o a more adventurous state. He 
le or no wine; and I presume it was 
...ence of triumph that was upon 
...ebras that upon 

ved yesterday, that he tried to en- 
...ield to drink; and interpreting the 
...es had given me as she went out, 
...yise to one glass, and then pro- 
...should follow her. I would have 

to-day; but Uriah was too quick 

m see our present visitor, sir," he 

ng Mr. Wickfield, sitting, such a 
, at the end of the table, "and I 
se to give him welcome in another 
...e, if you have no objections. 
...id, your elth and appiness!"

ged to make a show of taking the 

hed across to me; and then, with 
emoions, I took the hand of the 
man, his partner.

low-partner," said Uriah, "If I 

berty,—now, suppose you give us 
...other appropriate to Copper-

Mr. Wickfield’s proposing my aunt, 

Mr. Dick, his proposing Doctors’ 

proposing Uriah, his drinking 
...ce; his consciousness of his own 

 ineffectual effort that he made 

against it; the struggle between his shame in 
Uriah’s deportment, and his desire to conciliate 
him; the manifest exultation with which Uriah 
twisted and turned, and held him up before me. 
It made me sick at heart to see, and my hand re- 
colls from writing it.

“Come, fellow-partner," said Uriah at last, 

“I’ll give you another one, and I humbly ask for 
bumpers, seeing I intend to make it the divinest 
of her sex.”

Her father had his empty glass in his hand. I 
saw him set it down, look at the picture she was 
so like, put his hand to his forehead, and shrink 
back in his elbow-chair.

“I’m an humble individual to give you her 
...lth," proceeded Uriah, "but I admire—adore 
her.

No physical pain that her father’s grey head 
could have borne, I think could have been more 
terrible to me, than the mental endurance I saw 
compressed now within both his hands.

“Agnes," said Uriah, either not regarding 
him, or not knowing what the nature of his action 
was; “Agnes Wickfield is, I am safe to say, the 
divinest of her sex. May I speak out, among 
friends? To be her father is a proud distinction, 
but to be her ushband——"

Spare me from ever again hearing such a cry, 
as that with which her father rose up from the 
table.

“What’s the matter?" said Uriah, turning of 
a deadly color. "You are not gone mad, after 
all, Mr. Wickfield, I hope? If I say I’ve an am- 
...t to make your Agnes my Agnes, I have as 
good a right to it as another man. I have a bet- 
ter right to it than any other man!"

I had my arms round Mr. Wickfield, imploring 
him by everything that I could think of, oftest 
of all by his love for Agnes, to calm himself a lit- 
tle. He was mad for the moment; tearing out 
his hair, beating his head, trying to force me 
from him, and to force himself from me, not an- 
wering a word, not looking at or seeing any one; 
blindly striving for he knew not what, his face 
all staring and distorted—a frightful spectacle.

I conjured him, incoherently, but in the most 
impassioned manner, not to abandon himself to 
this wildness, but to hear me. I besought him 
to think of Agnes, to connect me with Agnes, to 
recollect how Agnes and I had grown up together, 
how I honored her and loved her, how she was 
his pride and joy. I tried to bring her idea before 
him in any form; I even reproached him with not 
having firmness to spare her the knowledge of 
such a scene as this. I may have effected some- 
thing or his wildness may have spent itself; but 
by degrees he struggled less, and began to look 
at me—strangely at first, then with recognition 
in his eyes. At length he said, "I know, Trot- 
wood! My darling child and you—I know! But 
look at him!"

He pointed to Uriah, pale and glowing, in a 
corner, evidently very much out in his calcula-
tions, and taken by surprise.
had ever thought of it before, seemed rather to astonish my aunt; who abruptly replied, "Well, ma'am, upon the whole, I shouldn't wonder if you were right."

"Mr. Micawber being now on the eve of casting off the pecuniary shackles that have so long enthrall'd him," said Mrs. Micawber, "and of commencing a new career in a country where there is sufficient range for his abilities—which, in my opinion, is exceedingly important; Mr. Micawber's abilities peculiarly requiring space—it seems to me that my family should signalise the occasion by coming forward. What I could wish to see, would be a meeting between Mr. Micawber and my family at a festive entertainment, to be given at my family's expense; where Mr. Micawber's health and prosperity being proposed, by some leading member of my family, Mr. Micawber might have an opportunity of developing his views."

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, with some heat, "it may be better for me to state distinctly, at once, that if I were to develop my views to that assembled group, they would possibly be found of an offensive nature; my impression being that your family are, in the aggregate, Impertinent Snobs; and, in detail, unmitigated Ruffians."

"Micawber," said Mrs. Micawber, shaking her head, "not! You have never understood them, and they have never understood you."

Mr. Micawber coughed.

"They have never understood you, Micawber," said his wife, "They may be incapable of it. If so, that is their misfortune. I can pity their misfortune."

"I am extremely sorry, my dear Emma," said Mr. Micawber, relenting, "to have been betrayed into any expressions that might, even remotely, have the appearance of being strong expressions. All I would say is, that I can go abroad without your family coming forward to favor me,—in short, with a parting Shove of their cold shoulders; and that, upon the whole, I would rather leave England with such impetus as I possess, than derive any acceleration of it from that quarter. At the same time, my dear, if they should confide to reply to your communications—which our joint experience renders most improbable—for be it from me to be a barrier to your wishes."

The matter being thus amicably settled, Mr. Micawber gave Mrs. Micawber his arm, and glancing at the heap of books and papers lying before Traddles on the table, said they would leave us to ourselves; which they ceremoniously did.

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, leaning back in his chair when they were gone, and looking at me with an affection that made his eyes red, and his hair all kinds of shapes, "I don't make any excuse for troubling you with business, because I know you are deeply interested in it."

"May divert your thoughts. My dear boy, I am not worn out?"

"I am quite myself," said I, after a pause. "We have more cause to think of myself than of any one. You know how much she has done."

"Surely, surely," answered Traddles, "we can forget it!"

"But even that is not all," said I. "Just the last fortnight, some new troubles have arisen, and she has been in and out of London all day. Several times she has gone out, and has been absent until evening. Last night, Traddles, with this journey before her, it was almost midnight before she came home. You know her consideration for others is. She will ask me what has happened to distress her."

My aunt, very pale, and with deep lines under her face, sat immovable until I had finished; then some stray tears found their way to her cheeks, and she put her hand on mine."

"It's nothing, Trot; it's nothing. There shall be no more of it. You shall know by to-morrow."

"Now, Agnes, my dear, let us attend to these affairs."

"I must do Mr. Micawber the justice to say," Traddles began, "that although he would again not to have worked to any good account of himself, he is a most unifying man when he works for other people. I never saw such a fellow as he always goes on in the same way, he must be naturally, about two hundred years old, at present, for he has been continually pulling himself; and the distracted and imperfect manner in which he has been doing, day and night, among papers and books; to say nothing of the immense number of letters he has written me between this house and Mr. Wickfield's, and often across the table when he has been sitting opposite, and must much more often have spoken; is quite extraordinary."

"Letters! cried my aunt. "I believe he dreams in letters!"

"There's Mr. Dick, too," said Traddles, "has been doing wonders! As soon as he was discharged from over-looking Uriah Heep, whom he kept at such charge as I never saw excessed, he began to devote himself to Mr. Wickfield. And really, his anxiety to be of use in the investigations he has been making, and his real usefulness in executing and copying and fetching and carrying, have been quite stimulating to me."

"Dick is a very remarkable man," exclaimed my aunt; "and I always said he was. Trot, you know it."

"I am happy to say, Miss Wickfield," said Traddles, at once with great delight and with great earnestness, "that in your absence Mr. Wickfield has considerably improved. Bashed of the incubus that had fastened upon him for a long time, and of the dreadful apprehension under which he had lived, he is hardly the same person. At times, even his impaired power of concentrating his memory and attention on particular points of business, has recovered itself very much, and he now seems able to reason in making some things clear. Now we should..."
MR. PEGGOTTY APPEARS. 233

at the inn door. The day was just when we were about to start, and then, thinking of her, came struggling up the de, through the mingled day and night, head.

iperfield i" said he, in a croaking whistle hung by the iron on the roof, "I thought ; glad to hear, before you went off, that no squares broke between us. I’ve been room already, and we’ve made it all

Why, though I’m humble, I’m useful to know; and he understands his interest isn’t in liquor! What an agreeable man was he, Master Copperfield!"

 ged myself to say that I was glad he had 3 apology.

to be sure!" said Uriah, "when a per
able, you know, what’s an apology? So
ay! I suppose," with a jerk, "you
etimes plucked a pear before it was ripe, Copperfield?"

ippose I have," I replied.
d that last night," said Uriah; but it’ll

It only wants attending to. I can se in his farewells, he got down again as hman got up. For anything I know, he ng something to keep the raw morning air ; he made motions with his mouth as if were ripe already, and he were smacking over it.

CHAPTER XL.

THE WANDERER.

and a very serious conversation in Buck-
Street that night, about the domestic occ-
as I have detailed in the last chapter. My deeply interested in them, and walked down the room with her arms folded, for an hour afterwards. Whenever she particularly discomposed, she always per
one of these pedestrian feats; and the of her discomposure might always be est
by the duration of her walk. On this she was so much disturbed in mind as to necessary to open the bed-room door, and course for herself, comprising the full ex-
the bed-rooms from wall to wall: and Mr. Dick and I sat quietly by the fire, she seeing in and out, along this measured t an unchanging pace, with the regularity ck-pendulum.

My aunt and I were left to ourselves by k’s going out to bed, I sat down to write r to the two old ladies. By that time she d of walking, and sat by the fire with her cheeked up as usual. But instead of sitting usual manner, holding her glass upon her he suffered it to stand neglected on the y-piece; and, resting her left elbow on her m, and her chin on her left hand, looked elly at me. As often as I raised my eyes s I was about, I met here. “I am in the

lovingest of tempers, my dear,” she would assure me with a nod, “but I am fidgeted and sorry!”

I had been too busy to observe, until after she was gone to bed, that she had left her night-mixture, as she always called it, untasted on the chim-
ney-piece. She came to her door, with even more than her usual affection of manner, when I knocked to acquaint her with this discovery; but only said, “I have not the heart to take it, Trot, to-night,” and shook her head, and went in again.

She read my letter to the two old ladies. In the morning, and approved of it. I posted it, and had nothing to do then, but wait, as patiently as I could, for the reply. I was still in this state of expectation, and had been, for nearly a week; when I left the Doctor’s one snowy night, to walk home.

It had been a bitter day; and a cutting north-
east wind had blown for some time. The wind had gone down with the light, and so the snow had come on. It was a heavy, settled fall, I recol-
ect, in great flakes; and it lay thick. The noise of wheels and tread of people were as hushed, as if the streets had been strewed with feathers.

My shortest way home,—and I naturally took the shortest way on such a night—was through Saint Martin’s Lane. Now, the church which gives its name to the lane, stood in a less free situation at that time; there being no open space before it, and the lane winding down to the Strand. As I passed the steps of the portico, I encountered, at the corner, a woman’s face. It looked in mine, passed across the narrow lane, and disappeared. I knew it. I had seen it somewhere. But I could not remember where. I had some association with it, that struck upon my heart directly; but I was thinking of anything else when it came upon me, and was confused.

On the steps of the church, there was the stooping figure of a man, who had put down some burden on the smooth snow, to adjust it; my seeing the face, and my seeing him, were simulta-
neous. I don’t think I had stopped in my surprise; but, in any case, as I went on, he rose, turned, and came down towards me. I stood face to face with Mr. Peggotty!

Then I remembered the woman. It was Mar-
tha, to whom Emily had given the money that night in the kitchen. Martha Endell—side by side with whom, he would not have seen his dear niece, Ham had told me, for all the treasures wrecked in the sea.

We shook hands heartily. At first, neither of us could speak a word.

“Mas’r Davy!” he said, griping me tight, “it do my art good to see you, sir. Well met, well met!”

“Well met, my dear old friend!” said I.

“I had my thoughts o’ coming to make inquiriga you, sir, to-night,” he said, “but know-
ing as your aunt was living along wi’ you—for I’ve been down yonder—Yarmouth way—I was ascer
It was too late. I should have come early in the morning, sir, afore going away.”

“Again?” said I.

“Yes, sir,” he replied, patiently shaking his head, “I am away to-morrow.”

“Where were you going now?” I asked.

“Well!” he replied, shaking the snow out of his long hair, “I was going to turn in somewhere.”

In those days there was a side entrance to the stable-yard of the Golden Cross, the inn so memorable to me in connexion with his misfortune, nearly opposite to where we stood. I pointed out the gateway, put my arm through his, and we went across. Two or three public-rooms opened out of the stable-yard; and looking into one of them, and finding it empty, and a good fire burning, I took him in there.

When I saw him in the light, I observed, not only that his hair was long and ragged, but that his face was burnt dark by the sun. He was greener, the lines in his face and forehead were deeper, and he had every appearance of having toiled and wandered through all varieties of weather; but he looked very strong, and like a man uplifted by steadiness of purpose, whom nothing could tire out. He shook the snow from his hat and clothes, and brushed it away from his face, while I was inwardly making these remarks. As he sat down opposite to me at a table, with his back to the door by which we had entered, he put out his rough hand again, and grasped mine warmly.

“I’ll tell you, Mas’r Davy,” he said,—“where all I’ve been, and what-all we’ve heard. I’ve been fur, and we’ve heard little; but I’ll tell you!”

I rang the bell for something hot to drink. He would have nothing stronger than ale; and while it was being brought, and being warmed at the fire, he sat thinking. There was a fine massive gravity in his face, I did not venture to disturb.

“When she was a child,” he said, lifting up his head soon after we were left alone, “she used to talk to men about the sea, and about them boats where the sea got to be dark blue, and to lay a-shining and a-shining in the sun. I thoult, odd times, as her father being drowned made her think on it so much. I don’t know, you see, but maybe she believed—or hoped—he had drifted out to them parts, where the flowers is always a blooming, and the country bright.”

“It is likely to have been a childish fancy,” I replied.

“When she was—lost,” said Mr. Peggotty, “I know’d in my mind, as he would take her to them countrys. I know’d in my mind, as he’d have told her wonders of ‘em, and how she was to be a lady there, and how he got her listen to him fast, along o’ sech like. When we see his mother, I know’d quite as well as I was right. I went across-channel to France, and landed there, as if I’d fell down from the sky.”

I saw the door move, and the snow drift in. I saw it move a little more, and a hand set loose to keep it open.

“I found out an English gentleman in authority,” said Mr. Peggotty, “and he was a-going to seek my niece. He got some papers as I wanted fur to carry me thar, I don’t rightly know how they’re called, but he would give me money, but that I was to have no need on. I thank him kind the he done, I’m sure! ‘I’ve wrote afore says to me,’ and I shall speak to my master come that way, and many will know you. I shall show you here, when you’re a-travelling. I told him, best as I was able, what my girl was, and went away through France.”

“Alone, and on foot?” said I.

“Mostly afoot,” he rejoined; “some carts along with people going to market in empty coaches. Many a mile a day, and often with some poor soldier or another seeing to his friends. I couldn’t talk to Mr. Peggotty, ’nor he to me; but company for one another, too, along the roads.”

I should have known that by his friend.

“When I come to any town,” he said, “I found the inn, and waited about the yard, one turned up (some one mostly did) as English. Then I told how that I was out to seek my niece, and they told me what of gentlefolk was in the house, and I see my as seemed like her, going in or out, it wasn’t Emily, I went on agen. By little, when I come to a new village or the the people, I found they know’d about her. They would set me down at their cottage and give me what not fur to eat and drink and show me where to sleep; and many a Mas’r Davy, as has had a daughter of about the same age, I’ve found a waiting for me, at Our S Cross outside the village, fur to do me kindnesses. Some had had daughters and some had had sons. And God only knows how good them must have been to me!”

It was Martha at the door. I saw her listening face distinctly. My dread was that she should turn his head, and see her too.

“They would often put their childish tickles, their little girls,” said Mr. Peggotty, “my knee; and many a time you might see me sitting at their doors, when night was on, as if they were my Darlings’! Oh, my Darling!”

Overpowered by sudden grief, he sobbed. I laid my trembling hand upon the hand before his face. “Thank’ee, sir,” he said, “take no notice.”

In a very little while he took his hand and put it on his breast, and went on with his story.

“They often walked with me,” he said, “in the morning, maybe a mile or two upon a horse, and when we parted, well, I said, ‘We’ve been very good to you, your God bless you!’ They were...”
understand, and answered pleasant. At last I
went to the sea. It wasn't hard, you may sup-
pose for a sea-faring man like me to work his way
to Italy. When I got there, I wandered on
and done afore. The people was just as good
as I had expected, and I should have gone from town to town,
and the country through, but that I got news
of being seen among them Swiss mountains
by one as know'd his servant see 'em there,
and told me how they travelled, and
how they was. I made for them mountains,
and Deary, day and night. Ever so far as I
went, ever so far the mountains seemed to shift
off from me. But I come up with 'em, and I
was 'em. When I got nigh the place as I had
told of, I began to think within my own self,
what shall I do when I see her?"

"The listening face, insensible to the inclement
storms, still dropped at the door, and the hands
stared me—prayed me—not to cast it forth.

"I never doubted her," said Mr. Peggotty.

"Not a bit! On'y let her see my face—on'y
her hear my voice—on'y let my stammering still
be her bringing her thoughts the home she had
away from, and the child she had been—and
the she had grewed to be a royal lady, she'd have
down at my feet! I know'd it would! Many a
night in my sleep had I heerd her cry out, 'Uncle!'
seen her fall like death afore me. Many a time
my sleep had I raised her up, and whispered to
'Emily, my dear, I am come fur to bring for-
ness, and to take you home!'

He stopped and shook his head, and went on
a sigh.

"He was nowt to me now. Emily was all. I
ought a country dress to put upon her; and I
would that, once found, she would walk beside
me over them stony roads, go where I would, and
never, never, leave me more. To put that dress
up her, and to cast off what she wore—to take
her on my arm again, and wander towards home
stop sometimes upon the road, and heal her
feet and her worse-bruised heart—was all
I thow't of now. I don't believe I should
have done so much as look at him. But, Mas'r
herr, it warn't to be—not yet! I was too late,
and they was gone. Where, I couldn't learn.
Some said beer, some said there. I travelled
there, and I travelled ther, but I found no Em'ly,
and I travelled home."

"How long ago?" I asked.

"A matter o' fower days," said Mr. Peggotty.

"I sighted the old boat arter dark, and the light a
flicking in the winder. When I come nigh and
asked in through the glass, I see the faithful
mister Missa Gummidge sittin' by the fire, as we
and fixed upon, alone. I called out, 'Doesn't be
dread! It's Dan'l!' and I went in. I never
would have thought the old boat would have been
a strange!"

From some pocket in his breast he took out,
with a very careful hand, a small paper bundle
containing two or three letters or little packets,
which he laid upon the table.

"This fust one come," he said, selecting it
from the rest, "fust I had been gone a week. A
fifty pound Bank note, in a sheet of paper, direct-
ed to me, and put underneath the door in the
night. She tried to hide her writing, but she
couldn't hide it from Me!"

He folded up the note again, with great pa-
tience and care, in exactly the same form, and laid
it on one side.

"This come to Missa Gummidge," he said,
opening another, "two or three months ago.
After looking at it for some moments, he gave it
to me, and added in a low voice, "Be so good as
read it, sir."

I read as follows:

"Oh what will you feel when you see this writing, and know
it comes from my wicked hand! But try, try—not for my sake,
but for uncle's goodness, try to let your heart soften to me, only
for a little, little time! Try, pray do, to relent towards a mis-
erable girl, and write down on a bit of paper whether he is well,
and what he said about me before you left off ever naming me
among yourselves—and whether, of a night, when it is my old
time of coming home, you ever see him look as if he thought of
one he used to love so dear. Oh, my heart is breaking when I
think about it! I am kneeling down to you, begging and pray-
ing you not to be as hard with me as I deserve—as I well, well
know I deserve—but to be so gentle and so good, as to write down
something of him, and to send it to me. You need not call me
Little, you need not call me by the name I have disgraced; but
oh, listen to my agony, and have mercy on me so far as to write
me some word of uncle, never, never to be seen in this world by
my eyes again!

"Dear, if your heart is hard towards me—justly hard, I know
—but, Listen, if it is hard, dear, ask him I have wronged the
most—him whose wife I was to have been—before you quite de-
cide against my poor, poor prayer! If he should be so compas-
sionate as to say that you might write something for me to read
—I think he would, oh, I think he would, if you would only ask
him, for he always was so brave and so forgiving—tell him then
(but not else), that when I hear the wind blowing at night, I feel
as if it was passing angrily from seeing him and uncle, and was
going up to God against me. Tell him that if I was to die to-
morrow (and oh, if I was fit, I would be so glad to die! I would
bless him and uncle with my last words, and pray for his happy
home with my last breath!"

Some money was enclosed in this letter also.
Five pounds. It was untouched like the previous
sum, and he refolded it in the same way. Det-
tailed instructions were added relative to the ad-
dress of a reply, which, although they betrayed
the intervention of several hands, and made it
difficult to arrive at any very probable conclusion
in reference to her place of concealment, made it
at least not unlikely that she had written from
that spot where she was stated to have been
seen.

"What answer was sent?" I inquired of Mr.
Peggotty.

"Missis Gummidge," he returned, "not being
a good scholar, eir, Ham kindly drew it out, and
she made a copy on it. They told her I was gone
to seek her, and what my parting words was;"

"Is that another letter in your hand?" I said.

"It's money, eir," said Mr. Peggotty, unfolding
it a little way. "T'een pound, you see. And
wrote inside, 'From a true friend,' was the text.
But the fact was put underneath the sheet, such
this come by the post, days afore yesterday. I'm a going to seek her at the post-mark.'"

He showed it to me. It was a town on the Upper Rhine. He had bought it, at Yarmouth, some foreign dealers who knew that country, and they had drawn him a rude map on paper, which he could very well understand. He laid it between us on the table; and, with his chin resting on one hand, tracked his course upon it with the other.

I asked him how Ham was? He shook his head.

"He works," he said, "as bold as a man can. His name's as good, in all that part, as any man's is, anywhere in the world. Any one's hand is ready to help him, you understand, and his is ready to help them. He's never been heard for to complain. But my sister's belief is (twist ourselves) as it has cut him deep."

"Poor fellow, I can believe it!"

"He ain't no care, Ma'r Davy," said Mr. Peggoty in a solemn whisper—"keinor no care no; how for his life. When a man's wanted for rough service in rough weather, he's there. When there's hard duty to be done with danger in it, he steps for'ard afore all his mates. And yet he's as gentle as any child. There ain't a child in Yarmouth that doesn't know him."

He gathered up the letters thoughtfully, smoothing them with his hand; put them into their little bundle; and placed it tenderly in his breast again. The face was gone from the door. I saw the snow drifting in; but nothing else was there.

"Well!" he said, looking to his bag, "having seen you to-night, Ma'r Davy (and that does me good, I shall away betimes to-morrow morning. You have seen what I've got here;" putting his hand on where the little packet lay; "all that troubles me is, to think that any harm might come to me, afore that money was give back. If I was to die, and it was lost, or stolen, or elsewhere made away with, and it was never found by him but what I'd took it, I believe the t'other wretch wouldn't hold me. I believe I must come back!"

He rose, and I rose too; we grasped each other by the hand again, before going out. "I'd go ten thousand mile," he said, "I'd go till I dropped dead, to lay that money down afore him. If I do that, and find my Emily, I'm content. If I don't find her, maybe she'll come to hear, sometime, as her loving uncle only ended his search for her when he ended his life; and if I know her, even that will turn her home at last!"

As he went out into the rigorous night, I saw the lonely figure flit away before us. I turned him hastily on some pretence, and held him in conversation until it was gone.

He spoke of a traveller's house on the Dover Road, where he knew he could find a clean, plain lodging for the night. I went with him over Westminster Bridge, and parted from him on the Surrey side. Everything seemed, to my imagination, to be hushed in reverence for him, asumed his solitary journey through the night. I returned to the inn-yard, and, upon my remembrance of the face, looked around for it. It was not there. The snow covered our late footsteps; my new hat the only one to be seen; and even that died away (it showed so fast) as I looked at my shoulder.

CHAPTER XLIII.
DORA'S ACQUAINTANCES.

To this favor, Mr. Copperfield humbled, with his respectful compliments, would have the honor of waiting on the Misses Spenlow at the time appointed; accompany their kind permission of Mr. Copperfield's companion of the Inner Temple. Having despatched which mise, Mr. Copperfield fell into a condition of strong emotion; and so remained until the day arrived.

It was a great augmentation of my excitement to be hereafter, at this eventful crisis, of familiar services of Miss Milla. But who was always doing something or other for me—of it as if he were, which was the same thing—had brought his conduct to me by taking it into his head that he would do it on a certain day (accompany thought proper, by a confidential hint); would be happy to hold some conversational subject.

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It was to be let or sold, and that
Mangle and all) was to be taken at
So, here was another earthquake of
the sort, before I had recovered
of its predecessor!
Sernal minds how to dress myself of
day; being divided between my de-
advantage, and my apprehen-
sion on anything that might impair
tactical character in the eyes of the
w. I endeavored to hit a happy
between these two extremes; my aunt
result; and Mr. Dick threw one of
Traddles and me, for luck, as we
uns.
slow as I knew Traddles to be, and
ed to him as I was, I could not help
hat delicate occasion, that he had
ed the habit of brushing his hair so
It gave him a surprised look—not
broomy kind of expression—
prehensions whispered, might be
liberty of mentioning it to Trad-
re walking to Putney; and saying
'd smooth it down a little—
Copperfield,' said Traddles, lifting
rubbing his hair all kinds of ways,
ld give me greater pleasure. But
smoothed down?' said I.

'Nothing will induce
I carry a half-hundredweight upon
r to Putney, it would be up again
weight was taken off. You have
obstinate hair mine is, Copperfield.
eful porcupine.'
ile disappointed, I must confess,
y charmed by his good-nature too.
I esteemed his good-nature; and
air must have taken all the obsti-
character, for he had none.
urned Traddles, laughing. 'I as-
quite an old story, my unfortunate
'e's wife couldn't bear it. She said
her. It stood very much in my
n I first fell in love with Sophy.
object to it?'
't,' rejoined Traddles; 'but her
the one that's the Beauty—quite
't it, I understand. In fact, all the
't it,' said I.
urned Traddles with perfect inno-
joke for us. They pretend that
ck of it in her desk, and is obliged
classed book, to keep it down. We

'e, my dear Traddles,' said I, 'your
y suggest something to me. When
aged to the young lady whom you
oned, did you make a regular pro-
ly? Was there anything like—
what we are going through to-day, for instance?'
I added, nervously.

'Why,' replied Traddles, on whose attentive
face a thoughtful shade had stolen, 'it was rather
a painful transaction, Copperfield, in my case.
You see, Sophy being of so much use in the fam-
ily, none of them could endure the thought of her
ever being married. Indeed, they had quite set-
tled among themselves that she never was to be
married, and they called her the old maid.
Accordingly, when I mentioned it, with the greatest
precaution, to Mrs. Crewler—'

'The mamma?' said I.

'The mamma,' said Traddles—'Reverend
Horace Crewler—when I mentioned it with every
possible precaution to Mrs. Crewler, the effect
upon her was such that she gave a scream and
became insensible. I couldn't approach the sub-
ject again, for months.'

'You did at last?' said I.

'Well, the Reverend Horace did,' said Trad-
dles. 'He is an excellent man, most exemplary
in every way; and he pointed out to her that she
ought, as a Christian, to reconcile herself to the
sacrifice (especially as it was so uncertain), and
to bear no uncharitable feeling towards me. As
myself, Copperfield, I give you my word, I felt
a perfect bird of prey towards the family.'

'The sisters took your part, I hope, Trad-
dles?'

'Why, I can't say they did,' he returned.

'When we had comparatively reconciled Mrs.
Crewler to it, we had to break it to Sarah. You
recollect my mentioning Sarah, as the one that
has something the matter with her spine?'

'Perfectly!'

'She clenched both her hands,' said Trad-
dles, looking at me in dismay; 'shut her eyes;
turned lead-color; became perfectly stiff; and
took nothing for two days but toast-and-water,
administered with a teaspoon.'

'What a very unpleasant girl, Traddles!' I
remarked.

'Oh, I beg your pardon, Copperfield!' said
Traddles. 'She is a very charming girl, but she
has a great deal of feeling. In fact, they all have.
Sophy told me afterwards, that the self-reproach
she underwent while she was in attendance upon
Sarah, no words could describe. I know it must
have been severe, by my own feelings, Copper-
field; which were like a criminal's. After Sarah
was restored, we still had to break it to the other
eight; and it produced various effects upon them
of a most pathetic nature. The two little ones,
whom Sophy educates, have only just left off de-
testing me.'

'At any rate, they are all reconciled to it now,
I hope?' said I.

'Ye—yes, I should say they were, on the
whole, resigned to it,' said Traddles, doubtfully.
'The fact is, we avoid mentioning the subject;
and my unsettled prospects and indifferent cir-
cumstances are a great consolation to them.
There will be a deplorable scene, whenever wa
the boatman, but half the people of the town, lurking behind buildings; some, now and then braving the fury of the storm to look away to sea, and blown sheer out of their course in trying to get zigzag back.

Joining these groups, I found bewailing women whose husbands were away in herring or oyster boats, which there was too much reason to think might have foundered before they could run in anywhere for safety. Grizzled old sailors were among the people, shaking their beads, as they looked from water to sky, and muttering to one another; shipowners, excited and uneasy; children, huddling together, and peering into older faces; even stout mariners, disturbed and anxious, levelling their glasses at the sea from behind places of shelter, as if they were surveying an enemy.

The tremendous sea itself, when I could find sufficient pause to look at it, in the agitation of the blinding wind, the flying stones and sand, and the awful noise, confounded me. As the high watery walls came rolling in, and, at their highest, tumbled into surf, they looked as if the least would engulf the town. As the receding wave swept back with a hoarse roar, it seemed to scoop out deep caves in the beach, as if its purpose were to undermine the earth. When some white-headed billows thundered on, and dashed themselves to pieces before they reached the land, every fragment of the late white seemed possessed by the full might of its wrath, rushing to be gathered to the composition of another monster. Undulating hills were changed to valleys, undulating valleys (with a solitary storm-bird sometimes skimming through them) were lifted up to hills; masses of water shivered and shook the beach with a booming sound; every shape tumultuously rolled on, as soon as made, to change its shape and place, and beat another shape and place away; the ideal shore on the horizon, with its towers and buildings, rose and fell; the clouds flew fast and thick; I seemed to see a rending and upheaving of all nature.

Not finding Ham among the people whom this memorable wind—for it is still remembered down there, as the greatest ever known to blow upon that coast—had brought together, I made my way to his house. It was shut; and as no one answered to my knocking, I went, by backways and byelanes, to the yard where he worked. I learned, there, that he had gone to Lowestoft, to meet some sudden exigency of ship-repairing in which his skill was required; but that he would be back to-morrow morning, in good time.

I went back to the inn; and when I had washed and dressed, and tried to sleep, but in vain, it was five o'clock in the afternoon. I had not sat five minutes by the coffee-room fire, when the waiter coming to stir it, as an excuse for talking, told me that two colliers had gone down, with all hands, a few miles away; and that some other ships had been seen laboring hard in the Roads, and trying, in great distress, to keep off shore. Mercy on them, and on all poor sailors, said he, if we had another night like this!

I was very much depressed in spirits; very solitary; and felt an uneasiness in Ham’s not being there, disproportionate to the occasion. I was seriously affected, without knowing how much by late events; and my long exposure to a fierce wind had confused me. There was the jumble in my thoughts and recollections, that I had lost the clear arrangement of time and distance. Thus, if I had gone out into the town, I should not have been surprised, I think, to encounter some one who I knew must be in London. So to speak, there was in those recesses a curious indistinctness in my mind. Yet it was busy, too, with all the remembrances the place naturally awakened; and they were particularly distinct and vivid.

In this state, the waiter’s dismal intelligence about the ships immediately connected itself without any effort of my volition, with my uneasiness about Ham. I was persuaded that I had an apprehension of his returning from Lowestoft by sea, and being lost. This grew so strong within me, that I resolved to go back to the yard before I took my dinner, and ask the boat-builder if he thought his attempting to return by sea at all likely? If he gave me the least reason to think so, I would go over to Lowestoft and present myself by bringing him with me.

I hastily ordered my dinner, and went back to the yard. I was none too soon; for the boat-builder, with a lantern in his hand, was locking the yard-gate. He quite laughed, when I asked him the question, and said there was no fear; no man in his senses, or out of them, would put off in such a gale of wind, least of all Ham Peggsy, who had been born to sea-faring.

So sensible of this, beforehand, that I had really felt ashamed of doing what I was nevertheless impelled to do. I went back to the inn. If such a wind could rise, I think it was rising. The howl and roar, the rattling of the doors and windows, the rumbling in the chimneys, the apparant rocking of the very house that sheltered me, and the prodigious tumult of the sea, were more fearful than in the morning. But there was now a great darkness besides; and I felt invaded the storm with new terrors, real and fanciful.

I could not eat, I could not sit still; I could not continue steadfast to anything. Something within me, faintly answering to the storm without, used up the depths of my memory, and made a tumult within them. Yet, in all the hurry of my thoughts, wild running with the thundering sea—the storm and my uneasiness regarding Ham, were always in the foreground.

My dinner went away almost untouched, and I tried to refresh myself with a glass or two of wine. In vain. I fell into a dull slumber before the fire, without losing my consciousness, either of the uproar out of doors, or of the place in which I was. Both became overshadowed by a sense of indelible horror; and when I awoke—representations of
Dora. Traddles came to my assistance.

Lavinia was going on to make some reference to her brother.

"When Miss Clarissa, who appeared to be very best by a desire to refer to her brother..."

"I don't know how it is, but Miss Clarissa, when she was married..."

Miss Clarissa had shaken her head, Miss Lavinia resumed: again referring to her letter.

"And all post of misunderstanding would have been..."

"Mr. Copperfield, to visit here, as the author of our niece..."

"Traddles..." said Miss Clarissa, out again, "wished to surround himself with the various satisfactions..."

"Traddles and I made some sort of..."

"Miss Lavinia, having heard her mind, "you can go on, my dear..."

"Copperfield, my sister Clarissa and I..."

"We have no doubt that you think..."
ing no probability, at present, of our engagement coming to a termination."

"You may be able to confirm what I have said, Mr. Traddles," observed Miss Lavinia, evidently taking a new interest in him, "of the affection that is modest and retiring; and waifs and waifs?"

"Entirely, matam," said Traddles.

Miss Clarissa looked at Miss Lavinia, and shook her head gravely. Miss Lavinia looked consciously at Miss Clarissa, and heaved a little sigh.

"Sister Lavinia," said Miss Clarissa, "take my smelling-bottle."

Miss Lavinia revived herself with a few whiffs of aromatic vinegar—Traddles and I looking on with great solicitude the while; and then went on to say, rather faintly:

"My sister and myself have been in great doubt, Mr. Traddles, what course we ought to take in reference to the likings, or imaginary likings, of such very young people as your friend Mr. Copperfield and our niece."

"Our brother Francis's child," remarked Miss Clarissa. "If our brother Francis's wife had found it convenient in her life-time (though she had an unquestionable right to act as she thought best) to invite the family to her dinner-table, we might have known our brother Francis's child better at the present moment. Sister Lavinia, proceed."

Miss Lavinia turned my letter, so as to bring the superscription towards herself, and referred through her eye-glass to some orderly looking notes she had made on that part of it.

"It seems to us," said she, "prejudiced, Mr. Traddles, to bring these feelings to the test of our own observation. At present we know nothing of them, and are not in a situation to judge how much reality there may be in them. Therefore we are inclined so far to accede to Mr. Copperfield's proposal, as to admit his visits here."

"I shall never, dear ladies," I exclaimed, relieved of an immense load of apprehension, "forget your kindness!"

"But," pursued Miss Lavinia,—"but, we would prefer to regard those visits, Mr. Traddles, as made, at present, to us. We must guard ourselves from recognising any positive engagement between Mr. Copperfield and our niece, until we have had an opportunity—"

"Until you have had an opportunity, sister Lavinia," said Miss Clarissa.

"Be it so," assented Miss Lavinia, with a sigh—"until I have had an opportunity of observing them."

"Copperfield," said Traddles, turning to me, "you feel, I am sure, that nothing could be more reasonable or considerate."

"Nothing!" cried I. "I am deeply sensible of it."

"In this position of affairs," said Miss Lavinia, again referring to her notes, "and admitting his visits on this understanding only, we must require from Mr. Copperfield a distinct assurance, on his word of honor, the munificence of any kind shall take place him and our niece without our knowledge, no project whatever shall be entered regard to our niece, without being first to us—"

"To you, sister Lavinia," Miss Clarissa concluded. "Be it so, Clarissa!" assented Miss Clarissa—a resolution—"to me—and receiving or not. We must make this a most serious stipulation, not to be broken. We wished Mr. Copperfield accompanied by some confidential friend, with an inclination of her head towards who bowed, "in order that there may be doubt or misconception on this subject Copperfield, or if you, Mr. Traddles, fee scruple, in giving this promise, I beg you time to consider it."

I exclaimed, in a state of high excitement that not a moment's consideration was necessary. I bound myself by the requirement of the most impassioned manner; called witnesses to witness it; and denounced myself most atrocious of characters if I ever from it in the least degree.

"Stay!" said Miss Lavinia, holding back; "we resolved, before we had the offer of receiving you two gentlemen, to alone for a quarter of an hour, to consider. You will allow us to retire."

It was in vain for me to say that no action was necessary. They persisted in waiting for the specified time. According little birds hopped out with great dignity me to receive the congratulations of and to feel as if I were translated to exquisite happiness. Exactly at the end of the quarter of an hour, they reappeared without dignity than they had disappeared had gone rustling away as if their little were made of autumn-leaves; and the rustling back, in like manner.

I then bound myself once more to prescribed conditions.

"Sister Clarissa," said Miss Lavinia, rest is with you."

Miss Clarissa, unfolding her arms first time, took the notes and glanced at them.

"We shall be happy," said Miss Clarissa, see Mr. Copperfield to dinner, every Sunday should suit his convenience. Our hour I bowed.

"In the course of the week," said Clarissa, "we shall be happy to see Mr. Copperfield to tea. Our hour is half-past six.

I bowed again.

"Twice in the week," said Miss Clarissa, "but, as a rule, not oftener."

I bowed again.

"Miss Tewkwood," said Miss Clarissa tioned in Mr. Copperfield's letter, will call upon us. When visiting in the way.
of all parties, we are glad to receive turn them. When it is better for the of all parties that no visiting should as in the case of our brother Francis, blushing, that is quite different."

"I measured that my aunt would be proud and to make their acquaintance; though I was not quite sure of their getting on cordially together. The conditions be-

sed, I expressed my acknowledgments nest manner; and, taking the hand, s Clarissa, and then of Miss Lavinia, n each case, to my lips.

vina then arose, and begging Mr. excuse us for a minute, requested me. I obeyed, all in a trouble, and was into another room. There, I found my ing stopping her ears behind the door, har little face against the wall; and late-warmer with his head tied up in a

ow beautiful she was in her black frock, sobbed and cried at first, and wouldn't om behind the door! How fond we e another, when she did come out at hat a state of bliss I was in, when we at of the plate-warmer, and restored light, sneezing very much, and were init.

ATEST DORA! Now, Indeed, my own for

"sir!" pleaded Dora. "Please!"

u not my own for ever, Dora!"

s, of course I am!" cried Dora, "but htened!"

ned, my own?"

I don't like him," said Dora. "Why ?"

my life?"

"I don't," said Dora. "It isn't any busi-

What a stupid he must be!"

re!" (There never was anything so her childish ways.) "He is the best

t we don't want any best creatures!"

ir."

"You will soon know ad like him of all things. And here is ming soon; and you'll like her all when you know her.

ase don't bring her!" said Dora, glv-

horrid little kiss, and folding her don't. I know she's a naughty, mis-
g old thing! Don't let her come here, hich was a corruption of David.

ance was of no use, then; so I d admired, and was very much in lover-

and she showed me Jip's new nding on his hind legs in a corner-

lid for, about the space of a flash of nd then fell down—and I don't know should have stayed there, obliations of Miss Lavinia had not come in to take s Lavinia was very fond of Dora (she told me Dora was exactly like what she had been herself at her age—she must have altered a good deal), and she treated Dora just as if she had been a toy. I wanted to persuade Dora to come and see Traddles, but on my proposing it she ran of to her own room, and locked herself in; so I went to Traddles without her, and walked away with him on air.

"Nothing could be more satisfactory," said Traddles; "and they are very agreeable old ladies, I am sure. I shouldn't be at all surprised if you were to be married years before me, Copperfield."

"Does your Sophy play on any instrument, Traddles?" I inquired, in the pride of my heart.

"She knows enough of the piano to teach it to her little sisters," said Traddles.

"Does she sing at all?" I asked.

"Why, she sings ballads, sometimes, to freshen up the others a little when they're out of spirits," said Traddles. "Nothing scientific."

"She doesn't sing to the guitar?" said I.

"Oh dear no!" said Traddles.

"Paint at all?"

"Not at all," said Traddles.

I promised Traddles that he should hear Dora sing, and see some of her flower-painting. He said he should like it very much, and went home arm in arm in great good-humor and delight. I encouraged him to talk about Sophy, on the way; which he did with a loving reliance on her that I very much admired. I compared her in my mind with Dora, with considerable inward satisfaction; but I candidly admitted to myself that she seemed to be an excellent kind of girl for Traddles, too.

Of course my aunt was immediately made acquainted with the successful issue of the conference, and with all that had been said and done in the course of it. She was happy to see me so happy, and promised to call on Dora's aunts without loss of time. But she took such a long walk up and down our rooms that night, while I was writing to Agnes, that I began to think she meant to walk till morning.

My letter to Agnes was a fervent and grateful one, narrating all the good effects that had resulted from my following her advice. She wrote, by return of post, to me. Her letter was hopeful, earnest, and cheerful. She was always cheerful from that time.

I had my hands more full than ever, now. My daily journeys to Highgate considered, Putney was a long way off; and I naturally wanted to go there as often as I could. The proposed tea-drinkings being quite impracticable, I compounded with Miss Lavinia for permission to visit every Saturday afternoon, without detriment to my privileged Sundays. So, the close of every week was a delicious time for me; and I got through the rest of the week by looking forward to it.

I was wonderfully relieved to find that my aunt and Dora's aunts rubbed on, all things considered, much more smoothly than I could have
expected. My aunt made her promised visit within a few days of the conference; and within a few more days, Dora's aunt called upon her, in due state and form. Similar but more friendly exchanges took place afterwards, usually at intervals of three or four weeks. I know that my aunt distressed Dora's anxious very much, by utterly sitting at naught the dignity of Fly-conveyance, and walking out to Putney at extraordinary times, as shortly after breakfast or just before tea; likewise by wearing her bonnet in any manner that happened to be comfortable to her head, without at all deferring to the prejudices of civilization on that subject. But Dora's aunts soon agreed to regard my aunt as an eccentric and somewhat masculine lady, with a strong understanding; and although my aunt occasionally ruffled the feathers of Dora's aunts, by expressing heretical opinions on various points of ceremony, she loved me so well not to sacrifice some of her little peculiarities to the general harmony.

The only member of our small society, who positively refused to adapt himself to circumstances, was Jip. He never saw my aunt without immediately displaying every tooth in his head, retreating under a chair, and growling incessantly; with now and then a little bow, as if she really were too much for his feelings. All kinds of treatment were tried with him—coaxing, scolding, slapping, bringing him to Buckingham Street (where he instantly dashed at the two cats, to the terror of all beholders); but he never could prevail upon himself to bear my aunt's society. He would sometimes think he had got the better of his objection, and be amiable for a few minutes; and then would put up his ennui nose, and howl to that extent, that there was nothing for it but to blind him and put him in the plate-warmer. At length, Dora regularly muffled him in a towel and shut him up there, whenever my aunt was reported at the door.

One thing troubled me much, after we had fallen into this quiet train. It was, that Dora seemed by one consent to be regarded like a pretty toy or plaything. My aunt, with whom she gradually became familiar, always called her Little Blossom; and the pleasure of Miss Lavinia's life was to wait upon her, curl her hair, make ornaments for her, and treat her like a pet child. What Miss Lavinia did, her sister did as a matter of course. It was very odd to me; but they all seemed to treat Dora, in her degree, much as Dora treated Jip in his.

I made up my mind to speak to Dora about this; and one day when we were out walking (for we were licensed by Miss Lavinia, after a while, to go out walking by ourselves), I said to her that I wished she could get them to behave towards her differently.

"Because you know, my darling," I remonstrated, "you are not a child."

"There!" said Dora. "Now you're going to be cross!"

"Cross, my love?"

"I am sure they're very kind to me, Dora, and I am very happy."

"Well! But my dearest life!" said I, "might be very happy, and yet be treated badly."

Dora gave me a reproachful look—the look—and then began to sob, saying, like her, why had I ever wanted so much engaged to her? And why didn't I go as if I couldn't bear her?

What could I do, but kiss away her tears, and tell her how I doted on her, after that?

"I am sure I am very affectionate," said I, "you oughtn't to be cruel to me, Dolly."

"Cruel, my precious love! As if I were cruel—to you, for the world!"

"Then don't find fault with me," said I, making a rush of her mouth; "I am very good.

I was charmed by her presently asking her own accord, to give her that cookery-book, which she had once spoken of, and to show her how to make the dishes; as I had once promised I would bring the volume with me on my next visit. She had got it pretty well bound, first, to make it dry and more inviting; and as we strolled over the Common, I showed her an old house-book of my aunt's, and gave her a set of pencilled notes, and a pretty little pencil-case, and box to practice housekeeping with.

But the cookery-book made Dora's love and the figures made her cry. They add up, she said. So she rubbed them, drew little nose-gags, and likenesses of Jip, all over the tablets.

Then I playfully tried verbal inquests on domestic matters, as we walked about on Saturday afternoon. Sometimes, for example, we passed a butcher's shop, I would say, "Now suppose, my pet, that we were rich; and you were going to buy a shoulder of mutton for dinner, would you know how to buy it?"

My pretty little Dora's face would fall, as if she would make her mouth into a big again, and would much prefer to shut mine when I asked her, "Would you know how to buy it?"

"I would repeat, perhaps, if I were flexible."

Dora would think a little, and then perhaps, with great triumph:

"Why, the butcher would know how, and what I need I know? Oh, you silly!"

So, when I once asked Dora, with the cookery-book, what would she do, if she were married, and I were to say she should like Irish stew, she replied, that she would servant to make it; and then clapped her hands together across my arm, and in such a charming manner that she was delightful than ever.

Consequently, the principal use to which cookery-book was devoted, was being in the corner for Jip to asleep over. I was so pleased when she had said,
MISS DARTLE TURNS UPON HIS MOTHER.

"I descended—as I might have known I should, but that he fascinated me with his boyish courtship—into a doll, a trifle for the occupation of an idle hour, to be dropped, and taken up, and tripped with, as the inconstant humor took him. When he grew weary, I grew weary. As his fancy fled out, I would no more have tried to strengthen any power I had, than I would have married him on his being forced to take me for his wife. We fell away from one another without a word. Perhaps you saw it, and were not sorry. Since then, I have been a mere disfigured piece of furniture between you both; having no eyes, no ears, no feelings, no remembrances. Moan? Moan for what you made him; not for your love. I tell you that the time was, when I loved him better than you ever did!"

She stood with her bright angry eyes confronting the wide stare, and the set face; and softened no more, when the moaning was repeated, than if the face had been a picture.

"Miss Dartle," said I, "If you can be so obtuse as not to feel for this afflicted mother—"

"Who feels for me?" she sharply retorted. "She has sown this. Let her moan for the harvest that she reaps to-day!"

"And if his faults—" I began.

"Faults!" she cried, bursting into passionate tears. "Who dares malign him? He had a soul worth millions of the friends to whom he stooped!"

"No one can have loved him better, no one can hold him in dearer remembrance than I," I replied. "I meant to say, if you have no compassion for his mother; or if his faults—you have been bitter on them—"

"It's false," she cried, tearing her black hair; "I loved him!"

"If his faults cannot," I went on, "be banished from your remembrance, in such an hour; look at that figure, even as one you have never seen before, and render it some help!"

All this time the figure was unchanged, and looked unchangeable. Motionless, rigid, staring; moaning in the same dumb way from time to time, with the same helpless motion of the head; but giving no other sign of life. Miss Dartle suddenly kneeled down before it, and began to loosen the dress.

"A curse upon you!" she said, looking round at me, with a mingled expression of rage and grief. "It was in an evil hour that you ever came here! A curse upon you! Go!"

After passing out of the room, I hurried back to ring the bell, the sooner to alarm the servants. She had then taken the impassive figure in her arms, and, still upon her knees, was weeping over it, kissing it, calling to it, rocking it to and fro upon her bosom like a child, and trying every tender means to rouse the dormant senses. No longer afraid of leaving her, I noiselessly turned back again; and alarmed the house as I went out.

Later in the day, I returned, and we laid him in his mother's room. She was just the same, they told me; Miss Dartle never left her; doctors were in attendance, many things had been tried; but she lay like a statue, except for the low sound now and then.

I went through the dreary house, and darkened the windows. The windows of the chamber where he lay, I darkened last. I lifted up the leaden hand, and held it to my heart; and all the world seemed death and silence, broken only by his mother's moaning.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE EMIGRANTS.

One thing more, I had to do, before yielding myself to the shock of these emotions. It was, to conceal what had occurred, from those who were going away; and to dismiss them on their voyage in happy ignorance. In this, no time was to be lost.

I took Mr. Micawber aside that same night, and confided to him the task of standing between Mr. Peggotty and intelligence of the late catastrophe. He zealously undertook to do so, and to intercept any newspaper through which it might, without such precautions, reach him.

"If it penetrates to him, sir," said Mr. Micawber, striking himself on the breast, "it shall first pass through this body!"

Mr. Micawber, I must observe, in his adaptation of himself to a new state of society, had acquired a bold buccaneering air, not absolutely lawless, but defensive and prompt. One might have supposed him a child of the wilderness, long accustomed to live out of the confines of civilization, and about to return to his native wilds.

He had provided himself, among other things, with a complete suit of oil-skin, and a straw-hat with a very low crown, pitched or caulked on the outside. In this rough clothing, with a common mariner's telescope under his arm, and a shrewd trick of casting up his eye at the sky as looking out for dirty weather, he was far more nautical, after his manner, than Mr. Peggotty. His whole family, if I may so express it, were cleared for action. I found Mrs. Micawber in the closest and most uncompromising of bonnets, made fast under the chin; and in a shawl which tied her up (as I had been tied up, when my aunt first received me) like a bundle, and was secured behind at the waist, in a strong knot. Miss Micawber I found made snug for stormy weather, in the same manner; with nothing superfluous about her. Master Micawber was hardly visible in a Guernsey shirt, and the shaggiest suit of slops I ever saw; and the children were done up, like preserved meats, in impervious cases. Both Mr. Micawber and his eldest son wore their sleeves loosely turned back at the wrists, as being ready to lend a hand in any direction, and to"
singing out, "Yeo—Heave—Yeo!" on the shortest notice.

Thus Traddles and I found them at midnight, assembled on the wooden steps, at that time known as Hungerford Stairs, watching the departure of a boat with some of their property on board. I had told Traddles of the terrible event, and it had greatly shocked him; but there could be no doubt of the kindness of keeping it a secret, and he came to help me in this last service. It was here that I took Mr. Micawber aside, and received his promise.

The Micawber family were lodged in a little, dirty, tumble-down public-house, which in those days was close to the stairs, and whose protruding wooden rooms overhung the river. The family, as emigrants, being objects of some interest in and about Hungerford, attracted so many beholders, that we were glad to take refuge in their room. It was one of the wooden chambers upstairs, with the tide flowing underneath. My aunt and Agnes were there, bustling some little extra comforts, in the way of dress, for the children. Peggoty was quietly assisting, with the old insensible work-box, yard-measure, and bits of wax-candle before her, that had now outlived so much.

It was not easy to answer her inquiries; still less to whisper to Mr. Peggoty, when Mr. Micawber brought him in, that I had given the letter, and all was well. But I did both, and made them happy. If I showed any trace of what I felt, my own sobs were sufficient to account for it.

"And when does the ship sail, Mr. Micawber?" asked my aunt.

Mr. Micawber considered it necessary to prepare either my aunt or his wife, by degrees, and said, sooner than he had expected yesterday.

"The boat brought you word, I suppose?" said my aunt.

"It did, ma'am," he returned.

"Well," said my aunt. "And she sails—" "Madam," he replied, "I am informed that we must positively be on board before seven tomorrow morning."

"Heyday!" said my aunt, "that's soon. Is it a sea-going fact, Mr. Peggoty?"

"Tis so, ma'am. She'll drop down the river with that tide. If Mr. Davy and my sister comes aboard at Gravesend, afternoon of next day, they'll see the last on us."

"And that we shall do," said I, "be sure!"

"Until then, and until we are asea," observed Mr. Micawber, with a glance of intelligence at me, "Mr. Peggoty and myself will constantly keep a double look-out together, on our goods and chattels. Emma, my love," said Mr. Micawber, clearing his throat in his magnificent way, "my friend Mr. Thomas Traddles is so obliging as to solicit, in my car, that he should have the privilege of ordering the ingredients necessary to the composition of a moderate portion of that Beverage which is peculiarly associated, in our minds, with the Spirit of Old England. I allude to—in short, Punch. Under ordinary circumstances, I don't scruple to entertain the indulgence of Miss Trotwood and Miss Wickfield, but——"

"I can only say for myself," said my aunt, "that I will drink all happiness and success to you, Mr. Micawber, with the utmost pleasure."

"And I too!" said Agnes, with a smile.

Mr. Micawber immediately descended the stairs, where he appeared to be quite at home; and in one time returned with a steaming jug. I could not but observe that he had been peeling the lemons with his own clasp-knife, which became the knife of a practical settler, was about a foot long; and which he wiped, not visibly without ostentation, on the sleeve of his coat. Mrs. Micawber and the two elder members of the family I now found to be provided with similar formidable instruments, while every child had its own wooden spoon attached to its body by a strong line. In a similar anticipation of life afloat, and in the Bush, Mr. Micawber, instead of helping Mrs. Micawber and his eldest named daughter to punch, in wine-glasses, which he might easily have done, for there was a shelf in the room, served it out to them in a series of villainous little tin pots; and I never saw him enjoy anything so much as drinking out of his own particular pint pot, and putting it in his pocket at the close of the evening.

"The luxuries of the old country," said Mr. Micawber, with an intense satisfaction in their recollection, "we abandon. The darkness of the forest cannot, of course, expect to participate in the refinements of the land of the Free."

Here, a boy came in to say that Mr. Micawber was wanted down-stairs.

"I have a presentiment," said Mrs. Micawber, setting down her tin pot, "that it is a member of my family!"

"If so, my dear," observed Mr. Micawber, with his usual suddenness of warmth on that subject, "as the member of your family—whichever he, she, or it, may be—has kept me waiting for a considerable period, perhaps the Member may now wait your convenience."

"Micawber," said his wife, in a low tone, "at such a time as this—"

"It is not meet," said Mr. Micawber, rising, "that every nice offence should bear its comment!" Emma, I stand reproved."

"The loss, Micawber," observed his wife, "has been my family's, not yours. If my family are at length sensible of the deprival to which their own conduct has, in the past, exposed them, and now desire to extend the hand of fellowship to let it not be repulsed."

"My dear," he returned, "so be it!"

"If not for their sakes; for mine, Micawber," said his wife.

"Emma," he returned, "that view of the question is, at such a moment, irresistible. I cannot, even now, absolutely pledge myself to fall upon your family's weal; but the matter—"
I BRING AGNES AND DORA TOGETHER.

Dora; her manner of making acquaintance; Jip (who responded instantly); her stay, when Dora was ashamed to come usual seat by me; her modest grace and ing a crowd of blushing little marks of from Dora; seemed to make our circle volate.

so glad," said Dora, after tea, "that you didn’t think you would; and I want, ever, to be liked, now Julia Mills ismitted to mention it, by-the-bye. Miss aided, and Dora and I had gone aboard at Indianam at Gravesend to see her; I had preserved ginger, and guava, and elies of that sort for lunch; and we had fills weeping on a camp-stool on the k, with a large new diary under her ich the original reflections awakened emplation of Ocean were to be recorded and key.

aid, she was afraid, I must have given omising character; but Dora corrected y, "she said, shaking her curls at me; praise. He thinks so much of your that I was quite afraid of it."

od opinion cannot strengthen his at- o some people whom he knows," said a smile; "it is not worth their hav-
case let me have it," said Dora, in her y, "if you can!"

le merry about Dora’s wanting to be I knew all of us, and she didn’t have any rate, and the short evening flew ammer-wings. The time was at hand coach was to call for us. I was stand-
fore the fire, when Dora came stealing gme that usual precious little kiss at.

you think, if I had had her for a friend a go, Doady," said Dora, her bright eyes ry brightly, and her little right hand g itself with one of the buttons of my i has been more clever perhaps?" re!" said I, "what nonsense!"

I think it is nonsense?" returned Dora, king at me. "Are you sure it is?"

ese I am." forgotten," said Dora, still turning the nd and round, "what relation Agnes is a dear bad boy.

ed-relation," I replied; "but we were ogether, like brother and sister," or why you ever fell in love with me?"

beginning on another button of my pe because I couldn’t see you, and not ora!"

so you had never seen me at all," said to another button.

we had never been born!" said I,

I wondered what she was thinking about, as I glanced in admiring silence at the little soft hand travelling up the row of buttons on my coat, and at the clustering hair that lay against my breast, and at the lashes of her downcast eyes, slightly rising as they followed her idle fingers. At length her eyes were lifted up to mine, and she stood on tiptoe to give me, more thoughtfully than usual, that precious little kiss—once, twice, three times—and went out of the room.

They all came back together within five minutes afterwards, and Dora’s unusual thoughtfulness was quite gone then. She was laughingly resolved to put Jip through the whole of his performances, before the coach came. They took some time (not so much on account of their variety, as Jip’s reluctance), and were still unfinished when it was heard at the door. There was a hurried but affectionate parting between Agnes and herself; and Dora was to write to Agnes (who was not to mind her letters being foolish, she said), and Agnes was to write to Dora; and they had a second parting at the coach-door, and a third when Dora, in spite of the remonstrances of Miss Lavinia, would come running out once more to remind Agnes at the coach-window about writing, and to shake her curls at me on the box.

The stage-coach was to put us down near Covent Garden, where we were to take another stage-coach for Highgate. I was impatient for the short walk in the Interval, that Agnes might prize Dora to me. Ah! what praise it was! How lovingly and fervently did it commend the pretty creature I had won, with all her artless graces best displayed, to my most gentle care! How thoughtfully remind me, yet with no preface of doing so, of the trust in which I hold the orphan child!

Never, never, had I loved Dora so deeply and truly, as I loved her that night. When we had again alighted, and were walking in the starlight along the quiet road that led to the Doctor’s house, I told Agnes it was her doing.

"When you were sitting by her," said I, "you seemed to be no less her guardian angel than mine; and you seem so now, Agnes."

"A poor angel," she returned, "but faithful."

The clear tone of her voice, going straight to my heart, made it natural to me to say:

"The cheerfulness that belongs to you, Agnes (and to no one else that ever I have seen), is so restored, I have observed to-day, that I have begun to hope you are happier at home?"

"I am happier in myself," she said; "I am quite cheerful and light-hearted."

I glanced at the serene face looking upward, and thought it was the stars that made it seem so noble.

"There has been no change at home," said Agnes, after a few moments.

"No fresh reference," said I, "to—I wouldn’t distress you, Agnes, but I cannot help asking—to what we spoke of, when we parted last?"

"No, none," she answered.
“I have thought so much about it.”

“You must think less about it. Remember that I confide in simple love and truth at last. Have no apprehensions for me, Trotwood,” she added, after a moment; “the step you dread my taking, I shall never take.”

Although I think I had never really feared it, in any season of cool reflection, it was an unspeakable relief to me to have this assurance from her own truthful lips. I told her so, earnestly.

“And when this visit is over,” said I, “for we may not be alone another time,—how long is it likely to be, my dear Agnes, before you come to London again?”

“Probably a long time,” she replied; “I think it will be best—for papa’s sake—to remain at home. We are not likely to meet often, for some time to come; but I shall be a good correspondent of Dora’s, and we shall frequently hear of one another that way.”

We were now within the little court-yard of the Doctor’s cottage. It was growing late. There was a light in the window of Mrs. Strong’s chamber, and Agnes, pointing to it, made me goodnight.

“Do not be troubled,” she said, giving me her hand, “by our misfortunes and anxieties. I can be happier in nothing than in your happiness. If you can ever give me any help, rely upon it, I will ask you for it. Good bless you always!”

In her benignant smile, and in these last tones of her cheerful voice, I seemed again to see and hear my little Dora in her company. I stood awhile, looking through the porch at the stars, with a heart full of love and gratitude, and then walked slowly forth. I had engaged a bed at a decent alehouse close by, and was going out at the gate, when, happening to turn my head, I saw a light in the Doctor’s study. A half-reproachful fancy came into my mind, that he had been working at the Dictionary without my help. With the view of seeing if this were so, and, in any case, of bidding him good-night, if he were yet sitting among his books, I turned back, and going softly across the hall, and gently opening the door, looked in.

The first person whom I saw, to my surprise, by the sober light of the shaded lamp, was Uriah. He was standing close beside it, with one of his skeleton hands over his mouth, and the other resting on the Doctor’s table. The Doctor sat in his study-chair, covering his face with his hands. Mr. Wickfield, sorely troubled and distressed, was leaning forward, irrevocably touching the Doctor’s arm.

For an instant, I supposed that the Doctor was ill. I hastily advanced a step under that impression, when I met Uriah’s eye, and saw what was the matter. I would have withdrawn, but the Doctor made a gesture to detain me, and I remained.

“At any rate,” observed Uriah, with a wrinkle of his ungainly person, “we may keep the door shut. We needn’t make it known to all the town.”

Saying which, he went on his toes, which I had left open, and carefully took up his fiction. There was an obtrusive show of affection in his voice and manner, altogether—an at least to me—than any he could have assumed.

“I have felt it incumbent upon me,” said Uriah, “to point out to you what you and me have about. You didn’t exactly understand?”

I gave him a look, but no other signs of going to my good old master, said, that I meant to be words of comfort a flag. He put his hand upon me and it was my custom to do when I was a little fellow, but did not lift his grey he.

“As you didn’t understand me, Mr. Copperfield,” resumed Uriah in the same manner, “I may take the liberty of mentioning, being among friends, that I hope Doctor Strong to the rest Mrs. Strong. It’s much against the rest me, assure you, Copperfield, to be come anything so unpleasant; but really, as we are all mixing ourselves up what can be. That was what my meaning was, sir, didn’t understand me.”

I wonder now, when I think of his face, not collar him, and try to shake the breeches out his body.

“I have no idea I didn’t make myself up when he went on, nor you neither. Nobody was both of us inclined to give such a wide berth. How’s ever, at last I have my mind to speak plain; and I have to Doctor Strong that—did you speak, sir?”

This was to the Doctor, who had not a word that he might have touched any heart I had, but it had no effect upon Uriah’s.

“—mentioned to Doctor Strong,” he said, “that any one may see that Mr. Melch the lovely and agreeable lady as is Doctor wife, are too sweet on one another. It is time we come (we being at present all themselves up with what oughtn’t to be), as it is to be told that this was full as everybody as the sun, before Mr. Malbone Indian; that Mr. Malbone made excuse back, for nothing else; and that he’s the only for nothing else. When you come in, it’s just putting it to my fellow-partner, whom he turned, “to say to Doctor Strether his word and honor, whether he’d ever this opinion long ago, or not. Come, Wickfield, sir! Would you be so good as tell me, or no, sir? Come, partner!”

“For God’s sake, my dear Doctor,” said Wickfield, again laying his irresolute hand on the Doctor’s arm, “don’t attach too much to any suspicion I may have entertained. “There!” cried Uriah, shaking his

“What a melancholy conclusion!”
I never mentioned this to any one. I never meant it to be known to any one. And though it is terrible to you to hear," said Mr. Wickfield, quite subdued, "if you knew how terrible it is for me to tell, you would feel compassion for me!"

The Doctor, in the perfect goodness of his nature, put out his hand. Mr. Wickfield held it for a little while in his, with his head bowed down.

"I am sure," said Uriah, writhing himself into the silence like a Conger-eel, "that this is a subject full of unpleasantness to everybody. But since we have got so far, I ought to take the liberty of mentioning that Copperfield had noticed it too."

I turned upon him, and asked him how he dared refer to me!

"Oh! it's very kind of you, Copperfield," returned Uriah, undulating all over, "and we all know what an amiable character yours is; but you know that the moment I spoke to you the other night, you knew what I meant. You know you knew what I meant, Copperfield. Don't deny it! You deny it with the best intentions; but don't do it, Copperfield."

I saw the mild eye of the good old Doctor turned upon me for a moment, and I felt that the confession of my old misgivings and remembrances was too plainly written in my face to be overlooked. It was of no use raging. I could not undo that. Say what I would, I could not unsee it.

We were silent again, and remained so, until the Doctor rose and walked twice or thrice across the room. Presently he returned to where his chair stood; and, leaning on the back of it, and occasionally putting his handkerchief to his eyes, with a simple honesty that did him more honor, to my thinking, than any disguise he could have effected, said:

"I have been much to blame. I believe I have been very much to blame. I have exposed one whom I hold in my heart, to trials and asperities—I call them asperities, even to have been conceived in anybody's inmost mind—of which she never, but for me, could have been the object."

Uriah Heep gave a kind of snivel. I think to express sympathy.

"Of which my Annie," said the Doctor, "never, but for me, could have been the object. Gentlemen, I am old now, as you know; I do not feel, to-night, that I have much to live for. But my life—my Life—upon the truth and honor of the dear lady who has been the subject of this conversation."

I do not think that the best embodiment of chivalry, the realisation of the handsomest and most romantic figure ever imagined by painter, could have said this with a more impressive and affecting dignity than the plain old Doctor did.

"But I am not prepared," he went on, "to deny—perhaps I may have been, without knowing..."
The knowledge came upon me, not quickly, but little by little, and grain by grain. The desolate feeling with which I went abroad, deepened and widened hourly. At first it was a heavy sense of loss and sorrow, wherein I could distinguish little else. By imperceptible degrees, it became a hopeless consciousness of all that I had lost—love, friendship, interest; of all that had been shattered—my first trust, my first affection, the whole silver castle of my life; of all that remained—a ruined blank and waste, lying wide around me, unbroken, to the dark horizon.

If my grief were selfish, I did not know it to be so. I mourned for my child-wit, taken from her blooming world, so young. I mourned for him who might have won the love and admiration of thousands, as he had won mine long ago. I mourned for the broken heart that had found rest in the stormy sea; and for the wandering remnants of the simple home, where I had heard the night-wind blowing, when I was a child.

From the accumulated sadness into which I fell, I had at length no hope of ever issuing again. I roamed from place to place, carrying my burden with me everywhere. I felt its whole weight now; and I drooped beneath it. I made a determination, and I said in my heart that it could never be lightened.

When this despondency was at its worst, I believed that I should die. Sometimes, I thought that I would like to die at home; and actually turned back on my road, that I might get there soon. At other times, I passed on farther away, from city to city, seeking I know not what, and trying to leave I know not what behind.

It is not in my power to retrace, one by one, all the weary phases of distress of mind through which I passed. There are some dreams that can only be imperfectly and vaguely described; and when I oblige myself to look back on this time of my life, I seem to be recalling such a dream. I see myself passing on among the novels of foreign towns, palaces, cathedrals, temples, pictures, castles, tombs, fantastic streets—the old abiding places of History and Fancy—as a dreamer might; bearing my painful load through all, and hardly conscious of the objects as they fade before me. Listlessness to everything, but brooding sorrow, was the night that fell on my undisciplined heart. Let me look up from it—as at last I did, thank Heaven!—and from its long, sad, wretched dream, to dawn.

For many months I travelled with this ever-darkening cloud upon my mind. Some blind reasons that I had for not returning home—reasons then struggling within me, vainly, for more distinct expression—kept me on my pilgrimage. Sometimes, I had proceeded restlessly from place to place, stopping nowhere; sometimes, I had lingered long in one spot. I had had no purpose, no sustaining soul within me, anywhere.

I was in Switzerland. I had come out of Italy, over one of the great passes of the Alps, and had since wandered with a guide among the by-ways of the mountains. If these solitudes had spoken to my heart, I should have heard it. I had found solitaries and wandering heights and precipices, in the mountain rives, and the wastes of ice and snow; but yet, they had taught me nothing else.

I came, one evening before sunset, down a valley, where I was to rest. In the course of my descent to it, by the winding-track along the mountain-side, from which I saw it shining below, I think some long-unvisited sense of beauty and tranquility, some softening influence awakened by its peace, moved faintly in my breast. I remember pausing once, with a kind of sorrow that was not all oppressive, not quite despairing. I remember almost hoping that some better change was possible within me.

I came into the valley, as the evening sun shining on the remote heights of snow, took closed it in, like eternal clouds. The bases of the mountains forming the gorge in which the little village lay, were richly green; and high above, this gentler vegetation, grew forests of dark firs, cleaving the wintry snow-drift, wedge-like and stemming the avalanche. Above these, the range upon range of craggy slopes, grey, blue, and bright ice, and smooth verdure-specks of pasture, all gradually blending with the crowning one. Dotted here and there on the mountain-side, each tiny dot a home, were lonely wooden cottages, so dwarfed by the towering heights that they appeared too small for toys. So did even the clustered village in the valley, with its wooden bridge across the stream, where the storm tumbled over broken rocks, and roared away among the trees. In the quiet air, there was a sound of distant singing—shepherd voices; but, as one bright evening cloud floated midway up the mountain's side, I could almost have believed it came from there, and was not earthly made. All at once, in this solemnity, great Nature spoke to me; and soothed me to lay down my weary head upon the grass, and weep as I had not wept yet, since Dora died!

I had found a packet of letters awaiting me; but a few minutes before, and had strolled out of the village to read them while my supper was making ready. Other packets had missed me, and I had received none for a long time. Beyond a line or two, to say that I was well, and had arrived at such a place, I had not had fortune or constancy to write a letter since I left home.

The packet was in my hand. I opened it, and read the writing of Agnes.

She was happy and useful, was prospering, as she had hoped. That was all she told me of herself. The rest referred to me.

She gave me no advice; she urged me only to be; she only told me, in her own fervent manner, what her trust in me was. She knew (she said) how much her nature as mine would turn afflictions to good. She knew how trial and emotion would quicken and strengthen it. She was sure that by every purpose I should gain a heart such as
that I despise you. I have shown you now, more plainly, that I do. Why should I dread your going worst to all about you? What else do you ever do?"

He perfectly understood this allusion to the considerations that had hitherto restrained me in my communications with him. I rather think that neither the blow, nor the allusion, would have escaped me, but for the assurance I had from Agnes that night. It is no matter.

There was another long pause. His eyes, as he looked at me, seemed to take every shade of color that could make eyes ugly.

"Copperfield," he said, removing his hand from his cheek, "you have always gone against me. I know you always used to be against me at Mr. Wickfield's."

"You may think what you like," I replies, still in a towering rage. "If it is not true, so much the worthier you."

"And yet I always liked you, Copperfield!" he exclaimed.

I delined to make him no reply; and, taking up my hat, was going out to bed, when he came between me and the door.

"Copperfield," he said, "there must be two parties to a quarrel. I won't be one."

"You may go to the devil!" said I.

"Don't say that," he replied. "I know you'll sorry afterwards. How can you make yourself inferior to me, as to show such a bad spirit?"

"I forgive you." "You forgive me!" I repeated disdainfully.

"I do, and you can't help yourself," replied Dr. "To think of your going and attacking me, that have always been a friend to you! But you can't be a quarrel without two parties, and won't be one. I will be a friend to you, in spite of you. So now you know what you've got to expect."

The necessity of carrying on this dialogue (his voice in which was very low; mine very quick) in a low tone, that the house might not be disturbed at an unseasonable hour, did not improve my temper; though my passion was cooling. Merely telling him that I should expect him what I always had expected, and had yet been disappointed in, I opened the door for him, as if he had been a great walnut put to be cracked, and went out of the house. He slept out of the house too, at his mother's; and before I had gone many hundred came up with me.

"You know, Copperfield," he said, in my car (did not turn my head), "you're in quite a position;" which I felt to be true, and made me chase the more: "you can't make a brave thing, and you can't help being for. I don't intend to mention it to mother, any living soul. I'm determined to forgive But I do wonder that you should lift your against a person that you know to be so."

"It only less mean than he. He knew me better than I knew myself. If he had retorted or openly exasperated me, it would have been a relief and a justification; but he had put me on a slow fire, on which I lay tormented half the night.

In the morning, when I came out, the early church bell was ringing, and he was walking up and down with his mother. He addressed me as if nothing had happened, and I could do no less than reply. I had struck him hard enough to give him this toothache, I suppose. At all events his face was tied up in a black silk handkerchief, which, with his hat perched on the top of it, was far from improving his appearance. I heard that he went to a dentist's in London on the Monday morning, and had a tooth out. I hope it was a double one.

The Doctor gave out that he was not quite well; and remained alone, for a considerable part of every day, during the remainder of the visit. Agnes and her father had been gone a week, before we resumed our usual work. On the day preceding its resumption, the Doctor gave me with his own hands a folded note, not sealed. It was addressed to myself; and laid an injunction on me, in a few affectionate words, never to refer to the subject of that evening. I had confided it to my aunt, but to no one else. It was not a subject I could discuss with Agnes, and Agnes certainly had not the least suspicion of what had passed.

Neither, I felt convinced, had Mrs. Strong then. Several weeks elapsed before I saw the least change in her. It came on slowly, like a cloud when there is no wind. At first, she seemed to wonder at the gentle compassion with which the Doctor spoke to her, and at his wish that she should have her mother with her, to relieve the dull monotony of her life. Often, when we were at work, and she was sitting by, I would see her pausing and looking at him with that memorable face. Afterwards, I sometimes observed her rise, with her eyes full of tears, and go out of the room. Gradually, an unhappy shadow fell upon her beauty, and deepened every day. Mrs. Markheim was a regular inmate of the cottage then; but she talked and talked, and saw nothing.

As this change stole on Annie, once like sunshine in the Doctor's house, the Doctor became older in appearance, and more grave; but the sweetness of his temper, the placid kindness of his manner, and his benevolent solicitude for her, if they were capable of any increase, were increased. I saw him once, early on the morning of her birthday, when she came to sit in the window while we were at work (which she had always done, but now began to do with a timid and uncertain air that I thought very touching), take her forehead between his hands, kiss it, and go hurriedly away, too much moved to remain. I saw her stand where he had left her, like a statue; and then bend down her head, and clasp her hands, and weep, I cannot say how sorrowfully.

Sometimes, after that, I fancied that she tried
to speak, even to me, in intervals when we were left alone. But she never uttered word. The Doctor always had some new project for her participating in amusements away from home, with her mother; and Mrs. Markleham, who was very fond of amusements, and very easily dissatisfied with anything else, entered into them with great goodwill, and was loud in her commendations. But Annie, in a spiritless unhappy way, only went whither she was led, and seemed to have no care for anything.

I did not know what to think. Neither did my aunt; who must have walked, at various times, a hundred miles in her uncertainty. What was strange of all was, that the only real relief which seemed to make its way into the secret region of this domestic unhappiness, made its way there in the person of Mr. Dick.

What his thoughts were on the subject, or what his observation was, I am as unable to explain, as I daresay he would have been to assist me in the task. But, as I have recorded in the narrative of my school days, his veneration for the Doctor was unbounded; and there is a subtlety of perception in real attachment, even when it is borne towards man by one of the lower animals, which leaves the highest intellect behind. To this mind of the heart, if I may call it so, in Mr. Dick, some bright ray of the truth shone straight.

He had proudly resumed his privilege, in many of his spare hours, of walking up and down the garden with the Doctor; as he had been accustomed to pace up and down The Doctor's Walk at Canterbury. But matters were no sooner in this state, than he devoted all his spare time (and got up earlier to make it more) to these perambulations. If he had never been so happy as when the Doctor read that marvellous performance, the Dictionary, to him; he was now quite miserable unless the Doctor pulled it out of his pocket, and began. When the Doctor and I were engaged, he now fell into the custom of walking up and down with Mrs. Strong, and helping her to trim her favorite flowers, or weed the beds. I daresay he rarely spoke a dozen words in an hour; but his quiet interest, and his wistful face, found immediate response in both their breasts; each knew that the other liked him, and that he loved both; and he became what no one else could be—a link between them.

When I think of him, with his impenetrably wise face, walking up and down with the Doctor, delighted to be battered by the hard words in the Dictionary; when I think of him carrying huge watering-pots after Annie; kneeling down, in very paws of gloves, at patient microscopic work among the little leaves; expressing as no philosopher could have expressed, in every thing he did, a delicate desire to be her friend; showering sympathy, truthfulness, and affection, out of every hole in the watering-pot; when I think of him never wandering in that better mind of his to which unhappiness addressed itself, never bringing the unfortunate King Charles into the girl's eyes, never wavering in his grateful service, never diverted from his knowledge that there was one thing wrong, or from his wish to set it right; I really feel almost ashamed of having known him; he was not quite in his wits, taking account of almost I have done with mine.

"Nobody but myself," Trot, knows what he means!" my aunt would proudly remark, as we conversed about it. "Dick will dissemble himself yet!"

I must refer to one other topic before I close this chapter. While the visit at the Doctor's was still in progress, I observed that the post brought two or three letters every morning to Uriah Heep, who remained at Highgate until his rest went back, it being a leisure time; and these were always directed in a business-like manner by Mr. Micawber, who now assumed a round legal hand. I was glad to infer, from these slight premises, that Mr. Micawber was doing well; and consequently was much surprised to receive, about this time, the following letter from his amiable wife:

"CANTERBURY, Monday Evening.

"You will doubtless be surprised, my dear Mr. Copperfield, to receive this communication, still more so, by its contents. Still more so, by the stipulation of implicit confidence which I beg to impose. But my feelings as a wife and mother require relief; and as I do not wish to consult my family (already obnoxious to the feelings of Mr. Micawber), I know no one of whom I can better ask advice than my friend and former lodger.

"You may be aware, my dear Mr. Copperfield, that between myself and Mr. Micawber (whom I will never desert), there has always been preserved a spirit of mutual confidence. Mr. Micawber and I have occasionally given a bill without consulting me; or he may have misled me as to the period when that obligation would become due. I have actually happened. But, in general, Mr. Micawber has had no secrets from the least of affection—I allude to his wife—and has been so, on our retirement to rest, recalled the press of the day.

"You will picture to yourself, my dear Mr. Copperfield, what the perplexity of my situation must be, when I inform you that Mr. Micawber is entirely changed. He is reserved. He is secret. His life is a mystery to the partner of his joys and sorrows—I again allude to his wife—and if I should assure you that beyond knowing that it passed from morning to night at the office, I know less of it than I do of the man in the midst; the children repeat an idle tale respecting cold plum porridge, I should adopt a popular facility to express an actual fact.

"But this is not all. Mr. Micawber is severe. He is severe. We are estranged from our oldest son and daughter. He has no hold in the house; it looks with an eye of hatred upon us.\]
nger who last became a member of our
the pecuniary means of meeting our ex-
cept down to the utmost farthing, are ob-
sum him with great difficulty, and even-
rful threats that he will Settle himself
expression); and he inexorably refuses
y explanation whatever of this distract-
 is hard to bear. This is heart-breaking.
ll Advise me, knowing my feeble powers
y are, how you think it will be best to
in a dilemma so unwanted, you will
r friendly obligation to the many you
ady rendered me. With love from the
nd a smile from the happily-unconscious
I remain, dear Mr. Copperfield,
"Your afflicted,
" EMMA MACAWBER."
not feel justified in giving a wife of Mr.
's experience any other recommenda-
that she should try to reclaim Mr.
 by patience and kindness (as I knew she
any case); but the letter set me thinking
very much.

CHAPTER XLIII.
ANOTHER RETROSPECT.
again, let me pause upon a memorable
my life. Let me stand aside, to see the
of those days go by me, accompanying
w of myself, in dim procession.
m, months, seasons, pass along. They
more than a summer day and a winter
Now, the Common where I walk with
in bloom, a field of bright gold; and
unseen heather lies in mounds and
underneath a covering of snow. In a
river that flows through our Sunday
sparkling in the summer sun, is ruffled
into wind, or thickened with drifting
cr. Faster than ever river ran towards
shades, darkens, and rolls away,
thread changes, in the house of the two
like ladies. The clock ticks over the
the weather-glass hangs in the hall,
lock nor weather-glass is ever right; but
in both, devoutly,
come legally to man's estate. I have
the dignity of twenty-one. But this is a
guilty that may be thrust upon one. Let
what I have achieved.
 tainted that savage stenographic mystery,
respectable income by it. I am in high
my accomplishment in all pertaining to
and am joined with eleven others in re-
re debates in Parliament for a Morning
er. Night after night, I record predic-
ever come to pass, professions that are
filled, explanations that are only meant
y, I wallow in words. Britania, that
female, is always before me, like a
! skewered through and through with
office-pens, and bound hand and foot with red
tape. I am sufficiently behind the scenes to know
the worth of political life. I am quite an Infidel
about it, and shall never be converted.

My dear old Traddles has tried his hand at the
same pursuit, but it is not in Traddles's way. He
is perfectly good-humored respecting his failure,
and reminds me that he always did consider him-
self slow. He has occasional employment on the
same newspaper, in getting up the facts of dry
subjects, to be written about and embellished by
more fertile minds. He is called to the bar;
and with admirable industry and self-denial has
scraped another hundred pounds together, to see
a conveyancer whose chambers he attends. A
great deal of very hot port wine was consumed at
his call; and, considering the figure, I should
think the Inner Temple must have made a profit
by it.

I have come out in another way. I have taken
with fear and trembling to authorship. I wrote a
little something, in secret, and sent it to a maga-
azine, and it was published in the magazine.
Since then, I have taken heart to write a good
many trifling pieces. Now, I am regularly paid
for them. Altogether, I am well off; when I tell
my income on the fingers of my left hand, I pass
the third finger and take in the fourth at the mid-
dle joint.

We have removed from Buckingham Street, to
a pleasant little cottage very near the one I looked
at, when my enthusiasm first came on. My aunt,
however (who has sold the house at Dover, to
good advantage), is not going to remain here, but
intends removing herself to a still more tidy
cottage close at hand. What does this portend? My
marriage? Yes!

Yes! I am going to be married to Dora! Miss
Lavinia and Miss Clarissa have given their con-
sent; and if ever canary birds were in a flutter,
they are. Miss Lavinia, self-charged with the
superintendence of my darling's wardrobe, is con-
stantly cutting out brown-paper curasses, and
differing in opinions from a highly respectable
young man, with a long bundle, and a yard mea-
ure under his arm. A dressmaker, always stabbed
in the breast with a needle and thread, boards and
lodges in the house; and seems to me, eating,
Drinking, or sleeping, never to take her thimble
off. They make a lay-figure of my dear. They
are always sending for her to come and try some-
thing on. We can't be happy together for five
minutes in the evening, but some intrusive female
knocks at the door, and says, "Oh, if you please,
Miss Dora, would you step up-stairs?"

Miss Clarissa and my aunt roam all over Lon-
don, to find out articles of furniture for Dora and
me to look at. It would be better for them to buy
the goods at once, without this ceremony of in-
spection; for, when we go to see a kitchen fender
and meat-screen, Dora sees a Chinese house for
Jip, with little bells on the top, and prefers that.
And it takes a long time to accustom Jip to his
new residence. After we have bought it; when
ever he goes in or out, he makes all the little bells ring, and is horribly frightened.

Peggotty comes up to make herself useful, and falls to work immediately. Her department appears to be, to clean everything over and over again. She rubs everything that can be rubbed, until it shines, like her own honest forehead, with perpetual friction. And now it is, that I begin to see her solitary brother passing through the dark streets at night, and looking, as he goes, among the wandering faces. I never speak to him at such an hour. I know too well, as his grave figure passes onward, what he seeks, and what he dreads.

Why does Traddles look so important when he calls upon me this afternoon in the Commonswhere I still occasionally attend, for form's sake, when I have time? The realisation of my boyish day-dreams is at hand. I am going to take out the Licence. I have a little document to do so much; and Traddles contemplates it, as it lies upon my desk, half in admiration, half in awe. There are the names in the sweet-old visionary connexion, David Copperfield and Dora Spenlov; and there, in the corner, is the Parental Institution, the Stamp Office, which is so benevolently interested in the various transactions of human life, looking down upon our Union; and there is the Archbishop of Canterbury invoking a blessing on us in print, and doing it as cheap as could possibly be expected.

Nevertheless, I am in a dream, a flustered, happy, hurried dream. I can't believe that it is going to be; and yet I can't believe that every one I pass in the street, must have some kind of perception, that I am to be married the day after to-morrow. The Surrogate knows me, when I go down to be sworn; and dispose of me casually, as if there were a Masonic understanding between us. Traddles is not at all wanted, but is in attendance as my general bachelor.

"I hope the next time you come here, my dear fellow," I say to Traddles, "it will be on the same errand for yourself. And I hope it will be soon."

"Thank you for your good wishes, my dear Copperfield," he replies. "I hope so too. It's a satisfaction to know that she'll wait for me any length of time, and that she really is the dearest girl."

"When are you to meet her at the coach?" I ask.

"At seven," says Traddles, looking at his plain old silver watch—the very watch he once took a wheel out of, at school, to make a water-mill. "That is about Miss Wickfield's time, is it not?"

"A little earlier. Her time is half past eight."

"I assure you, my dear boy," says Traddles, "I am almost as pleased as if I were going to be married myself, to think that this event is coming to such a happy termination. And really the great friendship and consideration of personally associating Sophy with the joyful occasion, and inviting her to be a bridesmaid in our wedding with Miss Wickfield, demands my thanks. I am extremely sensible of it."

I hear him, and shake hands with him, as we talk, and walk, and dine, and so on. I don't believe it. Nothing is real.

Sophy arrives at the house of Dora's due course. She has the most agreeable—not absolutely beautiful, but extra pleasantly, and it is one of the most genial, kind, frank, engaging creatures I have ever seen. Traddles presents her to me with great prudence, he rubs his hands for ten minutes by the clock, and every individual hair upon his head stands up in the tippet; and I congratulate him in the closest of his choice.

I have brought Agnes from the Cowper coach, and her cheerful and beautiful looks among us for the second time. Agnes has a liking for Traddles, and it is capital to see her, and to see the smile of Traddles, who commends the dearest girl in the world to me.

Still I don't believe it. We have a happy evening, and are supremely happy; but I don't believe it yet. I can't collect myself, and I can't check off my happiness as it takes place. I am in a misty and unsettled state of mind; as if it got up very early in the morning a week ago, and had never been to bed since. It makes me when yesterday was. I seem to have been carrying the licence about, in my many months.

Next day, too, when we all go in for a walk in the house—our house—Dora's and mine, quite unable to regard myself as its master. I don't seem to be there, by permission of somebody else. I half expect the real master to come presently, and say ha ha glad to see you. Such a beautiful little house as it is, with everything so bright and new; with the flowers carpets looking as if freshly gathered, green leaves on the paper as if they had just come out; with the spotless muslin curtains, the blushing rose-colored furniture, and Dora's bonnet with the blue ribbon—do I remember now, how I loved her in such another hat first seen here?—already hanging on its hook, the guitar-case quite at home on its shelf, corner; and everybody tumbling over Jip's paws, which is much too big for the established order.

Another happy evening, quite as sincere as the rest of it, and I steal into the new house before going away. Dora is not there. If they have not done trying on yet, Miss Wickfield peeps in, and tells me mysteriously that she is not long. She is rather long, notwithstanding her height and power, but by and by I hear a rustling at the door, and some one taps.

I say, "Come in," but some one says "I go to the door, wondering who it is.

I meet a pair of bright eyes, and a blue face; they are Dora's eyes and face, and Miss Wickfield has dressed her in some morning's dress. She wear

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DAVID COPPERFIELD.

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THE END.
to see. I take my little wife to my Miss Lavinia gives a little scream be-
side the bonnet, and Dora laughs and

is, because I am so pleased; and I be-
than ever.

you think it pretty, Dandy?" says

I should rather think I did.

are you sure you like me very much?"

ic is fraught with such danger to the
at Miss Lavinia gives another little
I beg me to understand that Dora is
looked at and on no account to be
so Dora stands in a delightful state of
or a minute or two, to be admired; and
off her bonnet—looking so natural !—and runs away with it in her hand;
dancing down again in her own fa-
s, and asks Jip if I have got a beauti-
life, and whether he’ll forgive her for
d, and kneels down to make him
the cookery-book, for the last time in
the ne, more incredulous than ever, to a
it I have hard by; and get up very
morning, to ride to the Highgate road
my aunt.
ever seen my aunt in such state. She
in a lavender-colored silk, and has a
ect on, and is amazing. Janet has
, and is there to look at me. Peggotty
go church, intending to behold the
rom the gallery. Mr. Dick, who is to
tring to the altar, has had his
Traddles, whom I have taken up by
it at the tollgate, presents a dazzling
of cream color and light blue; and
Mr. Dick have a general effect about
thing all gloves.
straying, and seem to see nothing. Nor
we anything whatever. Still, as we
; in an open carriage, this fairy mar-
I enough to fill me with a sort of won-
for the unfortunate people who have t,
are sweeping out the shops, and
eir daily occupations.
sits with my hand in hers all the way,
top a little way short of the church, to
Peggotty, whom we have brought on
e gives it a squeeze, and me a kiss.
less you, Trot! My own boy never
arer. I think of poor dear Baby this

I. And of all I owe to you, dear
bald!" says my aunt; and gives her
erowing cordially to Traddles, who
his to Mr. Dick, who then gives his to
give mine to Traddles, and then we
church door.

bch is calm enough, I am sure; but it
steam-power loom in full action, for

any sedative effect it has on me. I am too far
gone for that.

The rest is all a more or less incoherent
dream.

A dream of their coming in with Dora; of the
pew-opener arranging us, like a drill-sergeant, be-
fore the altar rails; of my wondering, even then,
why pew-openers must always be the most dis-
agreeable females procurable, and whether there
is any religious dread of a disastrous infection of
good-humor which renders it indispensable to
set those vessels of vinegar upon the road to
Heaven.

Of the clergyman and clerk appearing; of a
few boatmen and some other people strolling in;
of an ancient mariner behind me, strongly flavor-
ing the church with rum; of the service begin-
ing in a deep voice, and our all being very atten-
tive.

Of Miss Lavinia, who acts as a semi-auxiliary
bridesmaid, being the first to cry, and of her do-
ing homage (as I take it) to the memory of Plüger,
in sobs; of Miss Clarissa applying a smelling-
bottle; of Agnes taking care of Dora; of my aunt
endeavoring to represent herself as a model of
steriness, with tears rolling down her face; of
little Dora trembling very much, and making her
responses in faint whispers.

Of our kneeling down together, side by side;
of Dora’s trembling less and less, but always
classing Agnes by the hand; of the service being
got through, quietly and gravely; of our all look-
ing at each other in an April state of smiles and
tears, when it is over; of my young wife being
hysterical in the vestry, and crying for her poor
papa, her dear papa.

Of her soon cheering up again, and our sign-
ing the register all round. Of my going into the
gallery for Peggotty to bring her to sign it; of
Peggotty’s hugging me in a corner, and telling
me she saw my own dear mother married; of its
being over, and our going away.

Of my walking so proudly and lovingly down
the aisle with my sweet wife upon my arm,
through a mist of half-seen people, pulpits, in-
onuments, pews, fonts, organs, and church-windows,
in which there flutter faint airs of association
with my childish church at home so long ago.

Of their whispering, as we pass, what a youth-
ful couple we are, and what a pretty little wife
she is. Of our all being so merry and talkative
in the carriage going back. Of Sophy telling us
that when she saw Traddles (whom I had en-
trusted with the licence) asked for it, she almost
fainted, having been convinced that he would
contrive to lose it, or to have his pocket pick-d.
Of Agnes laughing gaily; and of Dora being so
fond of Agnes that she will not be separated from
her, but still keeps her hand.

Of there being a breakfast, with abundance of
things, pretty and substantial, to eat and drink;
whereof I partake, as I should do in any other
dream, without the least perception of their
flavor; eating and drinking, as I may say.
always to be beloved in, and done homage to with the whole faith of her heart; come what might.

The situation which both she and Traddles showed towards the Beauty, pleased me very much. I don’t know that I thought it very reasonable; but I thought it very delightful, and essentially a part of their character. If Traddles ever did an instant mislay his tea—spoons that were still to be won, I have no doubt it was when he handed the Beauty her tea. This sweet-tempered wife could have got up any self-assurance against any one, I am satisfied it could only have been because she was the Beauty’s sister. A few slight indications of a rather petted and capricious manner, which I observed in the Beauty, were manifestly considered, by Traddles and his wife, as her birthright and natural endowment. If she had been born a Queen Bee, and they laboring Bees, they could not have been more satisfied of that.

But their self-forgottenness charmed me. Their pride in those girls, and their submission of themselves to all their whims, was the place in the whole little testimony to their own worth I could have desired to see. If Traddles were addressed as “a darling,” once in the course of that evening, and besought to bring something here, or carry something there, or take something up, or put something down, or find something, or fetch something, he was so addressed, by one or other of his sisters-in-law, at least twelve times in an hour. Neither could they do anything without Sophy. Somebody’s hair fell down, and nobody but Sophy could put it up. Somebody forgot how a particular tune went, and nobody but Sophy could hum that tune right. Somebody wanted to recall the name of a place in Devonshire, and only Sophy knew it. Something wanted to be written down, and Sophy alone could be trusted to write before breakfast in the morning. Somebody broke down in a piece of knitting, and no one but Sophy was able to put the darning in the right direction. They were entire mistresses of the place, and Sophy and Traddles waited on them. How many children Sophy could have taken care of in her time, I can’t imagine; but she seemed to be famous for knowing every sort of song that ever was addressed to a child in the English tongue; and she sang dozens to order with the clearest little voice in the world, one after another (every sister issuing directions for a different tune, and the Beauty generally striking in last), so that I was quite fascinated. The best of all was, that, in the midst of their exactions, all the sisters had a great tenderness and respect both for Sophy and Traddles. I am sure, when I took my leave, and Traddles was coming out to walk with me to the coffee-house, I thought I had never seen an obdurate head of hair, or any other head of hair, rolling about in such a shower of kisses.

Altogether, it was a scene I could not help dwelling on with pleasure, for a long time after I got back and had wished Traddles good night. If I had beheld a thousand rosy ladies, set of chambers, in that withered stray could not have heightened it half so much. The idea of those Devonshire girls, and the law-stationers and the attorneys’ offices, the tea and toast, and children’s ever grim atmosphere of pounce and paste, tape, dusty wafers, ink-jars, bottled coffee, law reports, writes, declarations, papers, and costs, seemed almost as unpleasant as I had dreamed that the Sultan’s face had been submitted on the roll of after the Sultan had brought the talking bird, the six and the golden water into Gray’s Inn. How I found, I had taken leave of the night, and come back to the old with a great change in my despondent self, sort of chief waiters in London.

Drawing a chair before one of the fire places to think about him at my leisure, I fell from the consideration of his brave spirit and his courage into the recollection of the vicissitudes and separations that had marked his life. I had not seen a coal fire, since England three years ago; though not fire had I watched, as it crumbled and mingled with the feathers and ashes, and mingled with the feather- hearth, which not in a single figure of my despondency, my own dead hopes.

I could think of the past now, grave bitterly; and could contemplate the brave spirit. Home, in its best sense, no more. She in whom I might have dearer love, I had taught to be myself, would marry, and would have new of her tenderness; and in doing it, we know the love for her that had grown in heart. It was right that I should pay up of my headlong passion. What I have sworn.

I was thinking. And I truly did heart to this, and could I resolutely to calmly hold the place in her home which calmly held in mine,—when I found myself on a countenance that might mark of the fire, in its association with my memories.

Little Mr. Chilpp the Doctor, to his offices I was indebted in the very first of his history, sat reading a newspaper, shadow of an opposite corner. He was strucken in years by this time; but, he was met, calm little man, had worn so many I thought he looked at that moment might have looked when he sat in waiting for me to be born.

Mr. Chilpp had left Blandstone 6 years ago, and I had never seen him eat placidly perusing the newspaper, little head on one side, and a glass of water on his elbow. He was no more...
OUR FIRST LITTLE QUARREL.

Our first little quarrel.

I stood up at the clock, and hinted
contrary, my love," said I, referring,
wife came and sat upon my knee, to
middle of my nose; but I couldn't
though it was very agreeable.
you think, my dear," said I, "It
please! I couldn't, Dady!" said
my love?" I gently asked.
me, I am such a little goose," said
this sentiment so incompatible with
ment of any system of check on Mary
frowned a little.
ugly wrinkles in my bad boy's
said Dora, and still being on my knee,
zem with her pencil; and putting it
make it mark blacker, and work
head with a quaint little mockery
strange, that it quite delighted me in
child," said Dora, "It makes
love," said I.
please!" cried Dora, with a kiss,
baugh Blue Beard! Don't be se-
ious wife," said I, "We must be se-
we! Give me the pencil! There! talk sensibly. You know, dear;" hand it to hold, and what a tiny
it was to see! "You know, my
t comfortably to have to go
one's dinner. Now, is it?"
replied Dora, faintly.
how you tremble!" "I know you're going to scold me," Dora, in a piteous voice.
I am only going to reason.
reasoning is worse than scolding!" Dora, in despair. "I didn't marry to
with. If you meant to reason with
little thing as I am, you ought to have
ou cruel boy!" pacify Dora, but she turned away her
ook her curls from side to side, and
cruel, cruel boy!" so many times,
did not exactly know what to do: so
up and down the room in my
and came back again.
y darling!"
not your darling. Because you
that you married me, or else you
son with me!" returned Dora.
urted by the inconsequential na-
ge, that it gave me courage to be
own Dora," said I, "You are very
childish, and are talking nonsense. You must re-
member, I am sure, that I was obliged to go out
yesterday when dinner was half over; and that,
the day before, I was made quite unwel by being
obliged to eat underrate meat in a hurry; to-day,
I don't dine at all—and I am afraid to say how
loong we waited for breakfast—and the water
didn't boil. I don't mean to reproach you, my
dear, but this is not comfortable."
"Oh, you cruel, cruel boy, to say I am a dis-
agreeable wife!" cried Dora.
"Now, my dear Dora, you must know that I
never said that!"
"You said I wasn't comfortable!" said Dora.
"I said the housekeeping was not com-
fortable."
"It's exactly the same thing!" cried Dora.
And she evidently thought so, for she wept most
grieveously.
I took another turn across the room, full of
love for my pretty wife, and distracted by self-
accusatory inclinations to knock my head against
the door. I sat down again, and said:
"I am not blaming you, Dora. We have both
a great deal to learn. I am only trying to show
you, my dear, that you must—you really must"
(I was resolved not to give this up) "accustom
yourself to look after Mary Anne. Likewise to
act a little for yourself, and me."
"I wonder, I do, at your making such ungrate-
ful speeches," sobbed Dora. "When you know
that the other day, when you said you would like
a little bit of fish, I went out myself, miles and
miles, and ordered it, to surprise you."
"And it was very kind of you, my dear dar-
ling," said I. "I felt it so much that I wouldn't
on any account have even mentioned that you
bought a Salmon—which was too much for two.
Or that it cost one pound six—which was more
than we can afford."
"You enjoyed it very much," sobbed Dora.
"And you said I was a Mose."
"And I'll say so again, my love," I returned,
a thousand times!"
But I had wounded Dora's soft little heart, and
she was not to be comforted. She was so pathet-
ic in her sobbing and bewailing, that I felt as if
I had said I don't know what to hurt her. I was
obliged to hurry away; I was kept out late; and
I felt all night such pangs of remorse as made me
miserable. I had the conscience of an assassin,
and was haunted by a vague sense of enormous
wickedness.
It was two or three hours past midnight when
I got home. I found my aunt, in our house, sit-
ting up for me.
"Is anything the matter, aunt?" said I,
alarmed.
"Nothing, Trot," she replied. "Sit down,
sit down. Little Blossom has been rather out of
spirits, and I have been keeping her company.
That's all."
I leaned my head upon my hand; and felt more
sorry and downcast, as I sat looking at the fire.
spirit has been entirely broken since her marriage, and that she is all but melancholy mad. And the ladies," observed Mr. Chhillip, timorously, "are great observers, sir."

"I suppose she was to be subdued and broken to their detestable mould, Heaven help her!" said I. "And she has been."

"Well, sir, there were violent quarrels at first, I assure you," said Mr. Chhillip; "but she is quite a shadow now. Would it be considered forward if I were to say to you, sir, in confidence, that since the sister came to help, the brother and sister between them have nearly reduced her to a state of imbecility."

I told him I could easily believe it.

"I have no hesitation in saying," said Mr. Chhillip, fortifying himself with another slip of negus, "between you and me, sir, that her mother died of it—or that tyranny, gloom, and worry have made Mrs. Murdstone nearly imbecile. She was a lively young woman, sir, before marriage, and their gloom and austerity destroyed her. They go about with her, now, more like her keepers than her husband and sister-in-law. That was Mrs. Chhillip's remark to me, only last week. And I assure you, sir, the ladies are great observers. Mrs. Chhillip herself is a great observer!"

"Does he gloomily profess to be (I am ashamed to use the word in such association) religious still?" I inquired.

"You anticipate, sir," said Mr. Chhillip, his eyelids getting quite red with the unwonted stimulus in which he was indulging. "One of Mrs. Chhillip's most impressive remarks. Mrs. Chhillip," he proceeded, in the calmer and slower manner, "quite electrified me, by pointing out that Mrs. Murdstone sets up an image of himself, and calls it the Divine Nature. You might have knocked me down on the flat of my back, sir, with the feather of a pen, I assure you, when Mrs. Chhillip said so. The ladies are great observers, sir?"

"Intuitively," said I, to his extreme delight.

"I am very happy to receive such support in my opinion, sir," he rejoined. "It is not often that I venture to give a non-medical opinion, I assure you. Mr. Murdstone delivers public addresses sometimes, and it is said,—in short, sir, it is said by Mrs. Chhillip,—that the darker tyrant he has lately been, the more ferocious is his doctrine."

"I believe Mrs. Chhillip to be perfectly right," said I.

"Mrs. Chhillip does go so far as to say," pursued the meekest of little men, much encouraged, "that what such people miscall their religion, is a rent for their bad-humors and arrogance. And do you know I must say, sir?" he continued, mildly laying his head on one side, "that I don't find authority for Mr. and Mrs. Murdstone in the New Testament!"

"I never found it either," said I.

"In the meantime, sir," said Mr. Chhillip, "they are much disliked; and as they are very free in consigning everybody who dislikes to perdition, we really have a good deal of action going on in our neighborhood! And as Mrs. Chhillip says, sir, they undergo a punishment; for they are turned inward, upon their own hearts, and their own bad feeding. Now, sir, about that, yours, if you'll excuse my returning to it, you expose it to a good deal of excitement. I found it not difficult, in the exercise of Mr. Chhillip's own brain, under his own negus, to divert his attention from his own affairs, on which, for the next few minutes, he was quite loquacious; giving me to understand that he had become deranged from excessive drinking.

"And I assure you, sir," he said, "I tremely nervous on such occasions. I am support being what is called Bullied. I would quite unman me. Do you know some time before I recovered the conduct of that alarming lady, on the night of your visit to Copperfield?"

I told him that I was going down to the Dragon the next night, early in the morning, and that she was one of the most tender and excellent of women, as he would be well if he knew her better. There was the possibility of his ever seeing her appearing to terrify him. He replied with a smile, "If she so, indeed, sir? I and almost immediately called for a call went to bed, as if he were not quite so elsewhere. He did not actually stage the negus; but I should think his pulse might have made two or three more a minute, than it had done since the great of my aunt's disappointment, when she was with her bonnet.

Thoroughly tired, I went to bed too; passed the next day on the Dover boat and sound into my aunt's bed while she was at ten (she wore spectacles and was received by her, and Mr. Dick told Peggoty, who acted as housekeeper, to open the arms and tears of joy. My aunt was very amused, when we began to talk by my account of my meeting with Mr. and of his holding her in such a manner; and both she and Peggoty had dealt to say about my poor mother's second, and that murdering woman of a on whom I think no pain or penalty was induced my aunt to bestow any Civil Name, or any other designation.
EVEwebody CHEATS US.

Everybody we had anything to do with seemed . Our appearance in a shop was a signal for damage goods to be brought out immedi-
ately. If we bought a lobster, it was full of dead meat turned out to be tough, and hardly any crust to our loaves. In the principle on which joints ought to be roasted enough, and not too well referred to the Cookery Book, and were established as the allowance of an hour to every pound, and say a word. But the principle always failed us in serious fatality, and we never could hit on a combination between redness and cinders.

As to believe that in accomplishing these we incurred a far greater expense than we had achieved a series of triumphs. It is me, on looking over the tradesmen's if we might have kept the basement iced with butter, such was the extensive consumption of that article. I don't think it is a mistake, as the Excise returns of the period exhibited any increase in the demand; but if our performances did not affect it, I should say several families must have used it. And the most wonderful was, that we never had anything in the dozen washerwoman pawing the clothes in a state of pentent intoxication to suppose that might have happened to anybody. Also the chimney on rich engine, and perjury on the part of the Bailiff. But I apprehend that we were unfortunate in engaging a servant with a cordial, who swelled our running ac-

oriter at the public-house by such inexcusable as "quartern rum shrub (Mrs. alt-quartern gin and cloves (Mrs. C.); "a" and peppermint (Mrs. C.); "−−−the pathetics referring to Dora, who was supposed on explanation, to have in all of these refreshments.

Our first feat in the housekeeping way was to dine at Traddles. I met him in the street, asked him to walk out with me that night, and he readily consenting, I wrote to my mother to bring him home. It was neither on the road we made our happiness the theme of conversation, nor very full of it; and said, that, himself, with such a home, and Sophy waiting for him, he could think of nothing to complete his bliss.

Not have wished for a prettier little opposite end of the table, but I could have wished, when we sat down, for a room. I did not know how it was, there were only two of us, we were at the cramped for room, and yet had already enough to lose everything in. I supposed because nothing had a place of its own, except Jip's pagoda, which invariably blocked up the main thoroughfare. On the present occasion, Traddles was so hemmed in by the pagoda and the guitar-case, and Dora's flower-painting, and my writing-table, that I had serious doubts of the possibility of his using his knife and fork; but he protested, with his own good humor, "Oceans of room, Copperfield! I assure you, Oceans!"

There was another thing I could have wished; namely, that Jip had never been encouraged to walk about the table-cloth during dinner. I began to think there was something disorderly in his being there at all, even if he had not been in the habit of putting his foot in the salt or the melted-butter. On this occasion he seemed to think he was introduced expressly to keep Traddles at bay; and he barked at my old friend, and made short runs at his plate, with such undaunted pertinacity, that he may be said to have engrossed the conversation.

However, as I know how tender-hearted my dear Dora was, and how sensitive she would be to any slight upon her favorite, I hinted no objection. For similar reasons I made no allusion to the skirmishing plates upon the floor; or to the disreputable appearance of the castors, which were all at sixes and sevens, and looked drunk; or to the further blockade of Traddles by wandering vegetable dishes and jugs. I could not help wondering in my own mind, as I contemplated the boiled leg of mutton before me, previous to carving it, how it came to pass that our joints of meat were of such extraordinary shapes—and whether our butcher contracted for all the deformed sheep that came into the world; but I kept my reflections to myself.

"My love," said I to Dora, "what have you got in that dish?"

I could not imagine why Dora had been making tempting little faces at me, as if she wanted to kiss me.

"Oysters, dear," said Dora, timidly.

"Was that your thought?" said I, delighted.

"Yes, Dady," said Dora.

"There never was a happier one!" I exclaimed, laying down the carving-knife and fork.

"There is nothing Traddles likes so much!"

"Yes, Dady," said Dora, "and so I bought a beautiful little barrel of them, and the man said they were very good. But I—the man has nothing to do with the matter with them. They don't seem right." Here Dora shook her head, and diamonds twinkled in her eyes.

"They are only opened in both shells," said I.

"Take the top one off, my love."

"But it won't come off," said Dora, trying very hard, and looking very much distressed.

"Do you know, Copperfield," said Traddles, cheerfully examining the dish, "I think it is in consequence—they are capital oysters, but I think it is in consequence—of their never having been opened."

They never had been opened, and we had no
The well-remembered ground was soon traversed, and I came into the quiet streets, where every stone was a boy’s book to me. I went on foot to the old house, and went away with a heart too full to enter. I returned; and looking, as I passed, through the low window of the turnet-room where first Uriah Heep, and afterwards Mr. Micawber, had been wont to sit, saw that it was a little parker now, and that there was no office. Otherwise the staid old house was, as to its cleanliness and order, still just as it had been when I first saw it. I requested the new maid who admitted me, to tell Miss Wickfield that a gentleman who waited on her from a friend abroad, was there; and I was shown up the grave old staircase (catacombed of the steps I knew so well, into the unchanged drawing-room. The books that Agnes and I had read together, were on their shelves; and the desk where I had labored at my lessons, many a night, stood yet at the same old corner of the table. All the little changes that had crept in when the Heeps were there, were changed again. Everything was as it used to be, in the happy time.

I stood in a window, and looked across the ancient street at the opposite houses, recalling how I had watched them on wet afternoons, when I first came there; and how I had used to speculate about the people who appeared at any of the windows, and had followed them with my eyes up and down-stairs, while women went clicking along the pavement in patterns, and the dull rain fell in slanting lines, and poured out of the water-spout yonder, and flowed into the road. The feeling with which I used to watch the tramps, as they came into the town on those wet evenings, at dusk, and limped past, with their bundles dropping over their shoulders at the ends of sticks, came fresh back to me; fraught, as then, with the smell of damp earth, and wet leaves and briar, and the sensation of the very airs that blew upon me in my own toilsome journey.

The opening of the little door in the panelled wall made me start and turn. Her beautiful serene eyes met mine as she came towards me. She stopped and laid her hand upon her bosom, and I caught her in my arms.

"Agnes! my dear girl! I have come too suddenly upon you."

"No, no! I am so rejoiced to see you, Trotwood!"

"Dear Agnes, the happiness it is to me, to see you once again!"

I held her to my heart, and for a little while, we were both silent. Presently we sat down, side by side; and her angel-face was turned upon me with the welcome I had dreamed of, waiting and sleeping, for whole years.

She was so true, she was so beautiful, she was so good,—I owed her so much gratitude, she was so dear to me, that I could find no utterance for what I felt. I tried to bless her, tried to thank her, tried to tell her (as I had often done in letters) what an influence she had upon me; but all my efforts were in vain. My love was dumb.

With her own sweet trembling, my agitation; led me back by to the thinging; spoke to me as Emily, whenever in secret, many times; spoke to me of Duck’s grave. With the mourning noble heart, she touched the dear, so softly and harrowingly, that it within me; I could listen to the silent music, and desire to shrink in swoke. How could I, when, blind was her dear self, the better angel was?

"And you, Agnes," I said, by me of yourself. You have known or your own life, in all these years of time."

"What should I tell?" she asked, radiant smile. "Papa is well. To quiet in our own house; our uncle, our home restored to us; and now, Trotwood, you know all."

"All, Agnes?" said I.

She looked at me, with some flute in her face.

"Is there nothing else, Sister?"

Her color, which had just been & and faded again. She smiled; winness, I thought; and shook her head.

I had sought to lead her to what hinted at; for, sharply painful to my receive that confidence, I was to bear, and do my duty to her. I thought she was uneasy, and let it pass.

"You have much to do, dear Agnes?"

"With my school?" said she, lost in her bright complexion.

"Yes. It is laborious, is it not?"

"The labor is so pleasant, she is it is scarcely grateful in me to my name."

"Nothing good is difficult to you."

Her color came and went once more, as she bent her head, I saw her smile.

"You will wait and see papa, cheerfully, and pass the day with you will sleep in your own room call it yours."

I could not do that, having pro back to my aunt’s, at night; but I day there, joyfully.

"I must be a prisoner for a bit Agnes, but here are the old book and the old music."

"Even the old flowers are here, ing round: ‘or the old kinds."

"I have found a pleasure," re smiling, "while you have been about everything as it used to be when children. For we were very happy the"

"Heaven knows we were!" said Agnes, with her turned cheerfully upon me, "we n
MY CHILD-WIFE.

up a pen, and begin to write, and find
. Then she would take up another
... she would take up another pen, and
...t, and say in a low voice, "Oh, it's
en, and will disturb Dody!" And
uld give it up as a bad job, and put
-book away, after pretending to crush
it.

... were in a very sedate and serious
... ind, she would sit down with the
... little basket of bills and other docu-
... sh looked more like curl-papers than
... se, and endeavor to get some result.

... l after severely comparing one with
... 1 making entries on the tablets, and
... m out, and counting all the fingers of
... d over and over again, backwards and
... w would be so vexed and discouraged,
... ook so unhappy, that it gave me pain
... right face clouded—and for me!—and
... softly to her, and say:

... the matter, Dora?" I said look up hopelessly, and reply,
... "t come right. They make my head
... nd they don't do anything I want!" I
... would say, "Now let us try together.

v you, Dora,"

... would commence a practical demon—
... which Dora would pay profound at-
... haps for five minutes; when she
... 1 to get dreadfully tired, and would
... subject by curling my hair, or trying
... my face with my shirt collar turned
... tactly checked this playfulness, and
... would look so scared and discou-
... e became more and more bewildered,
... embrance of her natural gaity when
... d into her path, and of her being my
... would come reproachfully upon me;

... lay the pencil down, and call for the

... great deal of work to do, and had many
... at the same considerations made me
... to myself. I am far from sure, now,
... right to do this, but I did it for my
... sake. I search my breast, and I com-
... ute, if I know them, without any res-
... this paper. The old unhappy loss or
... thing had, I am conscious, some
... heart; but not to the embitterment

... When I walked alone in the fine
... i thought of the summer days when
... had been filled with my boyish en-
... I did miss something of the realisa-
... dreams; but I thought it was a
... ry of the Past, which nothing could
... upon the present time. I did feel,
... a little while, that I could have
... wife had been my counsellor; had had
... ar and purpose, to sustain me, and
... by; had been endowed with power

... vold which somewhere seemed to be
... ut I felt as if this were an unearthly

... consummation of my happiness, that never had
... been meant to be, and never could have been.

... I was a boyish husband as to years. I had
... known the softening influence of no other sor-
... rows or experiences than those recorded in these
... leaves. If I did any wrong, as I may have done
... much, I did it in mistaken love, and in my want
... of wisdom. I write the exact truth. It would
... avail me nothing to extoninate it.

... Thus it was that I took upon myself the toils
... and cares of our life, and had no partner in them.
... We lived much as before, in reference to our
... scrambling household arrangements; but I had
... got used to those, and Dora I was pleased to see
... was seldom vexed now. She was bright and
... cheerful in the old childish way, loved me dearly,
... and was happy with her old trifles.

... When the debates were heavy—I mean as to
... length, not quality, for in the last respect they
... were not often otherwise—and I went home late,
... Dora would never rest when she heard my foot-
... steps, but would always come downstairs to
... meet me. When my evenings were unoccupied
... by the pursuit for which I had qualified myself
... with so much pains, and I was engaged in writ-
... ing at home, she would sit quietly near me, how-
... ever late the hour, and be so mute, that I would
... often think she had dropped asleep. But gener-
... ally, when I raised my head, I saw her blue eyes
... looking at me with the quiet attention of which
... I have already spoken.

... "Oh, what a weary boy!" said Dora one
... night, when I met her eyes as I was shutting up
... my desk.

... "What a weary girl!" said I. "That's more
... to the purpose. You must go to bed another time,
... my love. It's far too late for you."

... "No, don't send me to bed!" pleaded Dora,
... coming to my side. "Pray don't do that!"

... "Dora!"

... To my amazement she was sobbing on my
... neck.

... "Not well, my dear! not happy!"

... "Yes! quite well, and very happy!" said
... Dora. "But say you'll let me stop, and see you
... write."

... "Why, what a sight for such bright eyes at
... midnight!" I replied.

... "Are they bright, though?" returned Dora,
... laughing. "I'm so glad they're bright."

... "Little Vanity!" said I.

... But it was not vanity; it was only harmless
... delight in my admiration. I knew that very well,
... before she told me so.

... "If you think them pretty, say I may always
... stop, and see you write!" said Dora. "Do you
... think them pretty?"

... "Very pretty."

... "Then let me always stop and see you
... write."

... "I am afraid that won't improve their bright-
... ness, Dora."

... "Yes it will! Because, you clever boy, you'll
... not forget me then, while you are full of those..."
fancies. Will you mind it, if I say something very, very silly—more than usual?" inquired Dora, peeping over my shoulder into my face.

"What wonderful thing is that?" said I.

"Please let me hold the pens," said Dora. "I want to have something to do with all those many hours when you are so industrious. May I hold the pens?"

The remembrance of her pretty joy when I said Yes, brings tears into my eyes. The next time I sat down to write, and regularly afterwards, she sat in her old place, with a spare bundle of pens at her side. Her triumph in this connexion with my work, and her delight when I wanted a new pen—which I very often feigned to do—suggested to me a new way of pleasing my child-wife. I occasionally made a pretence of wanting a page or two of manuscript copied. Then Dora was in her glory. The preparations she made for this great work, the aprons she put on, the bibs she borrowed from the kitchen to keep off the ink, the time she took, the innumerable stoppages she made to have a laugh with Jip as if he understood it all, her conviction that her work was incomplete unless she signed her name at the end, and the way in which she would bring it to me, like a school-copy, and then, when I praised it, clasp me round the neck, are touching recollections to me, simple as they might appear to other men.

She took possession of the keys soon after this, and went jingling about the house with the whole bunch in a little basket, tied to her slender waist. I seldom found that the places to which they belonged were locked, or that they were of any use except as a plaything for Jip—but Dora was pleased, and that pleased me. She was quite satisfied that a good deal was effected by this task-belief of housekeeping; and was as merry as if we had been keeping a baby-house, for a joke.

So we went on. Dora was hardly less affectionate to my aunt than to me, and often told me of the time when she was afraid she was "a cross old thing." I never saw my aunt unbend more systematically to any one. She courted Jip, though Jip never responded; listened, day after day, to the guitar, though I am afraid she had no taste for music; never attacked the Incapables, though the temptation must have been severe; went wonderful distances on foot to purchase, as surprises, any trifles that she found out Dora wanted; and never came in by the garden, and missed her from the room, but she would call out, at the foot of the stairs, in a voice that sounded cheerfully all over the house:

"Where's Little Blossom?"

CHAPTER XLV.

MR. NICK FULFILS MY AUNT'S PREDICTIONS.

It was some time now, since I had left the Doctor. Living in his neighborhood, I saw him frequently; and we all went to his house on two or three occasions to dinner or tea. The Old Soldier was in permanent quarters under the eaves of Jip's house. She was exactly the same and the same immortal butterflies hover over her cap.

Like some other mothers, whom I had met in the course of my life, Mrs. Markleham, more fond of pleasure than her daughter, required a great deal of amusement. She was a deep old soldier, pretended, in conscious inclinations, to be devoting herself to her child. The Doctor's desire that Annie should be entertained, was therefore particularly noticed by this excellent parent, who expressed the freest approval of his discretion.

I have no doubt, indeed, that she put Doctor's wound without knowing it. Nothing but a certain matured frivolity of inessential triviosity, not always inseparable from years, I think she confirmed him in his plan of a constraint upon his young wife. There was no congeniality of feeling between by so strongly commanding his design of coming to the house at times.

"My dear soul," she said to him one day, "I know there is no plan more a little policy for Annie to be shut up here;"

The Doctor nodded his benevolent head.

"When she comes to your mother's as Mrs. Markleham, with a flourish of 'then it will be another thing. You will be into a jail, with genteel society among you, and I should never come to see you unless you tell me how Annie is.'"

"Surely, surely," said the Doctor.

"You are the best of creatures—such as your pardon!" for the Doctor made a face of depression. "I must say before you go, I always say, don't you say, or you are not a creature! Of course you don't—enter into the same pursuits as Annie?"

"No," said the Doctor, in a sorrowful

"No, of course not," replied the Old Woman. Take your Dictionary, for example; useful work! A Dictionary is! What a work! The meaning of words! Wilberforce, Johnson, or somebody of that sort! We have been at this present moment calibrating iron, making a bedstead. But we can't expect anything—especially when it's making—Annie, can we?"

The Doctor shook his head.

"And that's why I so much approve of Mrs. Markleham, tapping him on the shoulder with her shut-up fan, of your house, it shows that, don't expect, most people do expect, old houses on your side. You have studied Annie's character, I understand it. That's what I find so strange. Even the calm and patient face of Doctor, exquisitely expressed some little sense of thought, under the influence of these circumstances.
fore, my dear Doctor," said the Soldier, a several affectionate taps, "you may me, at all times and seasons. Now, do that I am entirely at your service. I to go with Annie to operas, concerts, all kinds of places; and you shall fare every consideration in the uni-
as good as her word. She was one of who can bear a great deal of pleasure, ver flitted in her perseverance in the seldom got hold of the newspaper; settled herself down in the softest house to read through an eye-glass, for two hours), but she found out some; she was certain Annie would like to as vain for Annie to protest that she of such things. Her mother's remon-
says was, "Now, my dear Annie, I am now better; and I must tell you, my are not making a proper return for Doctor Strong." a usually said in the Doctor's presence, ed to me to constitute Annie's prene for withdrawing her objections made any. But in general she resigned her mother, and went where the Old a happened now that Mr. Mardon ac-
 them. Sometimes my aunt and Doran to do so, and accepted the invitation. Dora only was asked. The time had I should have been uneasy in her reflec on what had passed that in the Doctor's study, had made a y mistrust. I believed that the Doctor and I had no worse suspicions.
rubbed her nose sometimes when she to be alone with me, and said she s it out; she wished they were hap-
idn't think our military friend (so she ed the Old Soldier) mended the matter aunt further expressed her opinion, r military friend would cut off those and give 'em to the chimney-sweepers y, it would look like the beginning of sensible on her part."
\hs\: abiding reliance was on Mr. Dick. had evidently an idea in his head, she f he could once pen it up into a corner, his great difficulty, he would distinc-
\hs\: ions of this prediction, Mr. Dick con-
\hs\: cency precisely the same ground in refor-
\hs\: Doctor and to Mrs. Strong. He seemed advance nor to recede. He appeared tied into his original foundation, like a nd I must confess that my faith in his g, was not much greater than if he had\hs\: night when I had been married some.
\hs\: Dick put his head into the parlor, writing alone (Dora having gone out
with my aunt to take tea with the two little birds), and said, with a significant cough:
"You couldn't speak to me without inconve- niencing yourself, Trotwood, I am afraid?"
"Certainly, Mr. Dick," said I; "come in!"
"Trotwood," said Mr. Dick, laying his finger on the side of his nose, after he had shaken hands with me. "Before I sit down, I wish to make an observation. You know your aunt?"
"A little," I replied.
"She is the most wonderful woman in the world, sir!"
After the delivery of this communication, which he shot out of himself as if he were loaded with it, Mr. Dick sat down with greater gravity than usual, and looked at me.
"Now, boy," said Mr. Dick, "I am going to put a question to you."
"As many as you please," said I.
"What do you consider me, sir?" asked Mr. Dick, folding his arms.
"A dear old friend," said I.
"Thank you, Trotwood," returned Mr. Dick, laughing, and reaching across in high glee to shake hands with me. "But I mean, boy," re-
suming his gravity, "what do you consider me in this respect?" touching his forehead.
I was puzzled how to answer, but he helped me with a word.
"Weak?" said Mr. Dick.
"Well," I replied dubiously. "Rather so."
"Exactly!" cried Mr. Dick, who seemed quite enchanted by my reply. "That is, Trot-
wood, when they took some of the trouble out of you-know-who's head, and put it you know where, there was a—" Mr. Dick made his two hands revolve very fast about each other a great number of times, and then brought them into collision, and rolled them over and over one another to express confusion. "There was that sort of thing done to me somehow. Eh?"
I nodded at him, and he nodded back again.
"In short, boy," said Mr. Dick, dropping his voice to a whisper, "I am simple."
I would have qualified that conclusion, but he stopped me with.
"Yes I am! She pretends I am not. She won't hear of it; but I am. I know I am. If she hadn't stood my friend, sir, I should have been shut up, to lead a dismal life these many years. But I'll provide for her! I never spend the copy-
\hs\: ing money. I put it in a box. I have made a will. I'll leave it all to her. She shall be rich—noble!"
Mr. Dick took out his pocket-handkerchief, and wiped his eyes. He then folded it up with great care, pressed it smooth between his two hands, put it in his pocket, and seemed to put my aunt away with it.
"Now you are a scholar, Trotwood," said Mr. Dick. "You are a fine scholar. You know what a learned man, what a great man, the Doctor is. You know what honor he has always done me. Not proud in his wisdom. Humble, humble—
He blew a slight, contemptuous breath, blew himself away.

It was fortunate he had proceeded so far in his mystery, for we heard the coach stop at little garden gate, which brought my aunt home.

"Not a word, boy!" he pursued in a temper.

"Leave all the blame with Dick—simple, mad Dick. I have been thinking it over for a time, that I was getting it, and now I have After what you have said to me, I am sure I got it. All right!"

"Not another word did Mr. Dick utter subject; but he made a very telegraph of for the next half-hour (to the great distress my aunt's mind), to enjoin inviolable secrecy.

To my surprise, I heard no more about some two or three weeks, though I was eminently interested in the result of his endeavors, scaring a strange gleam of good sense—an igniting good feeling, for that he always courted—-in the conclusion to which he had come at last. I began to believe, that, in the highly unsettled state of his mind, he had either taken his intention or abandoned it.

One fair evening, when Dora was not to go out, my aunt and I strolled up to the tor's cottage. It was autumn, when the no debates vex the evening air; and I tell her how the leaves smell like our garden understone as we trod them under foot, and how old, unhappy feeling, seemed to go by, sighing wind.

It was twilight when we reached the cottage.

Mrs. Strong was just coming out of the room, where Mr. Dick yet lingered, busy with his newspaper and the gardener to point some stakes. The Doctor was engaged with some one in the garden, but the visitor would be gone directly, Mrs. Strong said, and begged us to remain and see how it was going. We went into the drawing-room, with it, down by the darkening windows. There was to have been a ceremony about the visit of some old-and-neighbors as we were left to it.

We had not sat there many minutes, when Markleham, who usually contrived to be in about something, came bustling in, with newspaper in his hand, and said, out of "My goodness gracious, Annie, why didn't you tell me there was some one in the Study?"

"My dear mamma," she quietly replied; "how could I know that you desired the information?"

"Desired the information?" said Mr. Dick, hammering on the sofa. "I never had time in all my life!"

"Have you been to the Study, then, was asked Annie.

"Been to the Study, my dear!" she repeated. "Indeed I have! I can't tell you what a simpleton—-if you'll imagine a simpleton! Miss Trotwood and David—and the Doctor and his wife!"
laughter looked round from the window

the act, my dear Annie," repeated Mrs. Strong, spreading the newspaper on her lap, and putting her hands upon it, wringing her last Will and Testament. The
t affection of the dear! I must tell you it was. I really must. I have no justice to the
-for he is nothing less than, I tell you how, it
perhaps you know, Miss Trotwood, that
never a candle lighted in this house, until
res are literally falling out of one's head
ng stretched to read the paper. And that
not a chair in this house, in which a pa-
be what I call, read, except one in the
This took me to the Study, where I saw
I opened the door. In company with
Doctor were two professional people,
y connected with the law, and they were
standing at the table: the darling Doctor
and. 'This simply expresses then,' said
ctor-Annie, my love, attend to the very
'this simply expresses then, gentlemen,
ience I have in Mrs. Strong, and gives
conditionally! One of the professional
spilled, 'And gives her all unconditionally,'
at, with the natural feelings of a mother,
Good God, I beg your pardon! I fell over
the step, and came away through the little
age where the pantry is.'

Strong opened the window, and went out
verandah, where she stood leaning against

now isn't it, Miss Trotwood, isn't it,
invigorating," said Mrs. Markleham, mo-
ly following her with her eyes, "to find
at Doctor Strong's time of life, with the
of mind to do this kind of thing? It
ows how right I was. I said to Annie
ctor Strong paid a very flattering visit to
and made her the subject of a declaration
er, I said, 'My dear, there is no doubt
or, in my opinion, with reference to a suit-
vision for you, that Doctor Strong will do
an he binds himself to do.'

the bell rang, and we heard the sound of
's feet as they went out.
all over, no doubt," said the Old Soldier,
tening; "the dear creature has signed,
and delivered, and his mind's at rest.
may be! What a mind! Annie, my love,
go to the Study with my paper, for I am
 creature without news. Miss Trotwood,
ay come and see the Doctor.'"
scious of Mr. Dick's standing in the
of the room, shutting up his knife, when
panied her to the Study; and of my
ubbing her nose violently, by the way, as
vent for her intolerance of our military
but who got first into the Study, or how
arkleham settled herself in a moment in
chair, or how my aunt and I came to be
earer the door (unless her eyes were
than mine, and she held me back), I have

forbidden if I ever knew. But this I know,—that
we saw the Doctor before he saw us, sitting at
his table, among the folio volumes in which he
delighted, resting his head calmly on his hand.
That, in the same manner, we saw Mrs. Strong
slide in, pale and trembling. That Mr. Dick sup-
pported her on his arm. That he laid his other
hand upon the Doctor's arm, causing him to look
up with an abstracted air. That, as the Doctor
moved his head, his wife dropped down on one
knee at his feet, and, with her hands imploringly
lifted, fixed upon his face the memorable look I
had never forgotten. That at this sight Mrs.
Markleham dropped the newspaper, and stared
more like a figure-head intended for a ship to be
called The Astonishment, than anything else I
can think of.

The gentleness of the Doctor's manner and
surprise, the dignity that mingled with the
supplicating attitude of his wife, the amiable concern
of Mr. Dick, and the earnestness with which my
aunt said to herself, "That man mad!" (trium-
phantly expressive of the misery from which she
had saved him)—I see and hear, rather than re-
member, as I write about it.

"Doctor!" said Mr. Dick. "What is it that's
amiss? Look here!"

"Annie!" cried the Doctor. "Not at my
feet, my dear!"

"Yes!" she said. "I beg and pray that no
one will leave the room! Oh, my husband and
father, break this long silence. Let us both know
what it is that has come between us!"

Mrs. Markleham, by this time recovering the
power of speech, and seeming to swell with fam-
ily pride and motherly indignation, here ex-
claimed, "Annie, get up immediately, and don't
disgrace everybody belonging to you, by hum-
b yourself like that, unless you wish to see
me go out of my mind on the spot!"

"Mamma!" returned Annie. "Waste no
words on me, for my appeal is to my husband,
and even you are nothing here."

"Nothing!" exclaimed Mrs. Markleham. "Me
nothing! The child has taken leave of her senses.
Please to get me a glass of water!"

I was too attentive to the Doctor and his
wife, to give any heed to this request; and it
made no impression on anybody else; so Mrs.
Markleham panted, stared, and fanned herself.

"Annie!" said the Doctor, tenderly taking
her in his hands. "My dear! If any unavoi-
dable change has come, in the sequence of time,
upon our married life, you are not to blame. The
fault is mine, and only mine. There is no change
in my affection, admiration, and respect. I wish
to make you happy. I truly love and honor you.
Rise, Annie, pray!"

But she did not rise. After looking at him for
a little while, she sank down closer to him, laid
her arm across his knee, and dropping her head
upon it, said:

"If I have any friend here, who can speak one
word for me, or for my husband in this matter:
if I have any friend here, who can give a voice to
any suspicion that my heart has sometimes whis-
pered to me; if I have any friend here, who honors
my husband, or has ever cared for me, and has
anything within his knowledge, no matter what
it is, that may help to mediate between us,—I im-
plor that friend to speak!"

There was a profound silence. After a few
moments of painful hesitation, I broke the si-
lence.

"Mrs. Strong," I said, "there is something
within my knowledge, which I have been earnest-
ly entreated by Doctor Strong to conceal, and
have concealed until to-night. But I believe the
time has come when it would be mistaken light
and delicacy to conceal it any longer, and when
your appeal absolves me from his injunction."

She turned her face towards me for a moment,
and I knew that I was right. I could not have
resisted its entreaty, if the assurance that it gave
me had been less convincing.

"Our future peace," she said, "may be in
your hands. I trust it confidently to your not
suppressing anything. I know beforehand that
nothing you, or any one, can tell me, will show
my husband's noble heart in any other light than
one. However it may seem to you to touch
me, disregard that. I will speak for myself, be-
fore him, and before God afterwards."

Thus earnestly besought, I made no reference
to the Doctor for his permission, but, without
any other compromise of the truth than a little
softening of the coarseness of Uriah Heep, re-
lated plainly what had passed in that same room
that night. The story of Mrs. Markleham during
the whole narration, and the shrill, sharp in-
terjections with which she occasionally inter-
rupted it, defy description.

When I had finished, Annie remained, for
some few moments, silent, with her head bent
down as I have described. Then, she took the
Doctor's hand (he was sitting in the same atti-
cude as when we had entered the room), and
pressed it to her breast, and kissed it. Mr. Dick
softly raised her; and she stood, when she began
to speak, leaning on him, and looking down upon
her husband—from whom she never turned her
eyes.

"All that has ever been in my mind, since I
was married," she said in a low, submissive,
tender voice, "I will lay bare before you. I
could not live and have one reservation, know-
ning what I know now."

"Nay, Annie," said the Doctor, mildly, "I
have never doubted you, my child. There is no
need: indeed there is no need, my dear."

"There is great need," she answered, in the
same way, "that I should open my whole heart
before the soul of generosity and truth, whom,
year by year, and day by day, I have loved and
venerated more and more, as Heaven knows!"

"Really," interrupted Mrs. Markleham, "if I
have any discretion at all—"

(Which you haven't, you Marplot," of
my aunt, in an indignant whisper.)

"I must be permitted to observe that
not be requisite to enter into these details.

"No one but my husband can judge of
mamma," said Annie, without removing it
from his face, "and he will hear me. I
anything to give you pain, mamma, long
I have borne pain first, often and for
self."

"Upon my word!" gasped Mrs. Markle-

"When I was very young," said Annie,
a little child, my first associations with
edge of any kind were inseparable from a
friend and teacher—the friend of my dead
—who was always dear to me. I can rec
nothing that I know, without remembering
He stored my mind with its first treasu
stamped his character upon them all. The
could have been, I think, as good as the
been to me, if I had taken them from as
hands."

"Makes her mother nothing!" ex-
Mrs. Markleham.

"Not so, mamma," said Annie; "but
him what he was. I must do that. As
up, he occupied the same place still,
proud of his interest; deeply, fondly, at
him. I looked up to him I eas
describe how—as a father, as a guide,
whose praise was different from all other
as one in whom I could have trusted and
if I had doubted all the world. You know
ma, how young and inexperienced I was
presented him before me, of a su
lover."

"I have mentioned the fact, fifty times
to everybody here!" said Mrs. Markle-
(Then hold your tongue, for the Lord
and don't mention it any more!"

"It was so great a change: so great a
felt at first," said Annie, still preserv
same look and tone, "that I was agitat	ressed. I was but a girl; and when suc
change came in the character in which I
long looked up to him, I think I was so
nothing could have made him what he was
again; and I was proud that he should be
so worthy, and we were married."

"At Saint Alphage, Canterbury," of
Mrs. Markleham.

"Confound the woman! said my su
won't be quiet!"

"I never thought," proceeded Annie,
highened color, "of any worldly gain, a
husband would bring to me. My young be
no room in its homage for any such po
Mamma, forgive me when I say that
you who first presented to my mind the t
that any one could wrong me, and wrong
such a trust so soon."

"Me! cried Mrs. Markleham.
(Alas! You, to be sure!"

""
MY AUNT SKIRMISHES WITH THE OLD SOLDIER.

"It was the first unhappiness of my new life," said Anne. "It was the first occasion of every happy moment I have known. Those moments were more, of late, than I can count; but—my generous husband!—not for the reason I suppose; for in my heart there is not a right, a recollection, or a hope, that any power could separate you from me!"

She raised her eyes, and clasped her hands, looking beautiful and true, I thought, as she spoke. The Doctor looked on her, his chin and breast, as steadfastly as she on him.

"Mamma is blameless," she went on, "of course you urged you for herself, and she is incapable in intention every way, I am sure—but I saw how many important claims were vested upon you in my name; how you were dead in my name; how generous you were, how Mr. Wickfield, who had your welfare at heart, recanted it; the first sense of exposure to the mean suspicion that my tenancy was bought—and sold to you, of all men earth—fell upon me, like unmerited disgrace, which I forced you to participate. I cannot I you what it was—mamma cannot imagine at it was—to have this dread and trouble always on my mind, yet know in my own soul that my marriage-day I crowned the love and honor of my life!"

"A specimen of the thanks one gets," cried Markleham, in tears, "for taking care of one's family! I wish I was a Turk!"

("I wish you were, with all my heart—and in your native country!" said my aunt.)

"It was at that time that mamma was most solicitous about my Cousin Maldon. I had liked her; she spoke softly, but with no hesitation; "very much. We had been little lovers. If circumstances had not happened otherwise, I might have come to persuade myself that I really loved him, and might have married him, had been most wretched. There can be no disparity in marriage like unsuitability of mind and purpose."

I pondered on those words, even while I was solemnly attending to what followed, as if they had some particular interest, or some strange peculiarity that I could not divine. "There can be no disparity in marriage like unsuitability of bad and purpose"—"no disparity in marriage is unsuitability of mind and purpose."

"There is nothing," said Anne, "that we are in common. I have long found that there is nothing. If I were thankful to my husband I no more, instead of for so much, I should be accountable to him for having saved me from the first impulse of my uncontrolled heart."

She stood quite still before the Doctor, and spoke with an earnestness that thrilled me. Yet her voice was just as quiet as before.

"When he was willing to be the object of your solicitude, so freely bestowed for my sake, and when I was unhappy in the mercenary shape I was made to wear, I thought it would have become him better to have worked his own way on. I thought that if I had been he, I would have tried to do it, at the cost of almost any hardship. But I thought no worse of him, until the night of his departure for India. That night I knew he had a false and thankless heart. I saw a double meaning, then, in Mr. Wickfield's scrutiny of me. I perceived, for the first time, the dark suspicion that shadowed my life!"

"Suspicion, Anne!" said the Doctor. "No, no, no!"

"In your mind there was none, I know, my husband!" she returned. "And when I came to you, that night, to lay down all my load of shame and grief, and knew that I had to tell, that, underneath your roof, one of my own kindred, to whom you had been a benefactor, for the love of me, had spoken to me words that should have found no utterance, even if I had been the weak and mercenary wretch he thought me—my mind revolted from the taint the very tale conveyed. It died upon my lips, and from that hour till now has never passed them."

Mrs. Markleham, with a short groan, leaned back in her easy-chair, and retired behind her fan, as if she were never coming out any more.

"I have never, but in your presence, interchanged a word with him from that time; then, only when it has been necessary for the avoidance of this explanation. Years have passed since he knew from me what his situation was. The kindnesses you have secretly done for his advancement, and then disclosed to me, for my surprise and pleasure, have been, you will believe, but aggravations of the unhappiness and burden of my secret."

She sunk down gently at the Doctor's feet, though he did his utmost to prevent her; and said, looking up, tearfully, into his face.

"Do not speak to me yet! Let me say a little more! Right or wrong, if this were to be done again, I think I should do just the same. You never can know what it was to be devoted to you, with those old associations; to find that any one could be so hard as to suppose that the truth of my heart was bartered away, and to be surrounded by appearances confirming that belief. I was very young, and had no adviser. Between mamma and me, in all relating to you, there was a wide division. If I shrank into myself, hiding the disrespect I had undergone, it was because I honored you so much, and so much wished that you should honor me!"

"Anne, my pure heart!" said the Doctor, "my dear girl!"

"A little more! A very few words more! I used to think there were so many whom you might have married, who would not have brought such charge and trouble on you, and who would have made your home a worthier home. I used to be afraid that I had better have remained your pupil, and almost your child. I used to fear that
and then inaccessible to any human foot; and had been speculating which was the lonelier, those solitary regions, or a desert ocean.

"Riding to-day, Trot?" said my aunt, putting her head in at the door.

"Yes," said I, "I am going over to Canterbury. It's a good day for a ride."

"I hope your horse may think so, too," said my aunt; "but at present he is holding down his head and his ears, standing before the door there, as if he thought his stable preferable."

My aunt, I may observe, allowed my horse on the forbidden ground, but had not at all relented toward the donkeys.

"He will be fresh enough, presently!" said I.

"The ride will do his master good, at all events," observed my aunt, glancing at the papers on my table. "Ah, child, you pass a good many hours here! I never thought, when I used to read books, what work it was to write them."

"It's work enough to read them, sometimes," I returned. "As to the writing, it has its own charms, aunt."

"How! I see!" said my aunt. "Ambition, love of approbation, sympathy, and much more, I suppose? Well: go along with you!"

"Do you know anything more," said I, standing composedly before her—she had patted me on the shoulder, and sat down in my chair,—"of that attachment of Agnes?"

She looked up in my face a little while, before replying:

"I think I do, Trot."

"Are you confirmed in your impression?" I inquired.

"I think I am, Trot."

She looked so steadfastly at me: with a kind of doubt, or pity, or suspense in her affection; that I summoned the stronger determination to show her a perfectly cheerful face.

"And what is more, Trot—" said my aunt.

"Yes!"

"I think Agnes is going to be married."

"God bless her!" said I, cheerfully.

"God bless her!" said my aunt, "and her husband too!"

I echoed it, parted from my aunt, went lightly down-stairs, mounted, and rode away. There was greater reason than before to do what I had resolved to do.

How well I recollect the wintry ride! The frozen particles of ice, brushed from the blades of grass by the wind, and borne across my face; the hard clatter of the horse's hoofs, bending a tune upon the ground; the stiff-tilled soil; the snow-dirt lightly eddying in the chalk pit as the breeze ruffled it; the smoking team with the waggons of old hay, stopping to breathe on the hill-top, and whacking their bells musically; the whitened slopes and sweeps of down-land lying against the dark sky, as if they were drawn on a huge slate!

I found Agnes alone. The little girls had gone to their own homes now, and she was alone by the fire, reading. She put down her book, looking me in the face; and having done with usual, took her work-basket, and sat in a cold-fashioned window.

I sat beside her on the window-seat, and talked of what I was doing, and when I was doing, and of the progress I had made in my last visit. Agnes was very cheerful; slyly predicted that I should soon be famous to be talked to, on such subjects.

"So make the most of the present see," said Agnes, "and talk to you will."

As I looked at her beautiful face, over her work, she raised her mild clear eyes that I was looking at her.

"You are thoughtful to-day, Trotwood."

"Agnes, shall I tell you what about to tell you?"

She put aside her work, as she was about to do when we were seriously discussing anything that gave her whole attention.

"My dear Agnes, do you doubt my love to you?"

"No!" she answered, with a look of emotion.

"Do you doubt my being what I am to you?"

"No!" she answered, as before.

"Do you remember that I tried to tell you when I came home, what a debt of gratitude you owed, dearest Agnes, and how fervently towards you?"

"I remember it," she said, gently well.

"You have a secret," said I. "Let it, Agnes."

She cast down her eyes, and trembled.

"You could hardly fail to know, even if heard—but from other lips than your own, which seems strange—that there is some whom you have bestowed the treasure of your love. Do not shut me out of what common happiness so nearly! If you can trust me to say you can, and as I know you may, your friend, your brother, in this and others!"

With an appealing, almost a ravishing glance, she rose from the window; and across the room as if without knowing it, her hands before her face, and burst out in the floods of sobs that smote me to the heart.

And yet they awakened something in my heart, bringing promise to my heart. With knowing why, these tears alluded then to the quietly sad smile which was so fire remembrance, and shook me more with fear or sorrow.

"Agnes! Sister! Dearest! What has done?"

"Let me go away, Trotwood. I am I am not myself. I will speak to you by another time. I will write to you. Don't, don't!"

I sought to recollect what she had
meditations. Coming before me on this
evening that I mention, mingled with
fish recollections and later fancies, the
half-formed hopes, the broken shadows
pointments dimly seen and understood,
ling of experience and imagination, incl-
The occupation with which my thoughts
busy, it was more than commonly eng-
I fell into a brown study as I walked
voice at my side made me start.

a woman's voice, too. I was not long
acting Mrs. Steerforth's little parlor-maid,
I formerly worn blue ribbons in her cap,
taken them out now, to adapt herself, I
, to the altered character of the house; a
but one or two disconsolate bows of
own.

You please, sir, would you have the good-
walk in, and speak to Miss Dartle?"

Miss Dartle sent you for me?" I in-
to-night, sir, but it's just the same.
ittle saw you pass a night or two ago;
as to sit at work on the staircase, and
aw you pass again, to ask you to step in
to her."

ed back, and inquired of my conductor,
nt along, how Mrs. Steerforth was. She
lady was but poorly, and kept her own

good deal.

we arrived at the house, I was directed
Dartle in the garden, and left to make
nce known to her myself. She was sit-
a seat at one end of a kind of terrace,
ng the great city. It was a sombre
a lurid light in the sky; and as I
pect scowling in the distance, with
ere some larger object starting up into
n glare, I fancied it was no inapt com-
the memory of this fierce woman.
aw me as I advanced, and rose for a mo-
receive me. I thought her, then, still
less and thin than when I had seen
h the flashing eyes still brighter, and the
plainer.

reeting was not cordial. We had parted
the last occasion; and there was an
dain about her, which she took no pains
ld told you wish to speak to me, Miss
aid I, standing near her, with my hand
back of the seat, and declining her ges-
ivation to sit down.

ou please," said she. "Pray has this
found?"

"I yet she has run away!"

her thin lips working while she looked

if they were eager to load her with re-

away?" I repeated.

From him," she said, with a laugh.

is not found, perhaps she never will be
he may be dead!"

The vaunting cruelty with which she met my
ing, I never saw expressed in any other face
that ever I have seen.

"To wish her dead," said I, "may be the
kindest wish that one of her own sex could be-
wh, upon her. I am glad that time has softened
you so much, Miss Dartle."

She condescended to make no reply, but, turn-
ing on me with another scornful laugh, said:

"The friends of this excellent and much-injured
young lady are friends of ours. You are their
champion, and assert their rights. Do you wish
to know what is known of her?"

"Yes," said I.

She rose with an ill-favored smile, and taking
a few steps towards a wall of holly that was
near at hand, dividing the lawn from a kitchen-
garden, said, in a louder voice, "Come
here!"—as if she were calling to some unclean
beast.

"You will restrain any demonstrative champi-
ionship or vengeance in this place, of course,
Mr. Copperfield?" she said, looking over her
shoulder at me with the same expression.

I inclined my head, without knowing what
she meant; and she said, "Come here!" again;
and returned, followed by the respectable Mr.
Littimer, who, with undiminished respectability,
made me a bow, and took up his position behind
her. The air of wicked grace: of triumph, in
which, strange to say, there was yet something
feminine and alluring: with which she reclined
upon the seat between us, and looked at me, was
worthy of a cruel Princess in a Legend.

"Now," said she, imperiously, without glancing
at him, and touching the old wound as it
throbbed; perhaps, in this instance, with plea-
ure rather than pain. "Tell Mr. Copperfield
about the flight."

"Mr. James and myself, ma'am—"

"Don't address yourself to me!" she Inter-
rupted with a frown.

"Mr. James and myself, sir—"

"Nor to me, if you please," said I.

Mr. Littimer, without being at all discom-
posed, signified by a slight obeisance, that any-
thing that was most agreeable to us was most
agreeable to him; and began again.

"Mr. James and myself have been abroad with
the young woman, ever since she left Yarmouth
under Mr. James's protection. We have been in
a variety of places, and seen a deal of foreign
country. We have been in France, Switzerland,
Italy—in fact, almost all parts."

He looked at the back of the seat, as if he were
addressing himself to that; and softly played
upon it with his hands, as if he were striking
chords upon a dumb piano.

"Mr. James took quite uncommonly to the
young woman; and was more settled, for a length
of time, than I have known him to be since I
have been in his service. The young woman was
very improvable, and spoke the languages; and
wouldn't have been known for the same country!"
person. I noticed that she was much admired wherever we went."

Miss Darile put her hand upon her side. I saw him steal a glance at her, and slightly smile to himself.

"Very much admired, indeed, the young woman was. What with her dress; what with the air and sun; what with being made so much of; what with this, that, and the other; her merits really attracted general notice."

He made a short pause. Her eyes wandered restlessly over the distant prospect, and she bit her lower lip to stop that busy mouth.

Taking his hands from the seat, and placing one of them within the other, as he settled himself on one leg, Mr. Littimer proceeded, with his eyes cast down, and his respectable head a little advanced, and a little on one side:

"The young woman went on in this manner for some time, being occasionally low in her spirits, until I think she began to weary Mr. James by giving way to her low spirits and tempers of that kind; and things were not so comfortable, Mr. James began to be restless again. The more restless he got, the worse she got; and I must say, for myself, that I had a very difficult time of it indeed between the two. Still matters were patched up here, and made good there, over and over again; and altogether lasted, I am sure, for a longer time than anybody could have expected."

Recalling her eyes from the distance, she looked at me again now, with her former air. Mr. Littimer, clearing his throat behind his hand with a respectable short cough, changed legs, and went on:

"At last, when there had been, upon the whole, a good many words and reproaches, Mr. James set off one morning, from the neighborhood of Naples, where we had a villa (the young woman being very partial to the sea), and, under pretense of coming back in a day or so, left it in charge with me to break it out, that, for the general happiness of all concerned, he was—here an interruption of the short cough—gone. But Mr. James, I must say, certainly did behave extremely honorable; for he proposed that the young woman should marry a very respectable person, who was fully prepared to overlook the past, and who was, at least, as good as anybody the young woman could have aspired to in a regular way: her connexions being very common."

He changed legs again, and wetted his lips. I was convinced that the scoundrel spoke of himself, and I saw my conviction reflected in Miss Darile's face.

"This I also had it in charge to communicate. I was willing to do anything to relieve Mr. James from his difficulty, and to restore harmony between himself and an affectionate parent, who has undergone so much on his account. Therefore I undertook the commission. The young woman's violence when she came to, after I broke the fact of his departure, was beyond all expectations. She was quite mad, and had to be held by force; or, if she couldn't have got a knife, or got to the sea, she'd have beaten her head against the marble floor.""

Miss Darile, leaning back upon the sea, with a light of exultation in her face, seemed almost to caress the sounds this fellow had uttered.

"But when I came to the second part of what had been entrusted to me," said Mr. Littimer, rubbing his hands, uneasily, "which anybody might have supposed would have been, at first events, appreciated as a kind intimation, then the young woman came out in her true colors. A more outrageous person I never did see. Her conduct was surprisingly bad. She had no more gratitude, no more feeling, no more sense, to more reason in her, than a stock or a stone. If I hadn't been upon my guard, I am convinced she would have had my blood."

"I think the better of her for it," said I, indignantly.

Mr. Littimer bent his head, as much as to say, "Indeed, sir? But you're young!" and resumed his narrative.

"It was necessary, in short, for a time, to take away everything nigh her, that she could do herself, or anybody else, an injury with, and to shut her up close. Notwithstanding which, she got out in the night; forced the lattice of a window, that I had nailed up myself; dropped on the path that was trailed below; and never has been seen or heard of, to my knowledge, since."

"She is dead, perhaps," said Miss Darile, with a smile, as if she could have spared the body of the ruined girl.

"She may have drowned herself, miss," returned Mr. Littimer, catching at an excuse for addressing himself to somebody. "It's very possible. Or, she may have had assistance from the boatmen, and the boatmen's wives and children. Being given to low company, she was very much in the habit of talking to them on the beach, Miss Darile, and sitting by their boats. I have known her do it, when Mr. James has been away, whose days. Miss Darile was far from pleased to find out once, that she had told the children she was boatman's daughter, and that in her own country, long ago, she had runned about the beach, like them."

"Oh, Emily! Unhappy beauty! What a picture rose before me of her sitting on the beach shore, among the children like herself when she was innocent, listening to little voices such as might have called her Mother she had been a poor man's wife; and to the great voice of the sea, with its eternal "Never more!"

"When it was clear that nothing could be done, Miss Darile—"

"Did I tell you not to speak to me?" she said, with stern contempt.

"You spoke to me, miss," he replied. "I beg your pardon. But it is no service to obey?"
It was Mr. Peggotty. An old man now, but in a ruddy, hearty, strong old age. When our first emotion was over, and he sat before the fire with the children on his knees, and the blaze shining on his face, he looked, to me, as vigorous and robust, with his handsome, old man, as ever I had seen.

"'Mas'r Davy,' said he. 'And the old name in the old town fell so naturally on my ear!' 'Mas'r Davy, 'tis a joyful hour as I see you, once more, long with your own true wife!'"

"A joyful hour indeed, old friend!' cried I.

"And these are pretty ones," said Mr. Peggotty. "To look at these dear flowers! Why, Mas'r Davy, you was but the height of the littlest of these, when I first see you! When Em'ly wasn't no bigger, and our poor lad was but a lad!"

"Time has changed me more than it has changed you since then," said I. "But let these dear rogues go to bed; and as no house in England but this must hold you, tell me where to send for your luggage (is the old black bag among it, that went so far, I wonder!), and then, over a glass of Yarmouth grog, we will have the tidings of ten years!"

"Are you alone?" asked Agnes.

"Yes, ma'am," he said, kissing her hand, "quite alone!"

We sat him between us, not knowing how to give him welcome enough; and as I began to listen to his old familiar voice, I could have fancied he was still pursuing his long journey in search of his darling niece.

"It's a sort of water," said Mr. Peggotty, "far to come across, and on'y stay a matter of a few weeks. But water (especially when 'tis salt) comes nat'ral to me; and friends is dear; and I am heer.—Which is verse," said Mr. Peggotty, surprised to find it out, "though I hadn't such intentions."

"Are you going back those many thousand miles, so soon?" asked Agnes.

"Yes, ma'am," he returned. "I gave the promise to Em'ly, afore I came away. You see, I don't grow younger as the years comes round, and if I hadn't sailed so 'twice, most like I shouldn't never have done it. And it's allus been on my mind, as I must come and see Mas'r Davy and your own sweet blooming self, in your wedded happiness, afore I got to be too old."

He looked at us, as if he could never feast his eyes on us sufficiently. Agnes laughingly put back some scattered locks of his grey hair, that he might see us better.

"And now tell us," said I, "everything relating to your fortunes."

"Our fortunes, Mas'r Davy," he rejoined, "is soon told. We haven't fared nebows, but fared to thrive. We've allus thrived. We've worked as we ought to, and maybe we lived a little hard at first or so, but we have allus thrived. What with sheep-farming, and what with stock-farming, and what with one thing and what with another, we are as well to do, as well could be. Thee's been kiender a blessing fell upon us," said Mr. Peggotty, reverentially inclining his head, "and we've done nowt but prosper. That is, in the long run. If not yesterday, why then to-day. If not to-day, why then to-morrow."

"And Emily?" said Agnes and I, both to gather.

"Em'ly," said he, "arter you left her, ma'am—and I never heard her saying of her prayers at night, t'other side the canvas screen, when we was settled in the Bush, but what I heard your name—and arter she and me lost sight of Mas'r Davy, that thee shining sundown—was that low, at first, that, if she had know'd then what Mas'r Davy kep from us so kind and thoughtful, 'tis my opinion she'd have dropped away. But thee was some poor folks abroad as had illness among 'em, and she took care of them; and ther was the children in our company, and she took care of them; and so she got to be busy, and to be doing good, and that helped her."

"When did she first hear of it?" I asked.

"I kep it from her arter I hear'd on't," said Mr. Peggotty, "go'n on nigh a year. We was living then in a solitary place, but among the bestdoinest trees, and with the roses a covering our Heli' to the roof. Ther come along one day, when I was out a working on the land, a traveller from our own Norfolk or Suffolk in England (I don't rightly mind which), and of course we took him in, and giv him to eat and drink, and made him welcome. We all do that, all the colony over. He'd got an old newspaper with him, and some other account in print of the storm. That's how he know'd it. When I come home at night, I found she know'd it."

He dropped his voice as he said these words, and the gravity I so well remembered overspread his face.

"Did it change her much?" we asked.

"Aye, for a good long time," he said, shaking his head; "if not to this present hour. But I think the softness done her good. And she had a deal to mind in the way of poultry and the like, and minded of it, and come through. I wonder," he said thoughtfully, "if you could see my Em'ly now, Mas'r Davy, whether you'd know her?"

"Is she so altered?" I inquired.

"I don't know. I see her ev'ry day, and don't know; but, old-timers, I have thot so. A slight figure," said Mr. Peggotty, looking at the fire, "kiender worn; soft, sorrowful, blue eyes; a delicate face; a pretty head, leaning a little down; a quiet voice and way—timid a'most. That's Em'ly!"

We silentely observed him as he sat, still looking at the fire.

"Some thinks," he said, "as her affection was ill-bestowed: some, as her marriage was broke off by death. No one knows how 'ts. She says she has married with a most of them. She says she says to me, 'That's gone for ever.' Choose along with me; relish when others is by;"
"You are a good girl. I have had some slight correspondence with your former friend, sir," addressing me, "but it has not restored his sense of duty or natural obligation. Therefore I have no other object in this, than what Rosa has mentioned. If, by the course which may relieve the mind of the deceit which you brought here (for whom I am sorry—I can say no more), my son may be saved from again falling into the snare of a designing enemy, well!"

She drew herself up, and sat looking straight before her, far away.

"Madam," I said respectfully, "I understand. I assure you I am in no danger of putting any strained construction on your motives. But I must say, even to you, having known this injured family from childhood, that if you suppose the girl, so deeply wronged, has not been cruelly deluded, and would not rather die a hundred deaths than take a cup of water from your son's hand now, you cherish a terrible mistake."

"Well, Rosa, well!" said Mrs. Steerforth, as the other was about to interpose, "It is no matter. Let it be. You are married, sir, I am told?"

I answered that I had been some time married.

"And are doing well? I hear little in the quiet life I lead, but I understand you are beginning to be famous."

"I have been very fortunate," I said, "and find my name connected with some praise."

"You have no mother?"—in a softened voice.

"No."

"It is a pity," she returned, "she would have been proud of you. Good night!"

I took the hand she held out with a dignified, unbending air, and it was as calm in mine as if her breast had been at peace. Her pride could still its very pulses, it appeared, and draw the placid veil before her face, through which she sat looking straight before her on the far distance.

As I moved away from them along the terrace, I could not help observing how steadily they both sat gazing on the prospect, and how it thickened and closed around them. Here and there, some early lamps were seen to twinkle in the distant city; and in the eastern quarter of the sky the lurid light still hovered. But, from the greater part of the broad valley interposed, a mist was rising like a sea, which, mingling with the darkness; made it seem as if the gathering waters would encompass them. I have reason to remember this, and think of it with awe; for before I looked upon those two again, a stormy sea had risen to their feet.

Reflecting on what had been thus told me, I felt it right that it should be communicated to Mr. Peggotty. On the following evening I went into London in quest of him. He was always wandering about from place to place, with his one object of recovering his niece before him; but was more in London than elsewhere. Often and often, now, and I seen him in the dead of night passing along the streets, searching, among the few who loitered out of doors at those unlimy hours, for what he dread to find.

He kept a lodging over the little chandler's shop in Hungerford Market, which I had occasion to mention more than once, and from which he first went forth upon his errand of mercy. Either I directed my walk. On making inquiry for him, I learned from the people of the house that he had not gone out yet, and I should see him in his room upstairs.

He was sitting reading by a window in which he kept a few plants. The room was very neat and orderly. I saw in a moment that it was always kept prepared for her reception, and that never went out but he thought it possible he might bring her home. He had not heard me at the door, and only raised his eyes when I laid my hand upon his shoulder.

"Mas'r Davy! Thankee, sir! thankee b'arly, for this visit! Sit ye down. You're kindly宽容, sir!"

"Mr. Peggotty," said I, taking the chair he handed me, "don't expect much! I have heard some news."

"Of Emily!"

He put his hand, in a nervous manner, on his mouth, and turned pale, as he fixed his eyes on mine.

"It gives no clue to where she is; but she is not with him."

He sat down, looking intently at me, and listened in profound silence to all I had to tell. I well remember the sense of dignity, beauty even, with which the patient gravity of his face impressed me, when, having gradually removed his eyes from mine, he sat looking downward, heaving his forehead on his hand. He offered no interruption, but remained throughout perfectly still. He seemed to pursue her figure through the narrative, and let every other shape go by him, as if it were nothing.

When I had done, he shaded his face, and continued silent. I looked out of the window for a little while, and occupied myself with the plants.

"How do you fare to feel about it, Mas'r Davy?" he inquired at length.

"I think that she is living," I replied.

"I don't know. Maybe the first shock was too rough, and in the wildness of her art—"

That there blue water as she used to speak on, could she have thought of that so many year, because it was to be her grave!"

He said this, musing, in a low, frightful voice; and walked across the little room.

"And yet," he added, "Mas'r Davy, I have told so sure as she was living—I have known, awake and sleeping, as it was so true that I should find her—I have been so led on by it, and held up to it—that I don't believe I can have been deceived. No! Emily's alive!"

He put his hand down firmly on the table, and set his sunburnt face into a resolute expression.

"My niece, Emily, is alive, sir!" he said, and
Among the eyes elevated towards you from this portion of the globe, will ever be found, while it has light and life,

"The
"Eye
"Appertaining to
"WILKINS MICAWBER,
"Magistrate."

I found, on glancing at the remaining contents of the newspaper, that Mr. Micawber was a dilligent and esteemed correspondent of that journal. There was another letter from him in the same paper, touching a bridge; there was an advertisement of a collection of similar letters by him, to be shortly republished, in a next volume, "with considerable additions;" and, unless I am very much mistaken, the leading article was his also.

We talked much of Mr. Micawber, on many other evenings while Mr. Peggotty remained with us. He lived with us during the whole term of his stay,—which, I think, was something less than a month,—and his sister and my aunt came to London to see him. Agnes and I parted from him aboard-ship, when he sailed; and we shall never part from him more, on earth.

But before he left, he went with me to Yarmouth, to see a little tablet I had put up in the churchyard to the memory of Ham. While I was copying the plain inscription for him at his request, I saw him stoop, and gather a tuft of grass from the grave, and a little earth.

"For Emily," he said, as he put it in his breast. "I promised, Mast' Davy."

CHAPTER LXIV.
A LAST RETROSPECT.

And now my written story ends. I look back, once more—for the last time—before I close these leaves.

I see myself, with Agnes at my side, journeying along the road of life, I see our children and our friends around us; and I hear the roar of many voices, not indifferent to me as I travel on.

What faces are the most distinct to me in the fleeting crowd? Lo, these; all turning to me as I ask my thoughts the question!

Here is my aunt, in stronger spectacles, an old woman of fourscore years and more, but upright yet, and a steady walker of six miles at a stretch in winter weather.

Always with her, here comes Peggotty, my good old nurse, likewise in spectacles, accustomed to do needlework at night very close to the lamp, but never sitting down to it without a bit of wax candle, a yard measure in a little house, and a work-box with a picture of St. Paul's upon the lid.

The cheeks and arms of Peggotty, so hard and red in my childish days, when I wondered why the birds didn't peck her in preference to apples, are shrivelled now; and her eyes, once clear, darken their whole neighbourhood in her face.
fainter (though they glitter still); but her rough forefinger, which I once associated with a pocket nutmeg grater, is just the same, and when I see my least child catching at it as it tatters from my aunt to her, I think of our little parlor at home, when I could scarcely walk. My aunt's old disappointment is set right, now. She is godmother to a real living Betsey Trotwood; and Dora (the next in order) says she spells her.

There is something bulky in Peggoty's pocket. It is nothing smaller than the Crocodile-Book, which is in rather a dilapidated condition by this time, with divers of the leaves torn and stitch ed across, but which Peggoty exhibits to the children as a precious relic. I find it very curious to see my own infant face, looking up at me from the Crocodile stories; and to be reminded by it of my old acquaintance Brooks of Sheffield.

Among my boys, this summer holiday time, I see an old man making giant kites, and gaz ing at them in the air, with a delight for which there are no words. He greets me rapturously, and whispers, with many nods and winks, "Trotwood, you will be glad to hear that I shall finish the Memorial when I have nothing else to do, and that your aunt's the most extraordinary woman in the world, sir!"

Who is this bent lady, supporting herself by a stick, and showing me a comeliness in which there are some traces of old pride and beauty, feebly contending with a querulous, immobile, fretful wandering of the mind? She is in a garden; and near her stands a sharp, dark, withered woman, with a white scar on her lip. Let me hear what they say.

"Rosa, I have forgotten this gentleman's name."

"Rosa bends over her, and calls to her, "Mr. Copperfield."

"I am glad to see you, sir. I am sorry to observe you are in mourning. I hope Time will be good to you."

Her impetuous attendant scolds her, tells her I am not in mourning, bids her look again, tries to rouse her.

"You have seen my son, sir," says the elderly lady. "Are you reconciled?"

Looking fixedly at me, she puts her hand to her forehead, and moans. Suddenly, she cries, in a terrible voice, "Rosa, come to me. He is dead!" Rosa kneeling at her feet, by turns caresses her, and quarrels with her; now fiercely telling her, "I loved him better than you ever did!"—now soothing her to sleep on her breast, like a sick child. Thus I leave them; thus I always find them; thus they wear their time away, from year to year.

What ship comes sailing home from India, and what English lady is this, married to a growing old Scotch Cressus with great piles of cash? Can this be Julia Mills?

Indeed it is Julia Mills, peevish and fine, with a black man to carry cards and letters to her on a golden sattire, and a copper-colored woman in linen, with a bright handkerchief round her head, to serve her Tiffin in her dressing-room. But Julia keeps no diary in these days; never any Affection's Diary; eternally quarrels with her old Scotch Cressus, who is a sort of yellow bear with a tanned hide. Julia is steeped in money to her throat, and talks and thinks of nothing else. I liked her better in the Desert of Sahara.

Or perhaps this is the Desert of Sahara! For though Julia has a sickly house, and mighty company, and sumptuous dinners every day, her no green growth near her: nothing that can ever come to fruit or flower. What Julia calls "society," I see; among it Mr. Jack Malden, from his Patent Place, sneering at the hand that gave him, and speaking to me, of the Doctor, as "so charmingly antique." But when society is the name for such hollow gentlemen and ladies, Julia, and when its breeding is professed indifference to everything that can advance or can retard mankind, I think we must have lost ourselves in the same Desert of Sahara, and had better find the way out.

And lo, the Doctor, always our good friend, laboring at his Dictionary (somewhere about the letter D), and happy in his home and wife. Also the Old Soldier, on a considerably reduced footing, and by no means so influential as in days of yore!

Working at his chambers in the Temple, with a busy aspect, and his hair (where he is not bald) made more rebellious than ever by the constant friction of his lawyer's wig, I come, in a later time, upon my dear old Traddles. His table is covered with thick piles of papers; and I say, as I look around me:

"If Sophia were your clerk, now, Traddles, she would have enough to do!"

"You may say that, my dear Copperfield! But then were capital days, too, in Holborn Court! Were they not?"

"When she told you you would be a Judge! But it was not the town that then."

"At all events," said Traddles, "if I ever am one."

"Why, you know you will be."

"Well, my dear Copperfield, when I am one, I shall tell the story, as I said I would."

We walk away, arm in arm. I am going to have a family dinner with Traddles. It is Sophia's birthday; and, on our road, Traddles discourses to me of the good fortune he has enjoyed.

"I really have been able, my dear Copperfield, to do all that I had most at heart. There's the Reverend Horace promoted to that living at four hundred and fifty pounds a year; there are our two boys receiving the very best education, and distinguishing themselves as steady scholars and good fellows; there are three of the girls married very comfortably; there are three more. Being with us; there are three more keeping house for the Reverend Horace since Mrs. Crowther's decease; and all of them happy."
"Except—" I suggest.

"Except the Beauty," says Traddles. "Yes. It was very unfortunate that she should marry such a vagabond. But there was a certain dash and glare about him that caught her. However, now we have got her safe at our house, and got rid of him, we must cheer her up again."

Traddles's house is one of the very houses—or it is easily may have been—which he and Sophy used to parcel out, in their evening walks. It is a large house; but Traddles keeps his papers in his dressing-room, and his boots with his papers; and he and Sophy squeeze themselves into upper rooms, reserving the best bed-rooms for the Beauty and the girls. There is no room to spare in the house; for more of the girls are here, and always are here by some accident or other, than I know how to count. Here, when we go in, is a crowd of them running down to the door, and handing Traddles about to be kissed, until he is out of breath. Here, established in perpetuity, is the poor Beauty, a widow with a little girl; here, at dinner on Sophy's birthday, are the three married girls with their three husbands, and one of the husband's brothers, and another husband's cousin, and another husband's sister, who appeared to me to be engaged to the cousin. Traddles, exactly the same simple, unaffected fellow as he ever was, sits at the foot of the large table like a Patriarch; and Sophy beams upon him, from the head, across a cheerful space that is certainly not glittering with Britannia metal.

And now, as I close my task, subduing my desire to linger yet, these faces fade away. But, one face, shining on me like a Heavenly light by which I see all other objects, is above them and beyond them all. And that remains.

I turn my head, and see it, in its beautiful serenity, beside me. My lamp burns low, and I have written far into the night; but the dear presence, without which I were nothing, bears me company.

Oh Agnes, Oh my soul, so may thy face be by me when I close my life indeed; so may I, when realities are melting from me like the shadows which I now dismiss, still find thee near me, pointing upward!

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