

**A SERIES OF DAILY  
COMPANIONS. THE BEST OF  
ALL GOOD COMPANY. A  
DAY WITH SIR WALTER SCOTT**

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A series of daily companions. The Best of All Good Company. A day with Sir Walter Scott by  
Blanchard Jerrold

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**BLANCHARD JERROLD**

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COMPANIONS. THE BEST OF  
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IN TOWN AND OUT OF TOWN - - - AT HOME AND ABROAD.

*A SERIES OF DAILY COMPANIONS.*

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THE BEST OF ALL GOOD COMPANY

BY BLANCHARD JERROLD.



A DAY WITH SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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BOSTON:  
SHEPARD & GILL.  
1873.

FOR THE POCKET AND THE PORTMANTEAU - - - ASHORE AND AFLOAT.



## P R E F A C E.

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DICKENS has described himself as "a not very robust child, sitting in by-places, near Rochester Castle, with a head full of Partridge, Strap, Tom Pipes, and Sancho Panza." Now my design and hope in putting forth my "Days" with "the Best of all Good Company" is to fill the heads of the rising generation, and indeed some of the risen generation, with a desire to become better acquainted with the best writers of this and other countries.

My "DAYS" will, I hope, lead readers to form life-long acquaintances that shall have the best and happiest influence on their lives. If they should draw readers from that

"—very unedifying stuffage of mind"

which is offered to them in the shape of light current literature, to become the companions of the noble minds that, we are told, "taken up any way are profitable company;" I should be able to say with Voltaire, "*J'ai fait un peu de bien—c'est mon meilleur ouvrage.*"

REFORM CLUB, December, 1872.

## PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

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THE privilege of making extracts from Mr. Dickens's works having been refused by his English publishers, Mr. Jerrold was compelled to issue the English edition of his "Day with Charles Dickens" in an incomplete and unsatisfactory form. As no such restriction can be binding in this country, we have taken the liberty of completing Mr. Jerrold's design, by appending selections from "Pickwick Papers," "Sketches by Boz," &c.; and, in order to keep the book within prescribed limits, have left out some of the less interesting matter that appeared in the English edition.

THE PUBLISHERS.



# CHARLES DICKENS.

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## In Memoriam.



WAS passing in review masses of correspondence, be-  
times, on June 10, 1870, clearing the weeds from the  
flowers, and tying up the precious papers of a life passed  
in the thick of the literary activities of my time, when  
I received a letter: "I should have written to you earlier  
to-day but from the smart blow of this sudden illness of  
our dear Charles Dickens, who had engaged to meet me this very after-  
noon (June 9) at 3 o'clock, little dreaming of what was to put aside the  
appointment." I rang for the morning papers.

Charles Dickens had passed away from us! Lay before me his letter  
in which he told me how, on a certain June day, travelling from Gad's  
Hill to London, a bluff City man had piped over the edge of his morning  
paper, "Do you see this? Douglas Jerrold is dead!" Dickens was in-  
expressibly shocked, for he had seen into the heart of his friend; and  
they had parted only a few days before, with the intention of spending  
some happy hours in the house by Rochester. "Few of his friends,"—  
I have the words before me in a blurred writing not often written by that  
firm and willing hand,— "I think, can have had more favorable oppor-  
tunities of knowing him, in his gentlest and most affectionate aspect, than  
I have had. He was one of the gentlest and most affectionate of men."

So of Dickens. Who knew him best and closest, saw how little he  
would ever produce to the outer world, of the bright, chivalrous, engag-  
ing, and deep and tender heart that beat within his bosom. The well of  
kindness was open to mankind, and from it generations will drink; but  
it was never fathomed. Charles Dickens, as all writers about him have  
testified, was so graciously as well as lavishly endowed by Nature that  
every utterance was sunny, every sentiment pure, every emotional opinion

instinctively right, — like a woman's. The head that governed the richly-stored heart was wise, prompt, and alert at the same time. He communicated to all he did the delightful sense of ease with power. Prodigal as he was, he seemed ever to reserve more love and tenderness than he gave. His vigor was sustained, as well as brilliant and daring. His mind, so marked in its self-respect and equal poise, was never weak on great occasions, as the judicial mind so often is. There was something feminine in the quality that led him to the right verdict, the appropriate word, the core of the heart of the question in hand. The air about him vibrated with his activity, and his surprising vitality. In a difficulty men felt safe, merely because he was present. Most easily, among all thinkers it has been my fortune to know, was he master of every situation in which he placed himself. Not only because of the latent, conscious power that was in him, and the knightly cheerfulness which became the pre-mind servant of humanity who had used himself to victory; but because he adopted always the old plain advice, and deliberated well before he acted with the vigor which was inseparable from any activity of his.

The art with which Charles Dickens managed men and women was nearly all emotional. As in his books, he drew at will upon the tears of his readers: in his life he helped men with a spontaneous grace and sweetness which are indescribable. The deep, rich, cheery voice; the brave and noble countenance; the hand that had the fire of friendship in its grip, — all played their part in comforting in a moment the creature who had come to Charles Dickens for advice, for help, for sympathy. When he took a cause in hand, or a friend under his wing, people who knew him breathed in a placid sense of security. He had not only the cordial will to be of use wherever his services could be advantageously enlisted, but he could see at a glance the exact thing he might do; and beyond the range of his conviction as to his own power, or the limit of proper asking or advancing, no power on earth could move him the breadth of a hair.

Slow to adopt a cause, Charles Dickens was the first in the battle for it when he had espoused it. He had the qualities of the perfect trooper, as well as the far-seeing captain. I have a letter of his, about Italy, dated 1844, in which, amid hearty gossip, he turns to a cause that was dear to him at the time. "Come and see me in Italy," he says to my father. "Let us smoke a pipe among the vines. I have taken a little house surrounded by them, and no man in the world should be more welcome to it than you;" and from the midst of the vines he turns to the Sanatorium in the New Road, nearly opposite the Devonshire Place in which so many wisely-happy evenings have been passed. "Is your modesty really a confirmed habit, or could you prevail upon yourself, if you are moderately well, to let me call you up for a word or two at the Sanatorium dinner? There are some men — excellent men — connected with that institution who would take the very strongest interest in your doing so, and *do* advise me one of these days, that if I can do it well and unaffectedly, I may." Dickens had steadfastness, endurance, thoroughness,

in all he undertook. If he invited a friend to his house, and it was at a distance, he would write the most minute directions,—a way-bill,—and enliven every mile-stone with a point of humor or a happy suggestion of pleasure to come out of the excursion.\* “Think it over.” (This from Switzerland to a dear friend in London.) “I could send you the minutest particulars of the journey. It’s nearly all railroad and steamboat, and the easiest in the world.” I have another letter of invitation to Paris, written some three-and-twenty years ago. Amid exquisite touches of humor, and in the glow of his friendship, lie details of the precise kind, beginning,—“The fifteenth of March is on a Monday. Now you can’t cross to Boulogne on a Sunday, unless in summer time. . . . The railroad from Abbeville hither, finished some time, is announced to open on the 1st of March.” There are directions, in the event of the railroad being open, and in the event of its remaining closed, and an offer to secure the proper seat in the *malle poste* at Boulogne. The coming, the visit, the return, the hour of arrival in London, are all mapped out, winding up with, “in London on Saturday night the 27th. *Voilà tout*—as we say.”

In more serious matters, he was a man of order and of righteous doing indeed. Cant is so well aired about the world, and people have come to take a spice of it so much for granted in every public man who holds the cause of his brethren to heart, that they can hardly conceive of the noblest servant that he had not the most infinitesimal particle of it. Writing from the South, when he was about to travel to London with the MS. of “The Christmas Carol,” more than a quarter of a century ago, to read it to a few friends in Mr. John Forster’s chambers in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, he observed of the book, “I have tried to strike a blow upon that part of the brass countenance of wicked Cant, where such compliment is sorely needed at this time; and I trust that the result of my training is at least the exhibition of a strong desire to make it a staggerer. If you should think at the end of the four rounds (there are no more) that the said Cant, in the language of ‘Bell’s Life,’ ‘comes up piping,’ I shall be very much the better for it.” Dickens abhorred a sham with his whole soul. When he published his “Child’s History of England,” the mass took it for granted that the chapters which were appearing in the columns of “Household Words” were so much copy, and that the writing of it for his own children was only a common, and, to the world, warrantable artistic fiction. Such fiction was not possible to the greatest fiction-writer of our century. I have his words before me on this history, and the ink is yellowing fast:—

“I am writing a little history of England for my boy, which I will send you when it is printed for him, though your boys are too old to profit by it. It is curious that I have tried to impress upon him (writing, I dare say, at the same moment with you) the exact spirit of your paper, †

\* His letters, published in Mr. James T. Fields’ delightful “Yesterdays with Authors,” are evidence of his thoroughness and downright determination to make every detail of any plan of his perfect.

† The Preacher Parrot.