

**PEN PHOTOGRAPHS OF
CHARLES
DICKENS'S READINGS,
TAKEN FROM LIFE**

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Pen Photographs of Charles Dickens's Readings, Taken from Life by Kate Field

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KATE FIELD

**PEN PHOTOGRAPHS OF
CHARLES
DICKENS'S READINGS,
TAKEN FROM LIFE**



TO MR
ABRAHAM

CHARLES F. SMITH

PEN PHOTOGRAPHS

DAY OF
OF CALIFORNIA

CHARLES DICKENS'S READINGS.

Taken from Life

BY KATE FIELD,

AN AMERICAN.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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PREFACE.

TO connect this book with the art of Photography, by even the slight link of a title, may be considered presumptuous; but when it is remembered that the best photographs fail to do justice to their originals, and that the most interesting subjects generally receive the worst treatment, I hope to be exonerated from so grave a charge.

The following pages are the inspiration of gratitude. Owing to Charles Dickens twenty-five of the most delightful and most instructive evenings of my life, I have photographed them with the hope of clinching their recollection in the minds of many, and of giving to others some faint outline of a rare pleasure, the like of which will ne'er come to us again. Now that the great man has "vanished forevermore" from the "garish lights" of St. James Hall, the republication of this book, in an enlarged and more durable form, is deemed opportune, and that I have been unable to

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catch the fleeting power of Dickens's last and finest reading, "The Murder of Nancy Sykes," declared by the veteran Macready to be "two Macbeths rolled into one," will ever remain a source of keen regret.

"It being low water, he went out with the tide."

The joy of yesterday is the dead past of to-day, and I lay this offering at the feet of Charles Dickens, the actor, responsive to his prayer, "Lord, keep my memory green!"

THE AUTHOR.

December 25, 1870.

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THE WELCOME IN BOSTON.

"A hundred thousand welcomes: I could weep,
And I could laugh; I am light, and heavy: welcome:
A curse begin at very root of his heart
That is not glad to see thee!"

ONCE in a generation all hearts throb in unison to the music of some great master whose humanity is broad enough to embrace mankind. Charles Dickens is such a master. His hand has struck chords that scarce a loving Christian soul has not echoed, with a silent blessing upon Him who sent so humane a genius into the world. It is not strange, then, that on a raw, gray morning in December, 1867, Boston experienced a new sensation in watching a motley crowd, ranged in single file before the door of Messrs. Ticknor and Fields's publishing house, pursuing its winding way thus



along Hamilton Place, and dragging its slow length down Tremont Street, with the distance of an eighth