

THE HOLLY-TREE

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The Holly-Tree by Charles Dickens

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CHARLES DICKENS

THE HOLLY-TREE

828
D548Pm
1904

THE HOLLY-TREE





Frontispiece—The Holly-Tree.

“‘ THEN, COBBS,’ SAYS HE, ‘ YOU SHALL BE OUR HEAD-
GARDENER WHEN WE ARE MARRIED.’ ”

(See p. 77.)

The Holly-Tree

By

Charles Dickens



WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY WALTER JERROLD

Thirty-one Illustrations

PHILADELPHIA
HENRY ALTEMUS COMPANY



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“THE Holly-Tree Inn” was the title of the *Household Words* Christmas number for 1855, and it was written partly by Charles Dickens and partly by Wilkie Collins, but we have here only Dickens’s contribution to the work—a contribution complete in itself. Of the delightful little tale with its dual romance it is necessary to say but little. The “second branch,” telling of the elopement of two small children for Gretna Green was one of the best liked of the author’s Readings both in England and in America, and it remains to-day probably one of the most popular of the minor writings of Charles Dickens. It is full of the kindest of humor as recounted by the excellent Boots, and

INTRODUCTION

will assuredly make many fresh friends as here newly pictured by the cunning hand of an imaginative artist. Dickens himself often hit upon felicitous descriptions of his own work, and I fancy that he indicated the quality to which this little story owes its popularity when he wrote of it to Wilkie Collins, "I think it's an odd idea, and gets something of the effect of a Fairy Story out of the most unlikely materials." Unlikely as the episode might seem, fact has since borrowed from fiction, for our newspapers told us a few years ago of the elopement of a small couple of even fewer years than were those of Master Harry and his Norah.

WALTER JERROLD.



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