1838

The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby: Part 03

Charles Dickens

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Gottune%,

COMPLETE CAREER OF THE NICKLEBY FAMILY.

CONTAINING

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BY "PHIZ."

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CASE OF THE HYGEISTS AGAINST THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

That a strong case, borne out by the most indubitable testimony, has been made, and stands recorded in favour of the Hygeian theory of medicines, and against medical practice, it is presumed cannot be called in question. That, notwithstanding the persecution those connected with the honest promulgation of that system have endured from medical men for the last five years, the Hygeian system remains unshaken, and, at this moment, is triumphantly spreading itself throughout the world.

That, were medical men honest in their opposition to that system, and were they impressed with a bona fide belief that Hygeism was not founded in truth, they ought (if they can) first to show, in contradiction of that which Hygeists assert to be the truth, and upon which they act, First—That the vital principle is not contained in the blood—and why?

Second—That every thing in the body is not derived from the blood—and why?

Third—That all constitutions are not radically the same—and why?

Fourth—That all diseases do not arise from impurity of the blood—and why?

Fifth—That this impurity, which degenerates the blood, has not three sources, namely, the menstrine, the contagious, and the personal—and why?

Sixth—that pain and disease have not the same origin, and should not, therefore, be considered synonymous terms—and why?

Seventh—that all purgation by vegetables is not the effectual mode of eradicating disease—and why?

Eighth—that there is not an intimate connexion subsisting between the mind and the body, and that the health of the one does not conduce to the serenity of the other—and why?

When any member of the medical profession shall have satisfactorily proved the reverse of the above (which are the principles of the Hygeian theory) to be fallacious, more especially the seventh proposition, then, and then only, ought faith to be placed by the public in what medical men (as interested individuals) are pleased to assert in reference to the doctrine of Hygeism, which every-day experience clearly shows to be founded in truth.

The important Letter of Dr. Lynch, on the Nature, Cause, and Treatment of Inflammation, is just published, and may be had at the Medical Dissenter Office, 369, Strand, and of all the regularly appointed agents and sub-agents throughout the country.—British College of Health, Hamilton Place, New Road.

PETITION TO PARLIAMENT.

HYGEISM.—A petition (which was signed by upwards of 10,000 persons) was presented, in the House of Commons, by Mr. Hall, the Member for Marylebone, on Tuesday evening, praying that a Committee be appointed to inquire into the merits of Hygeism. The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

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CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE INTERNAL ECONOMY OF DOTIOBEYS HALL

A RIDE of two hundred and odd miles in severe weather, is one of the best softeners of a hard bed that ingenuity can devise. Perhaps it is even a sweetener of dreams, for those which hovered over the rough couch of Nicholas, and whispered their airy nothings in his ear, were of an agreeable and happy kind. He was making his fortune very fast indeed, when the faint glimmer of an expiring candle shone before his eyes, and a voice he had no difficulty in recognising as part and parcel of Mr. Squeers, admonished him that it was time to rise.

"Past seven, Nickleby," said Mr. Squeers.

"Has morning come already?" asked Nicholas, sitting up in bed.

"Ah! that has it," replied Squeers, "and ready iced too. Now, Nickleby, come; tumble up, will you?"

Nicholas needed no further admonition, but "tumbled up" at once, and proceeded to dress himself by the light of the taper which Mr. Squeers carried in his hand.

"Here's a pretty go," said that gentleman; "the pump's froze."

"Indeed!" said Nicholas, not much interested in the intelligence.

"Yes," replied Squeers. "You can't wash yourself this morning."

"Not wash myself!" exclaimed Nicholas.

"No, not a bit of it," rejoined Squeers tartly. "So you must be content with giving yourself a dry polish till we break the ice in the well, and can get a bucketful out for the boys. Don't stand staring at me, but do look sharp, will you?"

Offering no further observation, Nicholas huddled on his clothes, and Squeers meanwhile opened the shutters and blew the candle out, when the voice of his amiable consort was heard in the passage, demanding admittance.

"Come in, my love," said Squeers.

Mrs. Squeers came in, still habited in the primitive night-jacket which had displayed the symmetry of her figure on the previous night, and further ornamented with a beaver bonnet of some antiquity, which she wore with much ease and lightness upon the top of the nightcap before mentioned.

"Drat the things," said the lady, opening the cupboard; "I can't find the school spoon anywhere."

"Never mind it, my dear," observed Squeers in a soothing manner; "it's of no consequence."

"No consequence, why how you talk!" retorted Mrs. Squeers sharply; "isn't it brimstone morning?"

"I forgot, my dear," rejoined Squeers; "yes, it certainly is. We purify the boys' bloods now and then, Nickleby."

"Purify fiddlesticks' ends," said his lady. "Don't think, young man, that we go to the expense of flower of brimstone and molasses just
to purify them; because if you think we carry on the business in that way, you'll find yourself mistaken, and so I tell you plainly."

"My dear," said Squeers frowning. "Hem!"

"Oh! nonsense," rejoined Mrs. Squeers. "If the young man comes to be a teacher here, let him understand at once that we don't want any foolery about the boys. They have the brimstone and treacle, partly because if they hadn't something or other in the way of medicine they'd be always ailing and giving a world of trouble, and partly because it spoils their appetites and comes cheaper than breakfast and dinner. So it does them good and us good at the same time, and that's fair enough I'm sure."

Having given this explanation, Mrs. Squeers put her head into the closet and instituted a stricter search after the spoon, in which Mr. Squeers assisted. A few words passed between them while they were thus engaged, but as their voices were partially stifled by the cupboard all that Nicholas could distinguish was, that Mr. Squeers said what Mrs. Squeers had said was injudicious, and that Mrs. Squeers said what Mr. Squeers said was "stuff."

A vast deal of searching and rummaging succeeded, and it proving fruitless, Smike was called in, and pushed by Mrs. Squeers and boxed by Mr. Squeers, which course of treatment brightening his intellects, enabled him to suggest that possibly Mrs. Squeers might have the spoon in her pocket, as indeed turned out to be the case. As Mrs. Squeers had previously protested, however, that she was quite certain she had not got it, Smike received another box on the ear for presuming to contradict his mistress, together with a promise of a sound thrashing if he were not more respectful in future; so that he took nothing very advantageous by his motion.

"A most invaluable woman, that, Nickleby," said Squeers when his consort had hurried away, pushing the drudge before her.

"Indeed, Sir!" observed Nicholas.

"I don't know her equal," said Squeers; "I do not know her equal. That woman, Nickleby, is always the same—always the same bustling, lively, active, saving creetur that you see her now."

Nicholas sighed involuntarily at the thought of the agreeable domestic prospect thus opened to him; but Squeers was, fortunately, too much occupied with his own reflections to perceive it.

"It's my way to say, when I am up in London," continued Squeers, "that to them boys she is a mother. But she is more than a mother to them, ten times more. She does things for them boys, Nickleby, that I don't believe half the mothers going would do for their own sons."

"I should think they would not, Sir," answered Nicholas.

Now, the fact was, that both Mr. and Mrs. Squeers viewed the boys in the light of their proper and natural enemies; or, in other words, they held and considered that their business and profession was to get as much from every boy as could by possibility be screwed out of him. On this point they were both agreed, and behaved in unison accordingly. The only difference between them was, that Mrs. Squeers waged war against the enemy openly and fearlessly, and that Squeers covered his rascality, even at home, with a spice of his habitual deceit,
as if he really had a notion of some day or other being able to take himself in, and persuade his own mind that he was a very good fellow.

"But come," said Squeers, interrupting the progress of some thoughts to this effect in the mind of his usher, "let's go to the school-room; and lend me a hand with my school-coat, will you?"

Nicholas assisted his master to put on an old fustian shooting-jacket, which he took down from a peg in the passage; and Squeers arming himself with his cane, led the way across a yard to a door in the rear of the house.

"There," said the schoolmaster as they stepped in together; "this is our shop, Nickleby."

It was such a crowded scene, and there were so many objects to attract attention, that at first Nicholas stared about him, really without seeing anything at all. By degrees, however, the place resolved itself into a bare and dirty room with a couple of windows, whereof a tenth part might be of glass, the remainder being stopped up with old copy-books and paper. There were a couple of long old rickety desks, cut and notched, and inked and damaged, in every possible way; two or three forms, a detached desk for Squeers, and another for his assistant. The ceiling was supported like that of a barn, by cross beams and rafters, and the walls were so stained and discoloured, that it was impossible to tell whether they had ever been touched with paint or whitewash.

But the pupils—the young noblemen! How the last faint traces of hope, the remotest glimmering of any good to be derived from his efforts in this den, faded from the mind of Nicholas as he looked in dismay around! Pale and haggard faces, lank and bony figures, children with the countenances of old men, deformities with irons upon their limbs, boys of stunted growth, and others whose long meagre legs would hardly bear their stooping bodies, all crowded on the view together; there were the bleared eye, the hare-lip, the crooked foot, and every ugliness or distortion that told of unnatural aversion conceived by parents for their offspring, or of young lives which, from the earliest dawn of infancy, had been one horrible endurance of cruelty and neglect. There were little faces which should have been handsome, darkened with the scowl of sullen dogged suffering; there was childhood with the light of its eye quenched, its beauty gone, and its helplessness alone remaining; there were vicious-faced boys brooding, with leaden eyes, like malefactors in a jail; and there were young creatures on whom the sins of their frail parents had descended, weeping even for the mercenary nurses they had known, and lonesome even in their loneliness. With every kindly sympathy and affection blasted in its birth, with every young and healthy feeling flogged and starved down, with every revengeful passion that can fester in swollen hearts, eating its evil way to their core in silence, what an incipient Hell was breeding there!

And yet this scene, painful as it was, had its grotesque features, which, in a less interested observer than Nicholas, might have provoked a smile. Mrs. Squeers stood at one of the desks, presiding over an immense basin of brimstone and treacle, of which delicious compound she administered a large instalment to each boy in succession, using for the purpose a common wooden spoon, which might have been originally
manufactured for some gigantic top, and which widened every young gentleman's mouth considerably, they being all obliged, under heavy corporal penalties, to take in the whole of the bowl at a gasp. In another corner, huddled together for companionship, were the little boys who had arrived on the preceding night, three of them in very large leather breeches, and two in old trousers, a something tighter fit than drawers are usually worn; at no great distance from them was seated the juvenile son and heir of Mr. Squeers—a striking likeness of his father—kicking with great vigour under the hands of Smike, who was fitting upon him a pair of new boots that bore a most suspicious resemblance to those which the least of the little boys had worn on the journey down, as the little boy himself seemed to think, for he was regarding the appropriation with a look of most rueful amazement. Besides these, there was a long row of boys waiting, with countenances of no pleasant anticipation, to be treacled, and another file who had just escaped from the infliction, making a variety of wry mouths indicative of any thing but satisfaction. The whole were attired in such motley, ill-assorted, extraordinary garments, as would have been irresistibly ridiculous, but for the foul appearance of dirt, disorder, and disease, with which they were associated.

"Now," said Squeers, giving the desk a great rap with his cane, which made half the little boys nearly jump out of their boots, "is that physicking over?"

"Just over," said Mrs. Squeers, choking the last boy in her hurry, and tapping the crown of his head with the wooden spoon to restore him. "Here, you Smike; take away now. Look sharp."

Smike shuffled out with the basin, and Mrs. Squeers having called up a little boy with a curly head, and wiped her hands upon it, hurried out after him into a species of wash-house, where there was a small fire and a large kettle, together with a number of little wooden bowls which were arranged upon a board.

Into these bowls Mrs. Squeers, assisted by the hungry servant, poured a brown composition which looked like diluted pincushions without the covers, and was called porridge. A minute wedge of brown bread was inserted in each bowl, and when they had eat their porridge by means of the bread, the boys eat the bread itself, and had finished their breakfast; whereupon Mr. Squeers said, in a solemn voice, "For what we have received may the Lord make us truly thankful!"—and went away to his own.

Nicholas distended his stomach with a bowl of porridge, for much the same reason which induces some savages to swallow earth—lest they should be inconveniently hungry when there is nothing to eat. Having further disposed of a slice of bread and butter, allotted to him in virtue of his office, he sat himself down to wait for school-time.

He could not but observe how silent and sad the boys all seemed to be. There was none of the noise and clamour of a school-room, none of its boisterous play or hearty mirth. The children sat crouching and shivering together, and seemed to lack the spirit to move about. The only pupil who evinced the slightest tendency towards locomotion or playfulness was Master Squeers, and as his chief amusement was to
tread upon the other boys' toes in his new boots, his flow of spirits was rather disagreeable than otherwise.

After some half-hour's delay Mr. Squeers reappeared, and the boys took their places and their books, of which latter commodity the average might be about one to eight learners. A few minutes having elapsed, during which Mr. Squeers looked very profound, as if he had a perfect apprehension of what was inside all the books, and could say every word of their contents by heart if he only chose to take the trouble, that gentleman called up the first class.

Obedient to this summons there ranged themselves in front of the schoolmaster's desk, half-a-dozen scarecrows, out at knees and elbows, one of whom placed a torn and filthy book beneath his learned eye.

"This is the first class in English spelling and philosophy, Nickleby," said Squeers, beckoning Nicholas to stand beside him. "We'll get up a Latin one, and hand that over to you. Now, then, where's the first boy?"

"Please, Sir, he's cleaning the back parlour window," said the temporary head of the philosophical class.

"So he is, to be sure," rejoined Squeers. "We go upon the practical mode of teaching, Nickleby; the regular education system. C-l-e-a-n, clean, verb active, to make bright, to scour. W-i-n, win, d-e-r, der, winder, a casement. When the boy knows this out of book, he goes and does it. It's just the same principle as the use of the globes. Where's the second boy?"

"Please, Sir, he's weeding the garden," replied a small voice.

"To be sure," said Squeers, by no means disconcerted. "So he is. B-o-t, bot, t-i-n, tin, bottin, n-e-y, ney, bottinney, noun substantive, a knowledge of plants. When he has learned that bottinney means a knowledge of plants, he goes and knows 'em. That's our system, Nickleby: what do you think of it?"

"It's a very useful one, at any rate," answered Nicholas significantly.

"I believe you," rejoined Squeers, not remarking the emphasis of his usher. "Third boy, what's a horse?"

"A beast, Sir," replied the boy.

"So it is," said Squeers. "Ain't it, Nickleby?"

"I believe there is no doubt of that, Sir," answered Nicholas.

"Of course there isn't," said Squeers. "A horse is a quadruped, and quadruped's Latin for beast, as every body that's gone through the grammar knows, or else where's the use of having grammars at all?"

"Where, indeed!" said Nicholas abstractedly.

"As you're perfect in that," resumed Squeers, turning to the boy, "go and look after my horse, and rub him down well, or I'll rub you down. The rest of the class go and draw water up till somebody tells you to leave off, for it's washing day to-morrow, and they want the coppers filled."

So saying he dismissed the first class to their experiments in practical philosophy, and eyed Nicholas with a look half cunning and half doubtful, as if he were not altogether certain what he might think of him by this time.
"That's the way we do it, Nickleby," he said, after a long pause. Nicholas shrugged his shoulders in a manner that was scarcely perceptible, and said he saw it was.

"And a very good way it is, too," said Squeers. "Now, just take those fourteen little boys and hear them some reading, because you know you must begin to be useful, and idling about here won't do."

Mr. Squeers said this as if it had suddenly occurred to him, either that he must not say too much to his assistant, or that his assistant did not say enough to him in praise of the establishment. The children were recalled from house-window, garden, stable, and cow-yard, and he was soon listening to their dull, drawling, hesitating recital of those stories of engrossing interest which are to be found in the more antiquated spelling books.

In this exciting occupation the morning lagged heavily on. At one o'clock, the boys having previously had their appetites thoroughly taken away by stir-about and potatoes, sat down in the kitchen to some hard salt beef, of which Nicholas was graciously permitted to take his portion to his own solitary desk, and to eat there in peace. After this there was another hour of crouching in the school-room and shivering with cold, and then school began again.

It was Mr. Squeers's custom to call the boys together, and make a sort of report after every half-yearly visit to the metropolis regarding the relations and friends he had seen, the news he had heard, the letters he had brought down, the bills which had been paid, the accounts which had been left unpaid, and so forth. This solemn proceeding always took place in the afternoon of the day succeeding his return; perhaps because the boys acquired strength of mind from the suspense of the morning, or possibly because Mr. Squeers himself acquired greater sternness and inflexibility from certain warm potations in which he was wont to indulge after his early dinner. Be this as it may, the boys were recalled from house-window, garden, stable, and cow-yard, and the school were assembled in full conclave, when Mr. Squeers, with a small bundle of papers in his hand, and Mrs. S. following with a pair of canes, entered the room and proclaimed silence.

"Let any boy speak a word without leave," said Mr. Squeers, mildly, "and I'll take the skin off his back."

This special proclamation had the desired effect, and a deathlike silence immediately prevailed, in the midst of which Mr. Squeers went on to say—

"Boys, I've been to London, and have returned to my family and you, as strong and well as ever."

According to half-yearly custom, the boys gave three feeble cheers at this refreshing intelligence. Such cheers! Sighs of extra strength with the chill on.

"I have seen the parents of some boys," continued Squeers, turning over his papers, "and they're so glad to hear how their sons are getting on that there's no prospect at all of their going away, which of course is a very pleasant thing to reflect upon for all parties."

Two or three hands went to two or three eyes when Squeers said this, but the greater part of the young gentlemen having no particular
parents to speak of, were wholly uninterested in the thing one way or other.

"I have had disappointments to contend against," said Squeers, looking very grim, "Bolder's father was two pound ten short. Where is Bolder?"

"Here he is, please Sir," rejoined twenty officious voices. Boys are very like men to be sure.

"Come here, Bolder," said Squeers.

An unhealthy-looking boy, with warts all over his hands, stepped from his place to the master's desk, and raised his eyes imploringly to Squeers's face; his own quite white from the rapid beating of his heart.

"Bolder," said Squeers, speaking very slowly, for he was considering, as the saying goes, where to have him. "Bolder, if your father thinks that because—why what's this, Sir?"

As Squeers spoke, he caught up the boy's hand by the cuff of his jacket, and surveyed it with an edifying aspect of horror and disgust.

"What do you call this, Sir?" demanded the schoolmaster, administering a cut with the cane to expedite the reply.

"I can't help it, indeed, Sir," rejoined the boy, crying. "They will come; it's the dirty work I think, Sir—at least I don't know what it is, Sir, but it's not my fault."

"Bolder," said Squeers, tucking up his wristbands and moistening the palm of his right hand to get a good grip of the cane, "you're an incorrigible young scoundrel, and as the last thrashing did you no good, we must see what another will do towards beating it out of you."

With this, and wholly disregarding a piteous cry for mercy, Mr. Squeers fell upon the boy and caned him soundly: not leaving off indeed, until his arm was tired out.

"There," said Squeers, when he had quite done; "rub away as hard as you like, you won't rub that off in a hurry. Oh! you won't hold that noise, won't you? Put him out, Smike."

The drudge knew better from long experience, than to hesitate about obeying, so he bundled the victim out by a side door, and Mr. Squeers perched himself again on his own stool, supported by Mrs. Squeers, who occupied another at his side.

"Now let us see," said Squeers. "A letter for Cobbey. Stand up, Cobbey."

Another boy stood up, and eyed the letter very hard while Squeers made a mental abstract of the same.

"Oh!" said Squeers: "Cobbey's grandmother is dead, and his uncle John has took to drinking, which is all the news his sister sends, except eighteenpence, which will just pay for that broken square of glass. Mrs. Squeers, my dear, will you take the money?"

The worthy lady pocketed the eighteenpence with a most business-like air, and Squeers passed on to the next boy as coolly as possible.

"Graymarsh," said Squeers, "he's the next. Stand up, Graymarsh."

Another boy stood up, and the schoolmaster looked over the letter as before.

"Graymarsh's maternal aunt," said Squeers when he had possessed himself of the contents, "is very glad to hear he's so well and happy,
and sends her respectful compliments to Mrs. Squeers, and thinks she must be an angel. She likewise thinks Mr. Squeers is too good for this world; but hopes he may long be spared to carry on the business. Would have sent the two pair of stockings as desired, but is short of money, so forwards a tract instead, and hopes Graymarsh will put his trust in Providence. Hopes above all, that he will study in everything to please Mr. and Mrs. Squeers, and look upon them as his only friends; and that he will love Master Squeers, and not object to sleeping five in a bed, which no Christian should. "Ah!" said Squeers, folding it up, "a delightful letter. Very affecting, indeed."

It was affecting in one sense, for Graymarsh's maternal aunt was strongly supposed, by her more intimate friends, to be no other than his maternal parent; Squeers however, without alluding to this part of the story (which would have sounded immoral before boys), proceeded with the business by calling out "Mobbs," whereupon another boy rose, and Graymarsh resumed his seat.

"Mobbs's mother-in-law," said Squeers, "took to her bed on hearing that he would not eat fat, and has been very ill ever since. She wishes to know by an early post where he expects to go to, if he quarrels with his vittles; and with what feelings he could turn up his nose at the cow's liver broth, after his good master had asked a blessing on it. This was told her in the London newspapers—not by Mr. Squeers, for he is too kind and too good to set anybody against anybody—and it has vexed her so much, Mobbs can't think. She is sorry to find he is discontented, which is sinful and horrid, and hopes Mr. Squeers will flog him into a happier state of mind; with which view she has also stopped his halfpenny a week pocket-money, and given a double-bladed knife with a corkscrew in it to the Missionaries, which she had bought on purpose for him."

"A sulky state of feeling," said Squeers, after a terrible pause, during which he had moistened the palm of his right hand again, "won't do; cheerfulness and contentment must be kept up. Mobbs, come to me."

Mobbs moved slowly towards the desk, rubbing his eyes in anticipation of good cause for doing so; and he soon afterwards retired by the side door, with as good cause as a boy need have.

Mr. Squeers then proceeded to open a miscellaneous collection of letters, some enclosing money, which Mrs. Squeers "took care of;" and others referring to small articles of apparel, as caps and so forth, all of which the same lady stated to be too large or too small, and calculated for nobody but young Squeers, who would appear indeed to have had most accommodating limbs, since everything that came into the school fitted him to a nicety. His head, in particular, must have been singularly elastic, for hats and caps of all dimensions were alike to him.

This business despatched, a few slovenly lessons were performed, and Squeers retired to his fireside, leaving Nicholas to take care of the boys in the school-room, which was very cold, and where a meal of bread and cheese was served out shortly after dark.

There was a small stove at that corner of the room which was nearest to the master's desk, and by it Nicholas sat down, so depressed and self-
degraded by the consciousness of his position, that if death could have come upon him at that time he would have been almost happy to meet it. The cruelty of which he had been an unwilling witness, the coarse and ruffianly behaviour of Squeers even in his best moods, the filthy place, the sights and sounds about him, all contributed to this state of feeling; but when he recollected that being there as an assistant, he actually seemed—no matter what unhappy train of circumstances had led him to that pass—to be the aider and abettor of a system which filled him with honest disgust and indignation, he loathed himself, and felt for the moment as though the mere consciousness of his present situation must, through all time to come, prevent his raising his head in society again.

But for the present his resolve was taken, and the resolution he had formed on the preceding night remained undisturbed. He had written to his mother and sister, announcing the safe conclusion of his journey, and saying as little about Dotheboys Hall, and saying that little as cheerfully, as he possibly could. He hoped that by remaining where he was, he might do some good, even there, and at all events others depended too much on his uncle's favour to admit of his awakening his wrath just then.

One reflection disturbed him far more than any selfish considerations arising out of his own position. This was the probable destination of his sister Kate. His uncle had deceived him, and might he not consign her to some miserable place where her youth and beauty would prove a far greater curse than ugliness and decrepitude? To a caged man, bound hand and foot, this was a terrible idea;—but no, he thought, his mother was by; there was the portrait-painter, too—simple enough, but still living in the world, and of it. He was willing to believe that Ralph Nickleby had conceived a personal dislike to himself. Having pretty good reason by this time to reciprocate it, he had no great difficulty in arriving at that conclusion, and tried to persuade himself that the feeling extended no farther than between them.

As he was absorbed in these meditations he all at once encountered the upturned face of Smike, who was on his knees before the stove, picking a few stray cinders from the hearth and planting them on the fire. He had paused to steal a look at Nicholas, and when he saw that he was observed, shrunk back as if expecting a blow.

"You need not fear me," said Nicholas kindly. "Are you cold?"

"N-n-o."

"You are shivering."

"I am not cold," replied Smike quickly. "I am used to it."

There was such an obvious fear of giving offence in his manner, and he was such a timid, broken-spirited creature, that Nicholas could not help exclaiming, "Poor fellow!"

If he had struck the drudge, he would have slunk away without a word. But now he burst into tears.

"Oh dear, oh dear!" he cried, covering his face with his cracked and horny hands. "My heart will break. It will, it will."

"Hush!" said Nicholas, laying his hand upon his shoulder. "Be a man; you are nearly one by years, God help you."

"By years!" cried Smike. "Oh dear, dear, how many of them!
How many of them since I was a little child, younger than any that are here now! Where are they all!"

"Whom do you speak of?" inquired Nicholas, wishing to rouse the poor half-witted creature to reason. "Tell me."

"My friends," he replied, "myself—my—oh! what sufferings mine have been!"

"There is always hope," said Nicholas; he knew not what to say. "No," rejoined the other, "no; none for me. Do you remember the boy that died here?"

"I was not here you know," said Nicholas gently; "but what of him?"

"Why," replied the youth, drawing closer to his questioner's side, "I was with him at night, and when it was all silent he cried no more for friends he wished to come and sit with him, but began to see faces round his bed that came from home; he said they smiled, and talked to him, and died at last lifting his head to kiss them. Do you hear?"

"Yes, yes," rejoined Nicholas.

"What faces will smile on me when I die!" said his companion, shivering. "Who will talk to me in those long nights? They cannot come from home; they would frighten me if they did, for I don't know what it is, and shouldn't know them. Pain and fear, pain and fear for me, alive or dead. No hope, no hope."

The bell rang to bed, and the boy subsiding at the sound into his usual listless state, crept away as if anxious to avoid notice. It was with a heavy heart that Nicholas soon afterwards—no, not retired; there was no retirement there—followed—to his dirty and crowded dormitory.

CHAPTER IX.

OF MISS SQUEERS, MRS. SQUEERS, MASTER SQUEERS, AND MR. SQUEERS; AND VARIOUS MATTERS AND PERSONS CONNECTED NO LESS WITH THE SQUEERS THAN WITH NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

When Mr. Squeers left the school-room for the night, he betook himself, as has been before remarked, to his own fire-side, which was situated—not in the room in which Nicholas had supped on the night of his arrival, but in a smaller apartment in the rear of the premises, where his lady wife, his amiable son, and accomplished daughter, were in the full enjoyment of each other's society: Mrs. Squeers being engaged in the matronly pursuit of stocking-darning, and the young lady and gentleman occupied in the adjustment of some youthful differences by means of a pugilistic contest across the table, which, on the approach of their honoured parent, subsided into a noiseless exchange of kicks beneath it.

And in this place it may be as well to apprise the reader, that Miss Fanny Squeers was in her three-and-twentieth year. If there be any
one grace or loveliness inseparable from that particular period of life, Miss Squeers may be presumed to have been possessed of it, as there is no reason to suppose that she was a solitary exception to a universal rule. She was not tall like her mother, but short like her father; from the former she inherited a voice of harsh quality, and from the latter a remarkable expression of the right eye, something akin to having none at all.

Miss Squeers had been spending a few days with a neighbouring friend, and had only just returned to the parental roof. To this circumstance may be referred her having heard nothing of Nicholas, until Mr. Squeers himself now made him the subject of conversation.

"Well, my dear," said Squeers, drawing up his chair, "what do you think of him by this time?"

"Think of who?" inquired Mrs. Squeers; who (as she often remarked) was no grammarian, thank God.

"Of the young man—the new teacher—who else could I mean?"

"Oh! that Knuckleboy," said Mrs. Squeers impatiently; "I hate him."

"What do you hate him for, my dear?" asked Squeers."

"What's that to you?" retorted Mrs. Squeers. "If I hate him that's enough, ain't it?"

"Quite enough for him, my dear, and a great deal too much I dare say, if he knew it," replied Squeers in a pacific tone. "I only asked from curiosity, my dear."

"Well, then, if you want to know," rejoined Mrs. Squeers, "I'll tell you. Because he's a proud, haughty, consequential, turned-up-nosed peacock."

Mrs. Squeers when excited was accustomed to use strong language, and moreover to make use of a plurality of epithets, some of which were of a figurative kind, as the word peacock, and furthermore the allusion to Nicholas's nose, which was not intended to be taken in its literal sense, but rather to bear a latitude of construction according to the fancy of the hearers. Neither were they meant to bear reference to each other, so much as to the object on whom they were bestowed, as will be seen in the present case: a peacock with a turned-up-nose being a novelty in ornithology, and a thing not commonly seen.

"Hem!" said Squeers, as if in mild depreciation of this outbreak. 

"He is cheap, my dear; the young man is very cheap."

"Not a bit of it," retorted Mrs. Squeers. 

"Five pound a year," said Squeers. 

"What of that; it's dear if you don't want him, isn't it?" replied his wife. 

"But we do want him," urged Squeers. 

"I don't see that you want him any more than the dead," said Mrs. Squeers. "Don't tell me. You can put on the cards and in the advertisements, 'Education by Mr. Wackford Squeers and able assistants,' without having any assistants, can't you? Isn't it done every day by all the masters about? I've no patience with you."

"Haven't you!" said Squeers, sternly. "Now I'll tell you what, Mrs. Squeers. In this matter of having a teacher, I'll take my own way, if you please. A slave driver in the West Indies is allowed a man
under him, to see that his blacks don’t run away, or get up a rebellion; and I’ll have a man under me to do the same with our blacks, till such time as little Wackford is able to take charge of the school.

"Am I to take care of the school when I grow up a man, father?" said Wackford junior, suspending, in the excess of his delight, a vicious kick which he was administering to his sister.

"You are, my son," replied Mr. Squeers, in a sentimental voice.

"Oh my eye, won’t I give it to the boys!" exclaimed the interesting child, grasping his father’s cane. "Oh father, won’t I make ’em squeak again!"

It was a proud moment in Mr. Squeers’s life to witness that burst of enthusiasm in his young child’s mind, and to see in it a foreshadowing of his future eminence. He pressed a penny into his hand, and gave vent to his feelings (as did his exemplary wife also), in a shout of approving laughter. The infantine appeal to their common sympathies at once restored cheerfulness to the conversation, and harmony to the company.

"He’s a nasty stuck-up monkey, that’s what I consider him," said Mrs. Squeers, reverting to Nicholas.

"Supposing he is," said Squeers, "he is as well stuck up in our school-room as anywhere else, isn’t he?—especially as he don’t like it."

"Well," observed Mrs. Squeers, "there’s something in that. I hope it’ll bring his pride down, and it shall be no fault of mine if it don’t."

Now, a proud usher in a Yorkshire school was such a very extraordinary and unaccountable thing to hear of,—any usher at all being a novelty, but a proud one a being of whose existence the wildest imagination could never have dreamt—that Miss Squeers, who seldom troubled herself with scholastic matters, inquired with much curiosity who this Knuckleboy was that gave himself such airs.

"Nickleby," said Squeers, spelling the name according to some eccentric system which prevailed in his own mind, "your mother always calls things and people by their wrong names."

"No matter for that," said Mrs. Squeers, "I see them with right eyes, and that’s quite enough for me. I watched him when you were laying on to little Bolder this afternoon. He looked as black as thunder all the while, and one time started up as if he had more than got it in his mind to make a rush at you; I saw him, though he thought I didn’t."

"Never mind that, father," said Miss Squeers, as the head of the family was about to reply. "Who is the man?"

"Why, your father has got some nonsense in his head that he’s the son of a poor gentleman that died the other day," said Mrs. Squeers.

"The son of a gentleman!"

"Yes; but I don’t believe a word of it. If he’s a gentleman’s son at all he’s a fondling, that’s my opinion."

Mrs. Squeers intended to say "foundling," but, as she frequently remarked when she made any such mistake, it would be all the same a hundred years hence; with which axiom of philosophy indeed she was in the constant habit of consoling the boys when they laboured under more than ordinary ill usage.
"He's nothing of the kind," said Squeers in answer to the above remark, "for his father was married to his mother, years before he was born, and she is alive now. If he was it would be no business of ours, for we make a very good friend by having him here, and if he likes to learn the boys anything besides minding them, I have no objection I am sure."

"I say again I hate him worse than poison," said Mrs. Squeers vehemently.

"If you dislike him, my dear," returned Squeers, "I don't know anybody who can show dislike better than you, and of course there's no occasion, with him, to take the trouble to hide it."

"I don't intend to, I assure you," interposed Mrs. S.

"That's right," said Squeers; "and if he has a touch of pride about him, as I think he has, I don't believe there's a woman in all England that can bring anybody's spirit down as quick as you can, my love.

Mrs. Squeers chuckled vastly on the receipt of these flattering compliments, and said, she hoped she had tamed a high spirit or two in her day. It is but due to her character to say, that in conjunction with her estimable husband, she had broken many and many a one.

Miss Fanny Squeers carefully treasured up this and much more conversation on the same subject until she retired for the night, when she questioned the hungry servant minutely regarding the outward appearance and demeanour of Nicholas; to which queries the girl returned such enthusiastic replies, coupled with so many laudatory remarks touching his beautiful dark eyes, and his sweet smile, and his straight legs—upon which last-named articles she laid particular stress, the general run of legs at Dotheboys Hall being crooked—that Miss Squeers was not long in arriving at the conclusion that the new usher must be a very remarkable person, or as she herself significantly phrased it, "something quite out of the common." And so Miss Squeers made up her mind that she would take a personal observation of Nicholas the very next day.

In pursuance of this design, the young lady watched the opportunity of her mother being engaged and her father absent, and went accidentally into the school-room to get a pen mended, where, seeing nobody but Nicholas presiding over the boys, she blushed very deeply, and exhibited great confusion.

"I beg your pardon," faltered Miss Squeers; "I thought my father was—or might be—dear me, how very awkward!"

"Mr. Squeers is out," said Nicholas, by no means overcome by the apparition, unexcited though it was.

"Do you know will he be long, Sir?" asked Miss Squeers, with bashful hesitation.

"He said about an hour," replied Nicholas—politely of course, but without any indication of being stricken to the heart by Miss Squeers's charms.

"I never knew any thing happen so cross," exclaimed the young lady. "Thank you; I am very sorry I intruded I am sure. If I hadn't thought my father was here, I wouldn't upon any account have—it is very provoking—must look so very strange," murmured Miss
Squeers, blushing once more, and glancing from the pen in her hand, to Nicholas at his desk, and back again.

"If that is all you want," said Nicholas, pointing to the pen, and smiling, in spite of himself, at the affected embarrassment of the schoolmaster's daughter, "perhaps I can supply his place."

Miss Squeers glanced at the door as if dubious of the propriety of advancing any nearer to an utter stranger, then round the school-room as though in some measure reassured by the presence of forty boys, and finally sidled up to Nicholas, and delivered the pen into his hand with a most winning mixture of reserve and condescension.

"Shall it be a hard or a soft nib?" inquired Nicholas, smiling to prevent himself from laughing outright.

"He has a beautiful smile," thought Miss Squeers.

"Which did you say?" asked Nicholas.

"Dear me, I was thinking of something else for the moment, I declare," replied Miss Squeers—"Oh! as soft as possible, if you please." With which words Miss Squeers sighed; it might be to give Nicholas to understand that her heart was soft, and that the pen was wanted to match.

Upon these instructions Nicholas made the pen; when he gave it to Miss Squeers, Miss Squeers dropped it, and when he stooped to pick it up, Miss Squeers stooped also, and they knocked their heads together, whereat five-and-twenty little boys laughed aloud, being positively for the first and only time that half year.

"Very awkward of me," said Nicholas, opening the door for the young lady's retreat.

"Not at all, Sir," replied Miss Squeers; "it was my fault. It was all my foolish—a—a—good morning."

"Good bye," said Nicholas. "The next I make for you, I hope will be made less clumsily. Take care, you are biting the nib off now."

"Really," said Miss Squeers; "so embarrassing that I scarcely know what I—very sorry to give you so much trouble."

"Not the least trouble in the world," replied Nicholas, closing the school-room door.

"I never saw such legs in the whole course of my life!" said Miss Squeers, as she walked away.

In fact, Miss Squeers was in love with Nicholas Nickleby.

To account for the rapidity with which this young lady had conceived a passion for Nicholas, it may be necessary to state that the friend from whom she had so recently returned was a miller's daughter of only eighteen, who had contracted herself unto the son of a small com-factor resident in the nearest market town. Miss Squeers and the miller's daughter being fast friends, had covenanted together some two years before, according to a custom prevalent among young ladies, that whoever was first engaged to be married should straightway confide the mighty secret to the bosom of the other, before communicating it to any living soul, and bespeak her as bridesmaid without loss of time; in fulfilment of which pledge the miller's daughter, when her engagement was formed, came out express at eleven o'clock at night as the corn-
factor's son made an offer of his hand and heart at twenty-five minutes past ten by the Dutch clock in the kitchen, and rushed into Miss Squeers's bed-room with the gratifying intelligence. Now, Miss Squeers being five years older, and out of her teens (which is also a great matter), had since been more than commonly anxious to return the compliment, and possess her friend with a similar secret; but either in consequence of finding it hard to please herself, or harder still to please any body else, had never had an opportunity so to do, inasmuch as she had no such secret to disclose. The little interview with Nicholas had no sooner passed as above described, however, than Miss Squeers, putting on her bonnet, made her way with great precipitation to her friend's house, and upon a solemn renewal of divers old vows of secrecy, revealed how that she was—not exactly engaged, but going to be—to a gentleman's son—(none of your corn-factors, but a gentleman's son of high descent)—who had come down as teacher to Dotheboys Hall under most mysterious and remarkable circumstances—indeed, as Miss Squeers more than once hinted she had good reason to believe—induced by the fame of her many charms to seek her out, and woo and win her.

"Isn't it an extraordinary thing?" said Miss Squeers, emphasising the adjective strongly.

"Most extraordinary," replied the friend. "But what has he said to you?"

"Don't ask me what he said, my dear," rejoined Miss Squeers. "If you had only seen his looks and smiles! I never was so overcome in all my life."

"Did he look in this way?" inquired the miller's daughter, counterfeiting as nearly as she could a favourite leer of the corn-factor.

"Very like that,—only more genteel," replied Miss Squeers.

"Ah!" said the friend, "then he means something depend on it."

Miss Squeers, having slight misgivings on the subject, was by no means ill pleased to be confirmed by a competent authority; and discovering, on further conversation and comparison of notes, a great many points of resemblance between the behaviour of Nicholas and that of the corn-factor, grew so exceedingly confidential, that she intrusted her friend with a vast number of things Nicholas had not said, which were all so very complimentary as to be quite conclusive. Then she dilated on the fearful hardship of having a father and mother strenuously opposed to her intended husband, on which unhappy circumstance she dwelt at great length; for the friend's father and mother were quite agreeable to her being married, and the whole courtship was in consequence as flat and common-place an affair as it was possible to imagine.

"How I should like to see him!" exclaimed the friend.

"So you shall, 'Tilda," replied Miss Squeers. "I should consider myself one of the most ungrateful creatures alive, if I denied you. I think mother's going away for two days to fetch some boys, and when she does, I'll ask you and John up to tea, and have him to meet you."

This was a charming idea, and having fully discussed it, the friends parted.

It so fell out that Mrs. Squeers's journey to some distance, to fetch
three new boys, and dun the relations of two old ones for the balance of a small account, was fixed that very afternoon for the next day but one; and on the next day but one Mrs. Squeers got up outside the coach as it stopped to change at Greta Bridge, taking with her a small bundle containing something in a bottle and some sandwiches, and carrying besides a large white top coat to wear in the night-time; with which baggage she went her way.

Whenever such opportunities as these occurred, it was Squeers's custom to drive over to the market town every evening on pretence of urgent business, and stop till ten or eleven o'clock at a tavern he much affected. As the party was not in his way therefore, but rather afforded a means of compromise with Miss Squeers, he readily yielded his full assent thereunto, and willingly communicated to Nicholas that he was expected to take his tea in the parlour that evening at five o'clock.

To be sure Miss Squeers was in a desperate flutter as the time approached, and to be sure she was dressed out to the best advantage: with her hair—it had more than a tinge of red, and she wore it in a crop—curled in five distinct rows up to the very top of her head, and arranged dexterously over the doubtful eye; to say nothing of the blue sash which floated down her back, or the worked apron, or the long gloves, or the green gauze scarf worn over one shoulder and under the other, or any of the numerous devices which were to do so many arrows to the heart of Nicholas. She had scarcely completed these arrangements to her entire satisfaction when the friend arrived with a white-brown parcel—flat and three-cornered—containing sundry small adornments which were to be put on up stairs, and which the friend put on, talking incessantly. When Miss Squeers had "done" the friend's hair, the friend "did" Miss Squeers's hair, throwing in some striking improvements in the way of ringlets down the neck; and then, when they were both touched up to their entire satisfaction, they went down stairs in full state with the long gloves on, all ready for company.

"Where's John, 'Tilda?" said Miss Squeers.

"Only gone home to clean himself," replied the friend. "He will be here by the time the tea's drawn."

"I do so palpitate," observed Miss Squeers.

"Ah! I know what it is," replied the friend.

"I have not been used to it, you know, 'Tilda," said Miss Squeers, applying her hand to the left side of her sash.

"You'll soon get the better of it, dear," rejoined the friend. While they were talking thus the hungry servant brought in the tea things, and soon afterwards somebody tapped at the room door.

"There he is!" cried Miss Squeers. "Oh 'Tilda!"

"Hush!" said 'Tilda. "Hem! Say, come in."

"Come in," cried Miss Squeers faintly. And in walked Nicholas.

"Good evening," said that young gentleman, all unconscious of his conquest. "I understood from Mr. Squeers that"

"Oh yes; it's all right," interposed Miss Squeers. "Father don't tea with us, but you won't mind that I dare say." (This was said archly.)
Nicholas opened his eyes at this, but he turned the matter off very coolly—not caring particularly about any thing just then—and went through the ceremony of introduction to the Miller's daughter with so much grace, that that young lady was lost in admiration.

"We are only waiting for one more gentleman," said Miss Squeers, taking off the tea-pot lid, and looking in, to see how the tea was getting on.

It was matter of equal moment to Nicholas whether they were waiting for one gentleman or twenty, so he received the intelligence with perfect unconcern; and being out of spirits, and not seeing any especial reason why he should make himself agreeable, looked out of the window and sighed involuntarily.

As luck would have it, Miss Squeers's friend was of a playful turn, and hearing Nicholas sigh, she took it into her head to rally the lovers on their lowness of spirits.

"But if it's caused by my being here," said the young lady, "don't mind me a bit, for I'm quite as bad. You may go on just as you would if you were alone."

"Tilda," said Miss Squeers, colouring up to the top row of curls, "I am ashamed of you;" and here the two friends burst into a variety of giggles, and glanced from time to time over the tops of their pocket-handkerchiefs at Nicholas, who, from a state of unmixed astonishment, gradually fell into one of irrepressible laughter—occasioned partly by the bare notion of his being in love with Miss Squeers, and partly by the preposterous appearance and behaviour of the two girls; the two causes of merriment taken together, struck him as being so keenly ridiculous, that despite his miserable condition, he laughed till he was thoroughly exhausted.

"Well," thought Nicholas, "as I am here, and seem expected for some reason or other to be amiable, it's of no use looking like a goose. I may as well accommodate myself to the company.

We blush to tell it, but his youthful spirits and vivacity getting for a time the better of his sad thoughts, he no sooner formed this resolution than he saluted Miss Squeers and the friend with great gallantry, and drawing a chair to the tea-table, began to make himself more at home than in all probability an usher has ever done in his employer's house since ushers were first invented.

The ladies were in the full delight of this altered behaviour on the part of Mr. Nickleby, when the expected swain arrived with his hair very damp from recent washing; and a clean shirt, whereof the collar might have belonged to some giant ancestor, forming, together with a white waistcoat of similar dimensions, the chief ornament of his person.

"Well, John," said Miss Matilda Price (which, by-the-bye, was the name of the Miller's daughter).

"Weel," said John, with a grin that even the collar could not conceal.

"I beg your pardon," interposed Miss Squeers, hastening to do the honours, "Mr. Nickleby—Mr. John Browdie."

"Servant, Sir," said John, who was something over six feet high, with a face and body rather above the due proportion than below it.
"Yours to command, Sir," replied Nicholas, making fearful ravages on the bread and butter.

Mr. Browdie was not a gentleman of great conversational powers, so he grinned twice more, and having now bestowed his customary mark of recognition on every person in company, grinned at nothing particular and helped himself to food.

"Old wooman awa, beant she?" said Mr. Browdie, with his mouth full.

Miss Squeers nodded assent.

Mr. Browdie gave a grin of special width, as if he thought that really was something to laugh at, and went to work at the bread and butter with increased vigour. It was quite a sight to behold how he and Nicholas emptied the plate between them.

"Ye weant get bread and butther ev'ry night I expect, mun," said Mr. Browdie, after he had sat staring at Nicholas a long time over the empty plate.

Nicholas bit his lip and coloured, but affected not to hear the remark.

"Ecod," said Mr. Browdie, laughing boisterously, "they deant put too much intiv 'em. Y'll be nowt but skeen and beans if you stop here long eneaf. Ho! ho! ho!"

"You are facetious, Sir," said Nicholas, scornfully.

"Na; I deant know," replied Mr. Browdie, "but toother teacher, 'cod he wur a learn 'un, he wur." The recollection of the last teacher's leanness seemed to afford Mr. Browdie the most exquisite delight, for he laughed until he found it necessary to apply his coat-cuffs to his eyes.

"I don't know whether your perceptions are quite keen enough, Mr. Browdie, to enable you to understand that your remarks are very offensive," said Nicholas in a towering passion, "but if they are, have the goodness to——"

"If you say another word, John," shrieked Miss Price, stopping her admirer's mouth as he was about to interrupt, "only half a word, I'll never forgive you, or speak to you again."

"Weel, my lass, I deant care aboot 'un," said the corn-factor, bestowing a hearty kiss on Miss Matilda; "let 'un gang on, let 'un gang on."

It now became Miss Squeers's turn to intercede with Nicholas, which she did with many symptoms of alarm and horror; the effect of the double intercession was that he and John Browdie shook hands across the table with much gravity, and such was the imposing nature of the ceremonial, that Miss Squeers was overcome and shed tears.

"What's the matter, Fanny?" said Miss Price.

"Nothing, 'Tilda," replied Miss Squeers, sobbing.

"There never was any danger," said Miss Price, "was there, Mr. Nickleby?"

"None at all," replied Nicholas. "Absurd."

"That's right," whispered Miss Price, "say something kind to her, and she'll soon come round. Here, shall John and I go into the little kitchen, and come back presently?"

"Not on any account," rejoined Nicholas, quite alarmed at the proposition. "What on earth should you do that for?"

"Well," said Miss Price, beckoning him aside, and speaking with some degree of contempt—"you are a one to keep company."

"Let's have some more food, Mr. Browdie," said Nicholas, gratefully.

"What a sight to behold how he and Nicholas emptied the plate between them."

"Why, you are facetious, Sir," said Nicholas, scornfully.

Mr. Browdie gave a grin of special width, as if he thought that really was something to laugh at, and went to work at the bread and butter with increased vigour. It was quite a sight to behold how he and Nicholas emptied the plate between them.

"Ye weant get bread and butther ev'ry night I expect, mun," said Mr. Browdie, after he had sat staring at Nicholas a long time over the empty plate.

Nicholas bit his lip and coloured, but affected not to hear the remark.

"Ecod," said Mr. Browdie, laughing boisterously, "they deant put too much intiv 'em. Y'll be nowt but skeen and beans if you stop here long eneaf. Ho! ho! ho!"

"You are facetious, Sir," said Nicholas, scornfully.

"Na; I deant know," replied Mr. Browdie, "but toother teacher, 'cod he wur a learn 'un, he wur." The recollection of the last teacher's leanness seemed to afford Mr. Browdie the most exquisite delight, for he laughed until he found it necessary to apply his coat-cuffs to his eyes.

"I don't know whether your perceptions are quite keen enough, Mr. Browdie, to enable you to understand that your remarks are very offensive," said Nicholas in a towering passion, "but if they are, have the goodness to——"

"If you say another word, John," shrieked Miss Price, stopping her admirer's mouth as he was about to interrupt, "only half a word, I'll never forgive you, or speak to you again."

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"Well," said Miss Price, beckoning him aside, and speaking with some degree of contempt—"you are a one to keep company."
“What do you ‘mean?’” said Nicholas; “I am not one to keep company at all—here at all events. I can’t make this out.”

“No, nor I neither,” rejoined Miss Price; “but men are always fickle, and always were, and always will be; that I can make out, very easily.”

“Fickle!” cried Nicholas; “what do you suppose? You don’t mean to say that you think——”

“Oh no, I think nothing at all,” retorted Miss Price pettishly. “Look at her, dressed so beautiful and looking so well—really almost handsome. I am ashamed at you.”

“My dear girl, what have I got to do with her dressing beautifully or looking well?” inquired Nicholas.

“Come, don’t call me a dear girl,” said Miss Price—smiling a little though, for she was pretty, and a coquette too in her small way, and Nicholas was good-looking, and she supposed him the property of somebody else, which were all reasons why she should be gratified to think she had made an impression on him; “or Fanny will be saying it’s my fault. Come; we’re going to have a game at cards.” Pronouncing these last words aloud, she tripped away and rejoined the big Yorkshireman.

This was wholly unintelligible to Nicholas, who had no other distinct impression on his mind at the moment, than that Miss Squeers was an ordinary-looking girl, and her friend Miss Price a pretty one; but he had not time to enlighten himself by reflection, for the hearth being by this time swept up, and the candle snuffed, they sat down to play speculation.

“There are only four of us, Tilda,” said Miss Squeers, looking slyly at Nicholas; “so we had better go partners, two against two.”

“What do you say, Mr. Nickleby?” inquired Miss Price.

“With all the pleasure in life,” replied Nicholas. And so saying, quite unconscious of his heinous offence, he amalgamated into one common heap those portions of a Dotheboys Hall card of terms, which represented his own counters, and those allotted to Miss Price, respectively.

“Mr. Browdie,” said Miss Squeers hysterically, “shall we make a bank against them?”

The Yorkshireman assented—apparently quite overwhelmed by the new usher’s impudence—and Miss Squeers darted a spiteful look at her friend, and giggled convulsively.

The deal fell to Nicholas, and the hand prospered.

“We intend to win every thing,” said he.

“Tilda has won something she didn’t expect I think, haven’t you, dear?” said Miss Squeers, maliciously.

“Only a dozen and eight, love,” replied Miss Price, affecting to take the question in a literal sense.

“How dull you are to-night!” sneered Miss Squeers.

“No, indeed,” replied Miss Price, “I am in excellent spirits. I was thinking you seemed out of sorts.”

“Me!” cried Miss Squeers, biting her lips, and trembling with very jealousy; “Oh no!”

“That’s well,” remarked Miss Price. “Your hair’s coming out of curl, dear.”
“Never mind me,” tittered Miss Squeers; “you had better attend to your partner.”

“Thank you for reminding her,” said Nicholas. “So she had.”

The Yorkshireman flattened his nose once or twice with his clenched fist, as if to keep his hand in, till he had an opportunity of exercising it upon the features of some other gentleman; and Miss Squeers tossed her head with such indignation, that the gust of wind raised by the multitudinous curls in motion, nearly blew the candle out.

“I never had such luck, really,” exclaimed coquettish Miss Price, after another hand or two. “It’s all along of you, Mr. Nickleby, I think. I should like to have you for a partner always.”

“I wish you had.”

“You’ll have a bad wife, though, if you always win at cards,” said Miss Price.

“Not if your wish is gratified,” replied Nicholas. “I am sure I shall have a good one in that case.”

To see how Miss Squeers tossed her head, and the corn-factor flattened his nose, while this conversation was carrying on! It would have been worth a small annuity to have beheld that; let alone Miss Price’s evident joy at making them jealous, and Nicholas Nickleby’s happy unconsciousness of making anybody uncomfortable.

“We have all the talking to ourselves, it seems,” said Nicholas, looking good-humouredly round the table as he took up the cards for a fresh deal.

“You do it so well,” tittered Miss Squeers, “that it would be a pity to interrupt, wouldn’t it, Mr. Browdie? He! he! he!”

“Nay,” said Nicholas, “we do it in default of having anybody else to talk to.”

“We’ll talk to you, you know, if you’ll say anything,” said Miss Price.

“Thank you, ’Tilda, dear,” retorted Miss Squeers, majestically.

“Or you can talk to each other, if you don’t choose to talk to us,” said Miss Price, rallying her dear friend. “John, why don’t you say something?”

“Say summat?” repeated the Yorkshireman.

“Ay, and not sit there so silent and glum.”

“Weel, then!” said the Yorkshireman, striking the table heavily with his fist, “what I say’s this—Dang my boans and boddy, if I stan’ this ony longer. Do ye gang whoam wi’ me; and do yo lioght an’ toight young whipster, look sharp out for a brokken head next time he cums under my hond.”

“Mercy on us, what’s all this?” cried Miss Price, in affected astonishment.

“Cum whoam, tell’e, cum whoam,” replied the Yorkshireman, sternly. And as he delivered the reply Miss Squeers burst into a shower of tears; arising in part from desperate vexation, and in part from an impotent desire to lacerate somebody’s countenance with her fair finger-nails.

This state of things had been brought about by divers means and workings. Miss Squeers had brought it about by aspiring to the high
state and condition of being matrimonially engaged without good

grounds for so doing; Miss Price had brought it about by indulging

in three motives of action; first, a desire to punish her friend for

laying claim to a rivalship in dignity, having no good title; secondly,

the gratification of her own vanity in receiving the compliments of

a smart young man; and thirdly, a wish to convince the "corn-factor"
of the great danger he ran, in deferring the celebration of their expected

nuptials: while Nicholas had brought it about by half an hour's gaiety

and thoughtlessness, and a very sincere desire to avoid the imputation

of inclining at all to Miss Squeers. So, that the means employed, and

the end produced, were alike the most natural in the world: for young

ladies will look forward to being married, and will jostle each other in

the race to the altar, and will avail themselves of all opportunities of

displaying their own attractions to the best advantage, down to the

very end of time as they have done from its beginning.

"Why, and here's Fanny in tears now!" exclaimed Miss Price, as

if in fresh amazement. "What can be the matter?"

"Oh! you don't know, Miss, of course you don't know. Pray
don't trouble yourself to inquire," said Miss Squeers, producing that
change of countenance which children call making a face.

"Well, I'm sure," exclaimed Miss Price.

"And who cares whether you are sure or not, ma'am?" retorted
Miss Squeers, making another face.

"You are monstrous polite, ma'am," said Miss Price.

"I shall not come to you to take lessons in the art, ma'am,"
retorted Miss Squeers.

"You needn't take the trouble to make yourself plainer than you
are, ma'am, however," rejoined Miss Price, "because that's quite
unnecessary."

Miss Squeers in reply turned very red, and thanked God that she
hadn't got the bold faces of some people, and Miss Price in rejoinder
congratulated herself upon not being possessed of the envious feeling
of other people; whereupon Miss Squeers made some general remark
touching the danger of associating with low persons, in which Miss
Price entirely coincided, observing that it was very true indeed, and
she had thought so a long time.

"Tilda," exclaimed Miss Squeers with dignity, "I hate you."

"Ah! There's no love lost between us I assure you," said Miss
Price, tying her bonnet strings with a jerk. "You'll cry your eyes
out when I'm gone, you know you will."

"I scorn your words. Minx," said Miss Squeers.

"You pay me a great compliment when you say so," answered the
Miller's daughter, curtseying very low. "Wish you a very good night,
ma'am, and pleasant dreams attend your sleep."

With this parting benediction Miss Price swept from the room, followed
by the huge Yorkshireman, who exchanged with Nicholas at parting,
that peculiarly expressive scowl with which the cut-and-thrust counts
in melo-dramatic performances inform each other they will meet again.
They were no sooner gone than Miss Squeers fulfilled the prediction
of her quondam friend by giving vent to a most copious burst of tears.
and uttering various dismal lamentations and incoherent words. Nicholas stood looking on for a few seconds, rather doubtful what to do, but feeling uncertain whether the fit would end in his being embraced or scratched, and considering that either infliction would be equally agreeable, he walked off very quietly while Miss Squeers was moaning in her pocket-handkerchief.

"This is one consequence," thought Nicholas, when he had groped his way to the dark sleeping-room, "of my cursed readiness to adapt myself to any society into which chance carries me. If I had sat mute and motionless, as I might have done, this would not have happened."

He listened for a few minutes, but all was quiet.

"I was glad," he murmured, "to grasp at any relief from the sight of this dreadful place, or the presence of its vile master. I have set these people by the ears and made two new enemies, where, Heaven knows, I needed none. Well, it is a just punishment for having forgotten, even for an hour, what is around me now."

So saying, he felt his way among the throng of weary-hearted sleepers, and crept into his poor bed.

CHAPTER X.

HOW MR. RALPH NICKLEBY PROVIDED FOR HIS NIECE AND SISTER-IN-LAW.

On the second morning after the departure of Nicholas for Yorkshire, Kate Nickleby sat in a very faded chair raised upon a very dusty throne in Miss La Creevy's room, giving that lady a sitting for the portrait upon which she was engaged; and towards the full perfection of which, Miss La Creevy had had the street-door case brought up stairs, in order that she might be the better able to infuse into the counterfeit countenance of Miss Nickleby a bright salmon flesh-tint which she had originally hit upon while executing the miniature of a young officer therein contained, and which bright salmon flesh-tint was considered by Miss La Creevy's chief friends and patrons, to be quite a novelty in art: as indeed it was.

"I think I have caught it now," said Miss La Creevy. "The very shade. This will be the sweetest portrait I have ever done, certainly."

"It will be your genius that makes it so, then, I am sure," replied Kate, smiling.

"No, no, I won't allow that, my dear," rejoined Miss La Creevy. "It's a very nice subject—a very nice subject, indeed—though of course, something depends upon the mode of treatment."

"And not a little," observed Kate.

"Why, my dear, you are right there," said Miss La Creevy, "in the main you are right there; though I don't allow that it is of such very great importance in the present case. Ah! The difficulties of art my dear, are great."
"They must be, I have no doubt," said Kate, humouring her good-natured little friend.

"They are beyond anything you can form the faintest conception of," replied Miss La Creevy. "What with bringing out eyes with all one's power, and keeping down noses with all one's force, and adding to heads, and taking away teeth altogether, you have no idea of the trouble one little miniature is."

"The remuneration can scarcely repay you," said Kate.

"Why, it does not, and that's the truth," answered Miss La Creevy; "and then people are so dissatisfied and unreasonable, that nine times out of ten there's no pleasure in painting them. Sometimes they say, 'Oh, how very serious you have made me look, Miss La Creevy!' and at others, 'La, Miss La Creevy, how very smirking!' when the very essence of a good portrait is, that it must be either serious or smirking, or it's no portrait at all."

"Indeed!" said Kate, laughing.

"Certainly, my dear; because the sitters are always either the one or the other," replied Miss La Creevy. "Look at the Royal Academy. All those beautiful shiny portraits of gentlemen in black velvet waistcoats, with their fists doubled up on round tables or marble slabs, are serious, you know; and all the ladies who are playing with little parasols, or little dogs, or little children—it's the same rule in art, only varying the objects—are smirking. In fact," said Miss La Creevy, sinking her voice to a confidential whisper, "there are only two styles of portrait painting, the serious and the smirking; and we always use the serious for professional people (except actors sometimes), and the smirk for private ladies and gentlemen who don't care so much about looking clever."

Kate seemed highly amused by this information, and Miss La Creevy went on painting and talking with immoveable complacency.

"What a number of officers you seem to paint!" said Kate, availing herself of a pause in the discourse, and glancing round the room.

"Number of what, child?" inquired Miss La Creevy, looking up from her work. "Character portraits, oh yes—they're not real military men, you know."

"No!"

"Bless your heart, of course not; only clerks and that, who hire a uniform coat to be painted in and send it here in a carpet bag. Some artists," said Miss La Creevy, "keep a red coat, and charge seven-and-sixpence extra for hire and carmine; but I don't do that myself, for I don't consider it legitimate."

Drawing herself up as though she plumed herself greatly upon not resorting to these lures to catch sitters, Miss La Creevy applied herself more intently to her task, only raising her head occasionally to look with unspeakable satisfaction at some touch she had just put in, and now and then giving Miss Nickleby to understand what particular feature she was at work upon at the moment; "not," she expressly observed, "that you should make it up for painting, my dear, but because it's our custom sometimes, to tell sitters what part we are upon, in order that if there's any particular expression they want introduced, they may throw it in at the time, you know."
"And when," said Miss La Creevy, after a long silence, to wit, an interval of full a minute and a half, "when do you expect to see your uncle again?"

"I scarcely know; I had expected to have seen him before now," replied Kate. "Soon I hope, for this state of uncertainty is worse than anything."

"I suppose he has money, hasn't he?" inquired Miss La Creevy.

"He is very rich I have heard," rejoined Kate. "I don't know that he is, but I believe so."

"Ah, you may depend upon it he is, or he wouldn't be so surly," remarked Miss La Creevy, who was an odd little mixture of shrewdness and simplicity. "When a man's a bear he is generally pretty independent."

"His manner is rough," said Kate.

"Rough!" cried Miss La Creevy, "a porcupine's a feather-bed to him. I never met with such a cross-grained old savage."

"It is only his manner, I believe," observed Kate, timidly, "he was disappointed in early life I think I have heard, or has had his temper soured by some calamity. I should be sorry to think ill of him until I knew he deserved it."

"Well; that's very right and proper," observed the miniature painter, "and Heaven forbid that I should be the cause of your doing so. But now mightn't he, without feeling it himself, make you and your mamma some nice little allowance that would keep you both comfortable until you were well married, and be a little fortune to her afterwards? What would a hundred a year, for instance, be to him?"

"I don't know what it would be to him," said Kate, with great energy, "but it would be that to me I would rather die than take."

"Heyday!" cried Miss La Creevy.

"A dependence upon him," said Kate, "would embitter my whole life. I should feel begging a far less degradation."

"Well!" exclaimed Miss La Creevy. "This of a relation whom you will not hear an indifferent person speak ill of, my dear, sounds oddly enough, I confess."

"I dare say it does," replied Kate, speaking more gently, "indeed I am sure it must. I—I—only mean that with the feelings and recollection of better times upon me, I could not bear to live on anybody's bounty—not his particularly, but anybody's."

Miss La Creevy looked slyly at her companion, as if she doubted whether Ralph himself were not the subject of dislike, but seeing that her young friend was distressed, made no remark.

"I only ask of him," continued Kate, whose tears fell while she spoke, "that he will move so little out of his way in my behalf, as to enable me by his recommendation—only by his recommendation—to earn, literally, my bread and remain with my mother. Whether we shall ever taste happiness again, depends upon the fortunes of my dear brother; but if he will do this, and Nicholas only tells us that he is well and cheerful, I shall be contented."

As she ceased to speak there was a rustling behind the screen which
stood between her and the door, and some person knocked at the 
waistcoat.

"Come in whoever it is," cried Miss La Creevy.
The person complied, and coming forward at once, gave to view the 
form and features of no less an individual than Mr. Ralph Nickleby 
himself.

"Your servant, ladies," said Ralph, looking sharply at them by 
turns. "You were talking so loud that I was unable to make you hear."

When the man of business had a more than commonly vicious snarl 
lurking at his heart, he had a trick of almost concealing his eyes under 
their thick and protruding brows for an instant, and then displaying 
them in their full keenness. As he did so now, and tried to keep down 
the smile which parted his thin compressed lips, and puckered up the 
bad lines about his mouth, they both felt certain that some part, if not 
the whole, of their recent conversation had been overheard.

"I called in on my way up stairs, more than half expecting to find 
you here," said Ralph, addressing his niece, and looking contemptuously 
at the portrait. "Is that my niece's portrait, ma'am?"

"Yes it is, Mr. Nickleby," said Miss La Creevy, with a very 
spirightly air, "and between you and me and the post, Sir, it will be a 
very nice portrait too, though I say it who am the painter."

"Don't trouble yourself to show it to me, ma'am," cried Ralph, 
moving away, "I have no eye for likenesses. Is it nearly finished?"

"Why, yes," replied Miss La Creevy, considering with the pencil-
end of her brush in her mouth. "Two sittings more will——

"Have them at once, ma'am," said Ralph. "She'll have no time 
to idle over fooleries after to-morrow. Work, ma'am, work; we must 
all work. Have you let your lodgings, ma'am?"

"I have not put a bill up yet, Sir."

"Put it up at once, ma'am; they won't want the rooms after this 
week, or if they do, can't pay for them. Now, my dear, if you're ready, 
we'll lose no more time."

With an assumption of kindness which sat worse upon him, even 
than his usual manner, Mr. Ralph Nickleby motioned to the young 
lady to precede him, and bowing gravely to Miss La Creevy, closed the 
door and followed up stairs, where Mrs. Nickleby received him with 
many expressions of regard. Stopping them somewhat abruptly, Ralph 
waved his hand with an impatient gesture, and proceeded to the object 
of his visit.

"I have found a situation for your daughter, ma'am," said Ralph.

"Well," replied Mrs. Nickleby. "Now, I will say that that is 
only just what I have expected of you. Depend upon it; I said to 
Kate only yesterday morning at breakfast, 'that after your uncle has 
provided in that most ready manner for Nicholas, he will not leave us 
until he has done at least the same for you.' These were my very 
words as near as I remember. Kate, my dear, why don't you thank 
your——"

"Let me proceed, ma'am, pray," said Ralph, interrupting his sister-
in-law in the full torrent of her discourse.

"Kate, my love, let your uncle proceed," said Mrs. Nickleby.
"I am most anxious that he should, ma'am," rejoined Kate.

"Well, my dear, if you are anxious that he should, you had better allow your uncle to say what he has to say, without interruption," observed Mrs. Nickleby, with many small nods and frowns. "Your uncle's time is very valuable, my dear; and however desirous you may be—and naturally desirous, as I am sure any affectionate relations who have seen so little of your uncle as we have, must naturally be—to protract the pleasure of having him among us, still we are bound not to be selfish, but to take into consideration the important nature of his occupations in the city."

"I am very much obliged to you, ma'am," said Ralph with a scarcely perceptible sneer. "An absence of business habits in this family leads apparently to a great waste of words before business—when it does come under consideration—is arrived at, at all."

"I fear it is so indeed," replied Mrs. Nickleby with a sigh. "Your poor brother——"

"My poor brother, ma'am," interposed Ralph tartly, "had no idea what business was—was unacquainted, I verily believe, with the very meaning of the word."

"I fear he was," said Mrs. Nickleby, with her handkerchief to her eyes. "If it hadn't been for me, I don't know what would have become of him."

What strange creatures we are! The slight bait so skilfully thrown out by Ralph on their first interview was dangling on the hook yet. At every small deprivation or discomfort which presented itself in the course of the four-and-twenty hours to remind her of her straitened and altered circumstances, peevish visions of her dower of one thousand pounds had arisen before Mrs. Nickleby's mind, until at last she had come to persuade herself that of all her late husband's creditors she was the worst used and the most to be pitied. And yet she had loved him dearly for many years, and had no greater share of selfishness than is the usual lot of mortals. Such is the irritability of sudden poverty. A decent annuity would have restored her thoughts to their old train at once.

"Repining is of no use, ma'am," said Ralph. "Of all fruitless errands, sending a tear to look after a day that is gone is the most fruitless."

"So it is," sobbed Mrs. Nickleby. "So it is."

"As you feel so keenly in your own purse and person the consequences of inattention to business, ma'am," said Ralph, "I am sure you will impress upon your children the necessity of attaching themselves to it early in life."

"Of course I must see that," rejoined Mrs. Nickleby. "Sad experience, you know, brother-in-law——. Kate, my dear, put that down in the next letter to Nicholas, or remind me to do it if I write."

Ralph paused for a few moments, and seeing that he had now made pretty sure of the mother in case the daughter objected to his proposition, went on to say——

"The situation that I have made interest to procure, ma'am, is with——with a milliner and dress-maker, in short."
"A milliner!" cried Mrs. Nickleby.

"A milliner and dress-maker, ma'am," replied Ralph. "Dress-makers in London, as I need not remind you, ma'am, who are so well acquainted with all matters in the ordinary routine of life, make large fortunes, keep equipages, and become persons of great wealth and fortune."

Now, the first ideas called up in Mrs. Nickleby's mind by the words milliner and dress-maker were connected with certain wicker baskets lined with black oilskin, which she remembered to have seen carried to and fro in the streets, but as Ralph proceeded these disappeared, and were replaced by visions of large houses at the West End, neat private carriages, and a banker's book, all of which images succeeded each other with such rapidity, that he had no sooner finished speaking than she nodded her head and said, "Very true," with great appearance of satisfaction.

"What your uncle says is very true, Kate, my dear," said Mrs. Nickleby. "I recollect when your poor papa and I came to town after we were married, that a young lady brought me home a chip cottage bonnet, with white and green trimming, and green Persian lining, in her own carriage, which drove up to the door full gallop;—at least, I am not quite certain whether it was her own carriage or a hackney chariot, but I remember very well that the horse dropped down dead as he was turning round, and that your poor papa said he hadn't had any corn for a fortnight."

This anecdote, so strikingly illustrative of the opulence of milliners, was not received with any great demonstration of feeling, inasmuch as Kate hung down her head while it was relating, and Ralph manifested very intelligible symptoms of extreme impatience.

"The lady's name," said Ralph, hastily striking in, "is Mantalini—Madame Mantalini. I know her. She lives near Cavendish Square. If your daughter is disposed to try after the situation, I'll take her there directly."

"Have you nothing to say to your uncle, my love?" inquired Mrs. Nickleby.

"A great deal," replied Kate; "but not now. I would rather speak to him when we are alone;—it will save his time if I thank him and say what I wish to say to him as we walk along."

With these words Kate hurried away, to hide the traces of emotion that were stealing down her face, and to prepare herself for the walk, while Mrs. Nickleby amused her brother-in-law by giving him, with many tears, a detailed account of the dimensions of a rosewood cabinet piano they had possessed in their days of affluence, together with a minute description of eight drawing-room chairs with turned legs and green chintz squabs to match the curtains, which had cost two pounds fifteen shillings a-piece, and went at the sale for a mere nothing.

These reminiscences were at length cut short by Kate's return in her walking dress, when Ralph, who had been fretting and fuming during the whole time of her absence, lost no time, and used very little ceremony, in descending into the street.

"Now," he said, taking her arm, "walk as fast as you can, and you'll get into the step that you'll have to walk to business with every
morning." So saying, he led Kate off at a good round pace towards Cavendish Square.

"I am very much obliged to you, uncle," said the young lady, after they had hurried on in silence for some time; "very."

"I'm glad to hear it," said Ralph. "I hope you'll do your duty."

"I will try to please, uncle," replied Kate; "indeed I—"

"Don't begin to cry," growled Ralph; "I hate crying."

"It's very foolish, I know, uncle," began poor Kate; "It is," replied Ralph, stopping her short, "and very affected besides. Let me see no more of it."

Perhaps this was not the best way to dry the tears of a young and sensitive female about to make her first entry on an entirely new scene of life, among cold and uninterested strangers; but it had its effect notwithstanding. Kate coloured deeply, breathed quickly for a few moments, and then walked on with a firmer and more determined step.

It was a curious contrast to see how the timid country girl shrunk through the crowd that hurried up and down the streets, giving way to the press of people, and clinging closely to Ralph as though she feared to lose him in the throng; and how the stern and hard-featured man of business went doggedly on, elbowing the passengers aside, and now and then exchanging a gruff salutation with some passing acquaintance, who turned to look back upon his pretty charge with looks expressive of surprise, and seemed to wonder at the ill-assorted companionship. But it would have been a stranger contrast still, to have read the hearts that were beating side by side; to have had laid bare the gentle innocence of the one, and the rugged villany of the other; to have hung upon the guileless thoughts of the affectionate girl, and been amazed that among all the wily plots and calculations of the old man, there should not be one word or figure denoting thought of death or of the grave. But so it was; and stranger still—though this is a thing of every day—the warm young heart palpitated with a thousand anxieties and apprehensions, while that of the old worldly man lay rusting in its cell, beating only as a piece of cunning mechanism, and yielding no one throb of hope, or fear, or love, or care, for any living thing.

"Uncle," said Kate, when she judged they must be near their destination, "I must ask one question of you. I am to live at home?"

"At home!" replied Ralph; "where's that?"

"I mean with my mother—the widow," said Kate, emphatically.

"You will live, to all intents and purposes, here," rejoined Ralph; "for here you will take your meals, and here you will be from morning till night; occasionally perhaps till morning again."

"But at night, I mean," said Kate; "I cannot leave her, uncle. I must have some place that I can call a home; it will be wherever she is, you know, and may be a very humble one."

"May be!" said Ralph, walking faster in the impatience provoked by the remark, "must be, you mean. May be a humble one! Is the girl mad?"

"The word slipped from my lips, I did not mean it indeed," urged Kate.
"I hope not," said Ralph.
"But my question, uncle; you have not answered it."
"Why, I anticipated something of the kind," said Ralph; "and—though I object very strongly, mind—have provided against it. I spoke of you as an out-of-door worker; so you will go to this home that may be humble, every night."

There was comfort in this. Kate poured forth many thanks for her uncle's consideration, which Ralph received as if he had deserved them all, and they arrived without any further conversation at the dress-maker's door, which displayed a very large plate, with Madame Mantalini's name and occupation, and was approached by a handsome flight of steps. There was a shop to the house, but it was let off to an importer of otto of roses. Madame Mantalini's show-rooms were on the first floor, a fact which was notified to the nobility and gentry by the casual exhibition near the handsomely curtained windows of two or three elegant bonnets of the newest fashion, and some costly garments in the most approved taste.

A liveried footman opened the door, and in reply to Ralph's inquiry whether Madame Mantalini was at home, ushered them through a handsome hall, and up a spacious staircase, into the show saloon, which comprised two spacious drawing-rooms, and exhibited an immense variety of superb dresses and materials for dresses, some arranged on stands, others laid carelessly on sofas, and others again scattered over the carpet, hanging upon the cheval glasses, or mingling in some other way with the rich furniture of various descriptions, which was profusely displayed.

They waited here a much longer time than was agreeable to Mr. Ralph Nickleby, who eyed the gaudy frippery about him with very little concern, and was at length about to pull the bell, when a gentleman suddenly popped his head into the room, and seeing somebody there as suddenly popped it out again.

"Here. Hello!" cried Ralph. "Who's that?"
At the sound of Ralph's voice the head reappeared, and the mouth displaying a very long row of very white teeth, uttered in a mincing tone the words, "Demmit. What, Nickleby! oh, demmit!" Having uttered which ejaculations, the gentleman advanced, and shook hands with Ralph with great warmth. He was dressed in a gorgeous morning gown, with a waistcoat and Turkish trousers of the same pattern, a pink silk neckerchief, and bright green slippers, and had a very copious watch-chain wound round his body. Moreover, he had whiskers and a moustache, both dyed black and gracefully curled.

"Demmit, you don't mean to say you want me, do you, demmit?" said this gentleman, smiting Ralph on the shoulder.
"Not yet," said Ralph, sarcastically.
"Ha! ha! demmit," cried the gentleman; when wheeling round to laugh with greater elegance, he encountered Kate Nickleby, who was standing near.

"My niece," said Ralph.
"I remember," said the gentleman, striking his nose with the knuckle
of his forefinger as a chastening for his forgetfulness. "Demmit, I remember what you come for. Step this way, Nickleby; my dear, will you follow me? Ha! ha! They all follow me, Nickleby; always did, demmit, always."

Giving loose to the playfulness of his imagination after this fashion, the gentleman led the way to a private sitting-room on the second floor scarcely less elegantly furnished than the apartment below, where the presence of a silver coffee-pot, an egg-shell, and sloppy china for one, seemed to show that he had just breakfasted.

"Sit down, my dear," said the gentleman; first staring Miss Nickleby out of countenance, and then grinning in delight at the achievement. "This cursed high room takes one's breath away. These infernal sky parlours—I'm afraid I must move, Nickleby."

"I would, by all means," replied Ralph, looking bitterly round.

"What a demd rum fellow you are, Nickleby," said the gentleman, "the demdest, longest-headed, queerest-tempered old coiner of gold and silver ever was—demmit."

Having complimented Ralph to this effect, the gentleman rang the bell, and stared at Miss Nickleby till it was answered, when he left off to bid the man desire his mistress to come directly; after which he began again, and left off no more till Madame Mantalini appeared.

The dress-maker was a buxom person, handsomely dressed and rather good-looking, but much older than the gentleman in the Turkish trousers, whom she had wedded some six months before. His name was originally Muntle; but it had been converted, by an easy transition, into Mantalini: the lady rightly considering that an English appellation would be of serious injury to the business. He had married on his whiskers, upon which he had previously subsisted in a genteel manner for some years, and which he had recently improved after patient cultivation by the addition of a moustache, which promised to secure him an easy independence; his share in the labours of the business being at present confined to spending the money, and occasionally when that ran short, driving to Mr. Ralph Nickleby to procure discount—at a per centage—for the customers' bills.

"My life," said Mr. Mantalini, "what a demd devil of a time you have been!"

"I didn't even know Mr. Nickleby was here, my love," said Madame Mantalini.

"Then what a doubly demd infernal rascal that footman must be, my soul," remonstrated Mr. Mantalini.

"My dear," said Madame, "that is entirely your fault."

"My fault, my heart's joy?"

"Certainly," returned the lady; "what can you expect, dearest, if you will not correct the man?"

"Correct the man, my soul's delight!"

"Yes; I am sure he wants speaking to, badly enough," said Madame, pouting.

"Then do not vex itself," said Mr. Mantalini; "he shall be horse-whipped till he cries out demnebly." With this promise Mr. Mantalini kissed Madame Mantalini, and after that performance Madame Mantalini appeared.
Mantalini pulled Mr. Mantalini playfully by the ear, which done they
descended to business.

"Now, ma'am," said Ralph, who had looked on at all this, with
such scorn as few men can express in looks, "this is my niece."

"Just so, Mr. Nickleby," replied Madame Mantalini, surveying Kate
from head to foot and back again. "Can you speak French, child?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied Kate, not daring to look up; for she felt that
the eyes of the odious man in the dressing-gown were directed towards
her.

"Like a demd native?" asked the husband.

Miss Nickleby offered no reply to this inquiry, but turned her back
upon the questioner, as if addressing herself to make answer to what
her wife might demand.

"We keep twenty young women constantly employed in the esta-
blishment," said Madame.

"Indeed, ma'am!" replied Kate, timidly.

"Yes; and some of 'em demd handsome, too," said the master.

"Mantalini!" exclaimed his wife, in an awful voice.

"My senses' idol!" said Mantalini.

"Do you wish to break my heart?"

"Not for twenty thousand hemispheres populated with—with—
with little ballet-dancers," replied Mantalini in a poetical strain.

"Then you will, if you persevere in that mode of speaking," said his
wife. "What can Mr. Nickleby think when he hears you?"

"Oh! Nothing, ma'am, nothing," replied Ralph. "I know his
amiable nature, and yours,—mere little remarks that give a zest to
your daily intercourse; lovers' quarrels that add sweetness to those
domestic joys which promise to last so long—that's all; that's all."

If an iron door could be supposed to quarrel with its hinges, and to
make a firm resolution to open with slow obstinacy, and grind them to
powder in the process, it would emit a pleasanter sound in so doing,
than did these words in the rough and bitter voice in which they were
uttered by Ralph. Even Mr. Mantalini felt their influence, and turning
affrighted round, exclaimed—"What a demd horrid croaking!"

"You will pay no attention, if you please, to what Mr. Mantalini
says," observed his wife, addressing Miss Nickleby.

"I do not, ma'am," said Kate, with quiet contempt.

"Mr. Mantalini knows nothing whatever about any of the young
women," continued Madame, looking at her husband, and speaking
to Kate. "If he has seen any of them, he must have seen them in
the street going to, or returning from, their work, and not here. He
was never even in the room. I do not allow it. What hours of work
have you been accustomed to?"

"I have never yet been accustomed to work at all, ma'am," replied
Kate, in a low voice.

"For which reason she'll work all the better now," said Ralph,
putting in a word, lest this confession should injure the negotiation.

"I hope so," returned Madame Mantalini; "our hours are from
nine to nine, with extra work when we're very full of business, for
which I allow payment as over-time."
Kate bowed her head to intimate that she heard, and was satisfied.

"Your meals," continued Madame Mantalini, "that is, dinner and tea, you will take here. I should think your wages would average from five to seven shillings a-week; but I can't give you any certain information on that point until I see what you can do."

Kate bowed her head again.

"If you're ready to come," said Madame Mantalini, "you had better begin on Monday morning at nine exactly, and Miss Knag the forewoman shall then have directions to try you with some easy work at first. Is there anything more, Mr. Nickleby?"

"Nothing more, ma'am," replied Ralph, rising.

"Then I believe that's all," said the lady. Having arrived at this natural conclusion, she looked at the door, as if she wished to be gone, but hesitated notwithstanding, as though unwilling to leave to Mr. Mantalini the sole honour of showing them down stairs. Ralph relieved her from her perplexity by taking his departure without delay: Madame Mantalini making many gracious inquiries why he never came to see them, and Mr. Mantalini anathematizing the stairs with great volubility as he followed them down, in the hope of inducing Kate to look round,—a hope, however, which was destined to remain ungratified.

"There!" said Ralph when they got into the street; "now you're provided for."

Kate was about to thank him again, but he stopped her.

"I had some idea," he said, "of providing for your mother in a pleasant part of the country,—(he had a presentation to some almshouses on the borders of Cornwall, which had occurred to him more than once) —but as you want to be together, I must do something else for her. She has a little money?"

"A very little," replied Kate.

"A little will go a long way if it's used sparingly," said Ralph. "She must see how long she can make it last, living rent free. You leave your lodgings on Saturday?"

"You told us to do so, uncle."

"Yes; there is a house empty that belongs to me, which I can put you into till it is let, and then, if nothing else turns up, perhaps I shall have another. You must live there."

"Is it far from here, Sir?" inquired Kate.

"Pretty well," said Ralph; "in another quarter of the town—at the East end; but I'll send my clerk down to you at five o'clock on Saturday to take you there. Good bye. You know your way? Straight on."

Coldly shaking his niece's hand, Ralph left her at the top of Regent Street, and turned down a bye thoroughfare, intent on schemes of money-getting. Kate walked sadly back to their lodgings in the Strand.
ESTABLISHED 1820.

RIPPON AND BURTON'S
FURNISHING IRONmongery WAREHOUSES,
12, WELLS STREET, OXFORD STREET, LONDON.

CATALOGUE of ARTICLES, which, if purchased for Town, must be paid for on delivery; if for the Country, or for Exportation, the money must be remitted, postage free, with the order. On any other terms RIPPON & BURTON respectfully decline doing business at the Prices herein named.

The Frequent ROBBERIES of PLATE

Have induced RIPPON & BURTON to manufacture a SUBSTITUTE for SILVER, possessing all its advantages in point of appearance and durability, at less than one-tenth the cost. Their BRITISH PLATE is of such a superlative quality, that it requires the strictest scrutiny to distinguish it from silver, than which it is more durable, every article being made of solid wrought material. It improves with use, and is warranted to stand the test of the strongest of acids—aquefortis.

**BRITISH PLATE.**

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<td>Dessert Forks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carvers</td>
<td>16s. 0d.</td>
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**RICHLY CARVED ROSEWOOD CASES, containing Transparent Ivory Handles, with Silver Furlets.**

- **18 Table Knives,** 2 pair of large Carvers, and 1 pair of Poultry or Game Carvers, 100.
- **16 Dessert Knives,** 2 pair of large Carvers, and 1 pair of Poultry or Game Carvers, £10.

May 1st, 1838.
Shower Baths, Japanned Bamboo, with Brass Force-pump attached, to throw the water into the shower cistern, & curtains complete £24 10 0

Ditto, the very best made, with copper conducting tubes, brass force-pump, and curtains 5 10 0

Hot Water Baths, self-heating, slipper shaped, full size, Japanned walncot, with copper fire-place so attached that the Bath may, with the greatest safety, be heated in any room in 20 minutes 7 0 0

Hip Baths, Japanned Bamboo 1 2 0

Spuning Baths, Round, 30 inches diameter, 7 inches deep 1 1 0

Open Baths, 3 ft. 6 in. long, 30s.; 4 ft. long, 35s.; 4 ft. 6 in. long, 50s.; 5 ft. long, 60s.; 5 ft. 6 in. long, 76d.

Feet Baths, Japanned Bamboo, small size, 6s. 6d.; large, 7s. 6d.; tub shape, with hoops, 11s.

Bottle Jackets, Japanned, 7s. 6d.; Brass, 9s. 6d. each.

Brass Stair Rods, per dozen 21 inches long, 3s. 6d.; 24 in., 4s. 6d.; 27 in., 5s.; 30 in., 6s. 6d.

Brass Curtain Poles, warranted solid, 1 1/4 inch diameter, 1s. 6d. per foot; 2 ins., 2s. 6d. per foot.

Brass Poles, complete with end ornaments, rings, hooks & brackets, 3ft. long, 15s.; 3ft. 6in. 17s.; 4ft. 20s.

Brass Curtain Bands, 1 1/4 inch wide, 2s. 6d. per pair; 1 3/4 in., 3s.; 2 in., 4s. Richer patterns, 1 1/4 in. 4s.; 2 in. 5s.

Finger Plates for Doors, newest and richest patterns, long, 1s. 2d.; short, 10d. each.

Copper Coal Scops, small, 10s. 6d.; middle, 13s.; large, 14s. 6d. Helmet Shape, 14s. 6d., 18s., 20s.; Square Shape, with Handle Scope, 25s.

Copper Tea Kettles, Oval Shape, very strong, with barrel handle, 2 quarts, 5s. 6d.; 3 quarts, 6s.; 4 quarts, 7s. The strongest quality made, 2 quarts, 6s.; 3 quarts, 10s.; 4 quarts, 11s.

Copper Stewpans: Soup or Stock Pots, and Fish Kettles, with Shaping Pans; Saucepans and Preserving Pans; Cutlet Pans, Frying Pans, and Omelette Pans, at prices proportionate with the above.

Copper Warming Pans, with handles, for fire, 6s. 6d. to 19s. 6d.; Ditto, for water, 35s.

Fire Irons.

Large strong Wrought Iron for Kitchens, 5s. 6d. to 12s. 0 0
Wrought Iron, suitable for Servants' Beds Rooms 2 0
Small Polished Steel, for better Bed Rooms 5 0
Large Ditto, for Libraries 7 0
Ditto ditto, for Dining Rooms 8 6
Ditto ditto, with Cut Heads, for ditto 11 6
Ditto very highly Polished Steel, plain good pattern 20 0
Ditto ditto, richly cut 22s. 20 0

Corkscrews, Patent, 3s. 6d. each; Common ditto, 6d., 9d., 1s., 1s. 6d., and 2a.


N.B. Experienced Workmen employed to clean, repair, and oil Smoke Jacks, which are so constantly put out of order by the treatment they meet with from chimney sweepers.

Captains' Cabin Lamps, with 1 quart kettles, 6s.

| DISH COVERS. |
|---|---|
| Black Tin | 1 1/4 | 1 1/4 | 1 1/2 | 1 1/2 | 2 | 2 1/2 | 2 2/3 | £10 6s. 6d. |
| Ditto, Anti-Plated shape | 1 1/2 | 2 | 2 1/2 | 3 1/2 | 3 1/2 | 4 | 4 1/2 | £10 6s. 6d. |
| Ditto, O. G. shape | 1 1/2 | 2 | 2 1/2 | 3 1/2 | 3 1/2 | 4 | 4 1/2 | £10 6s. 6d. |
| Ditto, Patent Imperial Silver shape. The Tops raised in one piece | 2 1/4 | 3 3/8 | 4 1/8 | 5 1/2 | 5 1/2 | 6 | 6 1/4 | £10 17s. 6d. |
| Ditto, the very best made, except Plated or Silver | 2 1/4 | 3 3/8 | 4 1/8 | 5 1/2 | 5 1/2 | 6 | 6 1/4 | £10 17s. 6d. |

Rippon & Burton, 12, Wells Street, Oxford Street, London.
FENDERS.

The immense variety which the Show Rooms contain, and the constant change of patterns of Fenders, render it impossible to give the prices of but a small portion of them. The following Scale, however, may be taken as a guide, and the prices generally will be found about 25 per cent. below any other house whatever.

| Size       | Price per pair
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<td>3.5 Feet</td>
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Green, with Brass Top, suitable for Bed Rooms
All Brass
Black Iron for Dining Rooms or Libraries
Bromed for ditto
Ditto, with bright Steel Tops
Ditto, very handsome, with Steel Tops and Steel Bottom Moulding
Very rich Pattern, with Scroll Centre, Steel Rod and Steel Ends, for Drawing Rooms (all sizes)
Green painted Wire Nursery Guard Fenders, Brass Tops, 18 in. high
Ditto, 24 inches high
Iron Kitchen Fenders, with Sliding Bars

STOVES.

Inches wide

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Iron or Rumford Stoves, for Bed Rooms
Common half register Stoves
Register Stoves of superior patterns
Register Stoves, fine Cast, 3 feet wide, 27.5s., 31t., and 311—Ground Bright Front Register Stoves with Bronzed and Steel Ornaments, and with bright and black bars, 3 feet wide, 41.10s., 51t., and 61t.
Ironing Stoves for Laundries, complete, with Frame and Ash Pan, 16.6s.

KITCHEN RANGES.

To fit an opening of

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Iron Saucepans and Tea Kettles

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Iron Boiling Pots

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Oval Iron Boiling Pot and Cover

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<td>Tea Kitchens, or Water Fountains, with Brass Pipe &amp; Cock</td>
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</table>

Iron Coal Scoops and Boxes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14 in. long</th>
<th>16 in. long</th>
<th>18 in. long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coal Boxes, Japanned, with Covers, ornamented with Gold Lines</td>
<td>12s. 6d.</td>
<td>14s. 6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal Scoops, Iron, for Kitchen Use</td>
<td>1 9</td>
<td>2 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upright Hood</td>
<td>5 0</td>
<td>6 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Japanned Goods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>24</th>
<th>26</th>
<th>28</th>
<th>30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEA TRAYS, good common quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditto, best common quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditto, paper shape, black</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ditto, Gothic paper shape, black</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditto, ditto, Marone, ornamented all over</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bread and Knife Trays, each 9d., 1s., 1s. 6d., 2s. & 2s. 6d.
Best ditto, Gothic shape, 3s. 6d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. each.
Tea trays, paper, Gothic shape, in sets of each of 18, 24, and 30 inches, £2. 10s.
Ditto, ornamented, the set, £4. 5s.
Ditto, richest patterns, ditto, £5. 8s. and 6s.
Toasted Trays, plain black, 1s. 6d. Ornamented, 2s.
Ditto, marone or green, ornamented all over, 2s. 9d.
Cheese Trays, 2s., 2s. 6d., 3s., and 3s. 6d.
Snuff Trays, 5d., 6d., 8d., 1s., 1s. 6d., and 1s. 10d.
Paper ditto, 2s., 2s. 6d., 3s., 3d., and 4s.
Paper Decanter Stands, plain black, 3s. 6d. per pair.
Ditto, ditto, ornamented black or marone, 4s. 6d. per pair.
### RIPPON & BURTON’S Prices of STRONG SETS OF IRON AND TIN KITCHEN FURNITURE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Small Set</th>
<th>Middle Set</th>
<th>Large Set</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bread Grater</td>
<td>1 Bread Grater</td>
<td>1 Bread Grater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pair Brass Candlesticks</td>
<td>1 Pair Brass Candlesticks</td>
<td>1 Pair Brass Candlesticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Bottle Jack</td>
<td>1 Bottle Jack</td>
<td>1 Bottle Jack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tin Candlestick</td>
<td>1 Tin Candlestick</td>
<td>1 Tin Candlestick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Meat Chopper</td>
<td>1 Meat Chopper</td>
<td>1 Meat Chopper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cinder Sifter</td>
<td>1 Cinder Sifter</td>
<td>1 Cinder Sifter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Colander</td>
<td>1 Colander</td>
<td>1 Colander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Dripping Pan &amp; Stand</td>
<td>1 Dripping Pan &amp; Stand</td>
<td>1 Dripping Pan &amp; Stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Dust Pan</td>
<td>1 Dust Pan</td>
<td>1 Dust Pan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Slicer</td>
<td>1 Slicer</td>
<td>1 Slicer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Fish Kettle</td>
<td>1 Fish Kettle</td>
<td>1 Fish Kettle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Fryingpan</td>
<td>1 Fryingpan</td>
<td>1 Fryingpan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Gridiron</td>
<td>1 Gridiron</td>
<td>1 Gridiron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Mustard Pot</td>
<td>1 Mustard Pot</td>
<td>1 Mustard Pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Salt Cellar</td>
<td>1 Salt Cellar</td>
<td>1 Salt Cellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pepper Box</td>
<td>1 Pepper Box</td>
<td>1 Pepper Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Block Tin Butter Sauce Pan</td>
<td>1 Block Tin Butter Sauce Pan</td>
<td>1 Block Tin Butter Sauce Pan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Iron Saucepans</td>
<td>2 Iron Saucepans</td>
<td>2 Iron Saucepans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Iron Steewaps</td>
<td>2 Iron Steewaps</td>
<td>2 Iron Steewaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Rolling Pot, Iron</td>
<td>1 Rolling Pot, Iron</td>
<td>1 Rolling Pot, Iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Set of Skewers</td>
<td>1 Set of Skewers</td>
<td>1 Set of Skewers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Knives and Forks</td>
<td>6 Knives and Forks</td>
<td>6 Knives and Forks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Spoons</td>
<td>3 Spoons</td>
<td>3 Spoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tea Pot and 1 Tea Tray</td>
<td>1 Tea Pot and 1 Tea Tray</td>
<td>1 Tea Pot and 1 Tea Tray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Toasting Fork</td>
<td>1 Toasting Fork</td>
<td>1 Toasting Fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tea Kettle</td>
<td>1 Tea Kettle</td>
<td>1 Tea Kettle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£3 10 0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Small Set</th>
<th>Middle Set</th>
<th>Large Set</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bread Grater</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cinder Sifter</td>
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<td>1 Slicer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Fish Kettle</td>
<td>1 Fish Kettle</td>
<td>1 Fish Kettle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Fryingpan</td>
<td>1 Fryingpan</td>
<td>1 Fryingpan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Gridiron</td>
<td>1 Gridiron</td>
<td>1 Gridiron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Mustard Pot</td>
<td>1 Mustard Pot</td>
<td>1 Mustard Pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Salt Cellar</td>
<td>1 Salt Cellar</td>
<td>1 Salt Cellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pepper Box</td>
<td>1 Pepper Box</td>
<td>1 Pepper Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Wicker Plate Basket, fitted with Tin</td>
<td>1 Wicker Plate Basket, fitted with Tin</td>
<td>1 Wicker Plate Basket, fitted with Tin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Block Tin Saucepan</td>
<td>1 Block Tin Saucepan</td>
<td>1 Block Tin Saucepan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Iron Saucepans</td>
<td>1 Iron Saucepans</td>
<td>1 Iron Saucepans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Saucepan and Steamer</td>
<td>1 Saucepan and Steamer</td>
<td>1 Saucepan and Steamer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Large Rolling Pot, Iron</td>
<td>1 Large Rolling Pot, Iron</td>
<td>1 Large Rolling Pot, Iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Skewers</td>
<td>3 Skewers</td>
<td>3 Skewers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Set of Skewers</td>
<td>1 Set of Skewers</td>
<td>1 Set of Skewers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tea Pot and 1 Tea Tray</td>
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<td>1 Tea Pot and 1 Tea Tray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Toasting Fork</td>
<td>1 Toasting Fork</td>
<td>1 Toasting Fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tea Kettle</td>
<td>1 Tea Kettle</td>
<td>1 Tea Kettle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£5 5 0

£7 15 0

In submitting to the Public the foregoing Catalogue, RIPPON & BURTON beg to state, that they will continue to offer Articles of the very best MANUFACTURE only, as they have heretofore done, at prices which, when compared with others of the same quality, will be found much lower than any that have ever yet been quoted. The knowledge which RIPPON & BURTON have obtained by their close connexion with the largest Manufacturers, and the principle upon which they conduct their business, afford great advantages to the purchaser; all Articles being bought in very large quantities for Cash, and marked for sale at Cash prices, which are not subject to discount or abatement of any kind; thus giving the ready money purchaser all the advantages that can be obtained over the plan usually adopted by others, of marking their goods at prices which will enable them to give credit, and pay for that credit which they take; allowing those who pay cash, 5 per cent. discount from the prices 25 per cent. higher than they should fairly be charged. The many years RIPPON & BURTON’S business has been established, and the very extensive premises they have with, will be proof enough, that the public have not been deceived by them; but, as a further security against the impositions practised by many, RIPPON & BRAYDON will continue to exchange their return the money for every article that is not approved of, if returned in good condition and free of expense within one month of the time it was purchased.

J. Bradley, Printer, 78, Great Titchfield-street, London.
This Pamphlet is stitched by itself, and may be separated from the Publication it accompanies; and it is requested that the widest circulation may be given to it amongst the Members of each Family, and the Industrious Classes generally.

NATIONAL LOAN FUND
LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

CAPITAL, £500,000.

DEFERRED ANNUITIES.

Patron.
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF SOMERSET, F.R.S.

Directors.
T. LAMIE MURRAY, Esq., Chairman.

Col. Sir BURGES CAMAC, K.C.S. | ROBERT HOLLOND, Esq., M.P.
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Secretary.
F. FERGUSON CAMROUX, Esq.
NATIONAL LOAN FUND

LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

DEFERRED ANNUITIES.

I. Amongst the several remedies proposed to mitigate or diminish the burthen of poor-laws, none has hitherto been brought forward or adopted that would either induce or afford facilities to the able-bodied members of society, to be responsible for their own support.

II. In a state of employment and health every one may be assumed capable of self-support; competition has, no doubt, reduced the rewards of labour to the standard of existence, rendering it the more necessary that the smallest surplus, over exigencies, should be carefully husbanded, in order that, by the best facilities given to economy and the application of means to ends, it may be rendered capable of supplying the deficiencies, caused by want of employment, sickness, the several casualties of life, and by old age. Over the frequent fluctuations in the quantity of employment, the employed have no control; and, as the cause is not dependent on fixed laws, but most frequently on the contingencies which affect the quantity of money, their duration or occurrence cannot be submitted to calculation,—at any rate the remedy is beyond their reach. The laws of sickness have been sufficiently ascertained, for fixing a provision apportioned to the value of a given contribution; but although such a provision is not to be overlooked, it is of trifling importance, compared to the hardships resulting from want of employment, and unprovided old age.
age. Want of employment, sickness, and old age, may fairly be classed under one head, viz.:—a state of non-productiveness. To those, therefore, who solely depend on their labour, which is seldom too highly remunerated, it must be a matter of importance, out of their earnings when employed, to provide for every period of non-productiveness, from whichever of the foregoing causes it may arise.

III. The two institutions open to the productive classes, are Savings Banks and Benefit Societies, whose nature and scope, when examined, will be found to offer but a very imperfect remedy against the evil, being institutions wherein the limited means of this class are not best made applicable to their several ends.

Savings Banks are of unquestionable utility, but they afford no contingent future advantage, and, besides, the sum that can be hoarded is incommensurate with the wants of the middle productive classes.

Benefit Societies propose to offer provision in sickness and old age, but their construction will be found imperfect, and their plan the least profitable application of the means of economy.

1. Because sickness itself is not a calamity of equally probable duration to the fluctuations in the quantity of employment and other casualties, and misfortune, against which they offer no protection.

2. Because, out of a given means, the sum laid aside for sickness must diminish the provision for old age.

3. Because many must contribute to the sick fund who never become chargeable upon it, and the value of such contributions is lost to themselves and families.

4. Because sickness, being a state of non-productiveness, must necessarily be included in any protection against such an occurrence.

IV. Various observations have been made on the duration of sickness, amongst the industrious classes, from an early...
period of life until its close. Those most in use are,—the sickness amongst the Benefit Societies in Scotland, given by the Highland Society;—the sickness amongst the labourers in the East India Company’s Service;,—the sickness amongst persons employed in Cotton, Silk, Wool, Flax, and in the Potteries, by the Factory Commissioners;—and the sickness amongst the English Benefit Societies, from returns made to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

These results, though varied, show how inconsiderable is the amount of sickness during that period of life, between the ages of 20 and 65, when each individual is more immediately thrown on his own resources;—they are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of Persons</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Average amount of Sickness</th>
<th>Average yearly Sickness in the period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highland Societies’ return</td>
<td>20 to 65</td>
<td>16 4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East India Company’s labourers</td>
<td>20 to 65</td>
<td>9 0</td>
<td>6 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory Commissioners— Cotton</td>
<td>21 to 61</td>
<td>7 27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool, Yorkshire</td>
<td>21 to 61</td>
<td>10 29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditto, West of England</td>
<td>21 to 61</td>
<td>8 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flax, Yorkshire</td>
<td>21 to 61</td>
<td>9 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk</td>
<td>21 to 61</td>
<td>11 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society for Diffusion of Useful Knowledge</td>
<td>20 to 65</td>
<td>18 21</td>
<td>12 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, it appears that the highest expectation of sickness, amongst males, is twelve and a half days, and the lowest six days, in each year from the age of twenty to sixty-five; its mean duration, inclusive of accidents of all kinds, would be nine and a quarter days, during which, from these causes, an individual may expect to be abstracted from productive employment throughout a period of forty-five years: while, it may be observed, his religious observation of the seventh day, in which he “shall do no work,” has diminished his productivity, by its recurrence in the same period, six years and 156 days.
V. From the foregoing facts it must be obvious that provision in sickness, or a Health Assurance by means of a separate contribution, is unnecessary, more particularly as such separate contribution must tend to waste the resources out of which the industrious classes have to provide for the future. It also in effect throws the burden of the permanently sick on one class exclusively, instead of society at large; who are thus called on for an act of benevolence, while they are scarce able to do justice to the claims of their own families. Besides this, no compensation is given out of the contribution for a provision in sickness and old age to the families of those who never reach the age of 65, though death should happen immediately preceding it; and, if an assumed hypothesis is correct, that sickness before death is not more than five weeks, and taking bed-laying-pay at 10s. per week, it will not unfrequently happen the only return a man may obtain as a long and steady contributor to a Benefit Society, will not exceed 50s., a sum scarcely equal to one year’s payment at a shilling per week, while by his death he leaves his family entirely unprovided for.

VI. It is to remedy these defects, inherent in the constitution of Benefit Societies, that the National Loan Fund Life Assurance Society proposes to submit a plan of Deferred Annuities on a new principle, which will not only afford a more ample provision for old age, and protection against sickness and misfortune—but in addition, the means, at all times, of putting his energies in motion, and in the event of premature death, a better protection to his family.

The plan proposed will embody several essential objects:

1. To secure an increased provision for old age out of a given saving, by applying it exclusively to the purchase of a Deferred Annuity.

2. To render the purchase of a protection in sickness unnecessary, by enabling the purchaser of a Deferred Annuity to withdraw or borrow two-thirds of his previous payments.
3. By the use of two-thirds of all his payments when required, to limit misfortune and want of employment, and extend the power of productiveness by an increasing command, in each year, of capital, so that, while providing for old age, each successive contribution renders him more secure against present misfortune.

4. To afford, at the age at which the Deferred Annuity would commence, without reference to his then state of health, the option of receiving, instead of his annuity, its value in money, according to the value fixed on the contract, or a larger sum payable at his death.

5. In the event of death before the age at which he would be entitled to his Deferred Annuity, to return two-thirds of his payments to his family, or such fixed Life Assurance as may be settled on the contract.

6. In all such cases where the power of productiveness fails, either from disease or accident, to enable the assured on equal terms to convert his Deferred Annuity into a present Annuity.

VII. Notwithstanding the obvious and manifold advantages of this plan over every other hitherto proposed, for securing present and future competence to the industrious population, still more striking advantages will be exhibited by contrasting its prospective provision for old age with that offered by Benefit Societies. This arises from the non-abstraction of a given sum for a separate benefit in sickness; which protection, by the operation of the Loan Fund on the Deferred Annuity, is not only more ample, but other misfortunes are provided against, which if calculated, and a separate contribution made for each, whose duration equals that of sickness; the purchase of them would entirely absorb the means of providing for old age, while such a system must tend to discourage productiveness, and afford no protection to a family in the event of premature death. The object this plan embraces is to open facilities to the efforts of self support, to stimulate the independence of one class above the forced benevolence of another, while it recommends itself to the latter by diminishing the burden of poor laws, which has been at all times irksome, disturbing the harmony and fomenting the mutual distrusts of society.
The following is a comparison of the benefits to be derived from the contribution of 1s. per week paid into a Benefit Society, or to purchase a Deferred Annuity from the National Loan Fund Society:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Loan Fund Deferred Annuities</td>
<td>£47 16</td>
<td>£394 11</td>
<td>£466 0</td>
<td>¾ of the payments</td>
<td>¾ of the payments</td>
<td>¾ of the payments received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option of Benefits, at 65</td>
<td>26 0</td>
<td>Nil.</td>
<td>Nil.</td>
<td>allowances in sickness</td>
<td>Nil.</td>
<td>Nil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefit Societies ditto</td>
<td>27 11</td>
<td>269 11</td>
<td>346 15</td>
<td>¾ of the payments</td>
<td>¾ of the payments</td>
<td>¾ of the payments received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Loan Fund</td>
<td>27 11</td>
<td>269 11</td>
<td>346 15</td>
<td>¾ of the payments</td>
<td>¾ of the payments</td>
<td>¾ of the payments received</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not alone to the industrious classes this plan of Deferred Annuities will be found efficient, in securing an ample competency for old age; but also to that important class of the community who derive their income from a combination of capital and personal labour. To this class, the Savings Banks do not afford a sufficiently profitable investment; and, indeed, the framework of such institutions as have been designed for the more humble classes, has not been made to suit their wants or consult their interests, and there exists no institution, at present, to which they can resort, that would at the same time foster their industry,—secure to them a competency in old age,—and protect them against the varied casualties of life.

The Tables of Deferred Annuities have been constructed with a view to exhibit the benefits that may be secured by the smallest effort of frugality, and to suit the circumstances and convenience of all classes.

The object of Tables No. I. is to show the option of benefits the payment of 1s. per week, or £2. 12s. per annum, will secure at the period of attaining the age of 65, 60, 55, or 50.

The Tables No. II. show the Annual Premiums required to secure the option of given benefits at these ages,—the sum required at each age to be paid down at once to purchase them,—and also the sum at any age to be paid as disparity, so as to enable the purchaser, instead of paying the premium at his own age, to pay that set down for the age of 20, and by this means enabling the owner of a little saving to turn it to the best account. The society will, moreover, receive all this sum by instalments, and two-thirds of the amount paid may, at any time, be withdrawn on deposit of the policy; and in the event of death before the stipulated age, two-thirds of the payments will be returned to the family.
I. BENEFITS

Secured, on attaining the **Age of 65**, by an Annual Premium of £2. 12s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£ s. d.</td>
<td>£ s. d.</td>
<td>£ s. d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>47 16 6</td>
<td>394 11 0</td>
<td>466 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>45 4 8</td>
<td>373 3 0</td>
<td>440 14 0</td>
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The basis on which this table is calculated is the payment of 1s. per week, or 2l. 12s. per annum; but any payment may be made, and the benefits secured in proportion thereto.

**Example.**—A person, aged 23, by the payment of 1s. per week, or 2l. 12s. per annum, will secure, on attaining the age of 65, the option of an annuity of 40l. 8s. 3d., cash down 33l. 7s., or a policy on his life for 200l. 15s.

By one-half the payment, that is, 6d. per week, or 1l. 6s. per annum, he will secure the option of half the benefits. By five times the payment, he will be entitled to the option of five times the benefits; and the same may be extended to any other proportion.

All premiums to terminate with the period.

Two thirds of the payments may at any time be withdrawn, on deposit of the policy; and should the party not survive, two-thirds of his payments will be returned to his representatives.
### II. PREMIUMS.

To secure, on attaining the age of 65, the option of an annuity of £10 0 0, viz. 10s. per annum, or a policy for £97 8 6; by the annual payment of 19s. 6d., or a single payment of £97 7s. 1d.; or by payment of £7 3s. 11d. for disparity of age, he will be entitled to the same benefits by the same annual payment as for the age of 30, viz. 10s. 11d. per annum.

An annuity of £50, or five times the other benefits, may be secured by five times the payment; and, in like manner, any other annuity and corresponding benefits may be purchased by making the payment accordingly.

All premiums to terminate with the period.

Two-thirds of the amount paid may at any time be withdrawn on deposit of the policy; and should the party not survive, two-thirds of his payments will be returned to his representatives.

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<tr>
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<th>Payable in One Sum.</th>
<th>Payable for Disparity.</th>
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</table>

The basis on which these tables, No. II., are calculated, is the purchase of a deferred annuity of 10l.; but any amount of annuity may be similarly purchased by making the payments in proportion.

Examples.—A person, age 30, may secure, on attaining the age of 65, the option of an annuity of 10l., cash down 92l. 10s., or a policy on his life for 97l. 8s. by the annual payment of 19s. 6d., or a single payment of 10l. 7s. 1d.; or by payment of 71. 3s. 11d. for disparity of age, he will be entitled to the same benefits by the same annual payment as for the age of 20, viz. 10s. 11d. per annum.
I. BENEFITS

Secured, on attaining the Age of 60, by an Annual Premium of £2. 12s.

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Example.—A person, aged 25, by the payment of £2. 12s. per annum, will secure, on attaining the age of 60, the option of an annuity of £20. 13s. 4d., cash down £202. 1s.; or a policy on his life for £259. 19s.
### II. PREMIUMS.

To secure, on attaining the age of 60, the option of an Annuity, £10 0 0, the Cash, 97 15 0, or the Policy, 125 15 6.

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**Example.**—A person aged 26 may secure, on attaining the age of 60, an Annuity of £10, with the other options, by the annual payment of £1. 6s. 9d., or a single payment of £22. 17s. 3d.; or on payment of £6. 14s. 3d. for disparity, he will be entitled to the same benefits by an annual payment of 18s. 11d., the same as for age 20.
1. BENEFITS

Secured, on attaining the Age of 55, by an Annual Premium of £2. 12s.

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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>4 12 0</td>
<td>52 2 0</td>
<td>73 15 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>4 4 3</td>
<td>47 14 0</td>
<td>67 11 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example.—A person, aged 25, by the payment of £2. 12s. per annum, will secure, on attaining the age of 55, the option of an Annuity of £12. 9s. 7d.; Cash down £141. 6s.; or a Policy on his Life for £200. 1s.
### II. PREMIUMS.

To secure, on attaining the age of 55, the option of annuity, £10 0 0, cash, 113 5 0, or policy, 160 6 6, a person aged 25 may secure, on attaining the age of 55, an annuity of £10 with the other options, by the annual payment of £2. 1s. 9d., or a single payment of £34. 10s. 3d.; or on payment of £8. 18s. 4d. for disparity, he will be entitled to the same benefits by an annual payment of £1. 11s., the same as for age 20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Payable Annually. £ s d.</th>
<th>Payable in One Sum £ s d.</th>
<th>Payable for Disparity £ s d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1 11 0</td>
<td>27 5 11</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>1 12 10</td>
<td>28 12 0</td>
<td>1 12 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
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<td>3 6 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1 16 11</td>
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<td>5 2 0</td>
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<td>34 10 3</td>
<td>8 18 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>2 4 5</td>
<td>36 3 7</td>
<td>10 19 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>2 7 3</td>
<td>37 18 9</td>
<td>13 2 6</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>2 13 10</td>
<td>41 14 5</td>
<td>17 15 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>2 17 7</td>
<td>43 15 3</td>
<td>20 4 10</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>22 17 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>6 3 5</td>
<td>70 17 5</td>
<td>53 2 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## I. BENEFITS

Secured, on attaining the Age of **50**, by an Annual Premium of £2. 12s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age next Birth-Day</th>
<th>Annuity. £. s. d.</th>
<th>Cash. £. s. d.</th>
<th>Policy. £. s. d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>10 12 6</td>
<td>136 12 0</td>
<td>214 15 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>9 19 11</td>
<td>128 9 0</td>
<td>201 19 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
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<td>120 14 0</td>
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<td>8 5 2</td>
<td>106 4 0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>99 8 0</td>
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<td>7 4 8</td>
<td>92 19 0</td>
<td>146 3 0</td>
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<td>86 16 0</td>
<td>136 9 0</td>
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<td>6 5 11</td>
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<td>127 4 0</td>
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<td>64 16 0</td>
<td>101 18 0</td>
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<td>55 6 0</td>
<td>86 18 0</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>3 19 1</td>
<td>50 17 0</td>
<td>79 19 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>3 12 6</td>
<td>46 12 0</td>
<td>73 6 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example.**—A person, aged 23, by the payment of £2. 12s. per annum, will secure, on attaining the age of 50, the option of an Annuity of £3. 16s. 3d., cash down, £113. 6s.; or a Policy on his Life for £178. 1s.
II. PREMIUMS.

To secure, on attaining the age of 50, the option of

| Annuity, £ 10 0 0 | Cash, 128 11 0 | Policy, 202 1 6 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age next Birth-Day</th>
<th>Payable Annually</th>
<th>Payable in One Sum</th>
<th>Payable for Disparity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£. s. d.</td>
<td>£. s. d.</td>
<td>£. s. d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
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<td>41 1 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>6 11 6</td>
<td>78 18 5</td>
<td>49 10 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>7 3 5</td>
<td>82 14 8</td>
<td>54 10 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example.—A person, aged 24, may secure, on attaining the age of 50, an Annuity of £10, with the other options, by the annual payment of £3. 3s., or a single payment of £49. 8s.; or on payment of £11. 0s. 1d. for disparity, he will be entitled to the same benefits, by an annual payment of £2. 9s., the same as for age 20.
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LONDON:
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MDCCXXXVIII.
Patent Supports and other contrivances for Strom and Defor- 
mity of the Spine, Chest, or Limbs and Trunk.

Fig. 1. An inside view of the right foot of a yo-
This deformity is very common in var-
times with and sometimes without inver-
the ankle-joint, however, usually projects unnatu-
inner side of the shoe, and the deformity is accompa-
weakness of the feet and ankles, and a degree of 
walking, which is sometimes very great. Fig. 5 rep-
natural arched form, showing the condition into whi-
the means which Mr. Amesbury employs.

Fig. 4 shows a case of flat-foot, in-ankle, and flat-foot, in-ankle, and flat-foot, in-ankle, and a degree of weakness in the feet, ankles, and knees together, as seen in Fig. 5.

Fig. 5. A drawing of a child whose feet, ankles, and knees together, as seen in Fig. 5.

Fig. 6 represents a case of pointed toe. This de-
takes place after birth, and is usually the result of pa-
sometimes it occurs as the consequence of disease or a

Fig. 7 shows the deformity commonly called bow-
This, like the deformity seen in Fig. 4, occurs some-
times in both; occasionally one knee is bent inw 
outswards. This deformity takes place after birth, a 
partial, and sometimes of general, weakness in the bod

Fig. 8 shows a case of out-ankle, a variety of defor-
considerably in different persons, and is very fre-
birth; but it occasionally arises also from weakness o

Fig. 1. An inside view of the right foot of a young gentleman, in which is seen that variety of deformity called flat-foot. Fig. 2. An outside and front view of the left foot, in which is seen the same deformity. This deformity is very common in various degrees, sometimes with and sometimes without inversion of the ankle-joint. The ankle-joint, however, usually projects occasionally towards the sole of the shoe, and the deformity is accompanied with more or less weakness of the foot and ankles, and a degree of awkwardness in walking, which is sometimes very great. Fig. 3 represents a foot in its natural inverted state, showing the condition in which it is brought by the wearer of a shoe, and as seen by the surgeon. Fig. 4 shows a case of flat foot, ankles, and knees had been drawn in, as seen in the manner shown in Fig. 2. The deformity commenced first in the left, producing flat foot, ankle inversion, and in time the right also commenced the ankles turned inward, and then the knees, so that when the child was brought to Mr. Amesbury the first were eight inches behind the child stood with the knees together, as is seen in Fig. 4. The drawing. Fig. 5, represents the child as he appeared before Mr. Amesbury, and in Fig. 3 the case worn before the first application of the Supports. Fig. 6 represents a case of flat foot, but the deformity naturally takes place after birth, and is usually the result of partial weakness, but sometimes it occurs as the consequence of disease or accident. This. Fig. 7 shows a case of ankle inversion shown from above, and the deformity naturally called bow-knee, or out-knee. This deformity is sometimes produced by the feet, ankles, and knees had been drawn in, as seen in the manner shown in Fig. 2. The deformity commenced first in the left, producing flat foot, ankle inversion, and in time the right also commenced the ankles turned inward, and then the knees, so that when the child was brought to Mr. Amesbury the first were eight inches behind the child stood with the knees together, as is seen in Fig. 4. The drawing shows the child as he appeared before Mr. Amesbury, and in Fig. 3 the case worn before the first application of the Supports. Fig. 8 represents a case of flat foot, but the deformity naturally takes place after birth, and is usually the result of partial weakness, but sometimes it occurs as the consequence of disease or accident. This. Fig. 9 shows a back view of a young boy, aged 15, who was brought to Mr. Amesbury in consequence of having a lateral curvature of the spine seen in this Fig. 10, and as seen in another view in Fig. 11. The curvature commenced about four years before Mr. Amesbury saw the boy, and it was first noticed in consequence of the projection of the right shoulder. She was placed in Mr. Amesbury's Orthopedic Establishment by her father, where she had the advantage of daily attendance.

The kinds of deformity shown from Fig. 1 to Fig. 8 admit of relief, and almost always, if treatment be commenced sufficiently early, of permanent cure, without any distress or injury to the patient in whom they exist. Mr. Amesbury was in the treatment of these cases his Patent Supports and other inventions in connection with such medical and after management as the state of the system and condition of the parts may require.

Fig. 11 represents her appearance sixteen weeks after she was under Mr. Amesbury's care. This young boy used Mr. Amesbury's "Patent Treating Plaster" and wore his "Patent Spine Support," and was subjected to such other external means to the varying circumstances of her case required. She has now left the Establishment with directions to visit Mr. Amesbury once a month. She still wears the "Support" as a guard, and finds it easy and comfortable in every way.
Fig. 12. A young lady aged 14 was brought to Mr. Amesbury in consequence of a curvature which existed in the spine of the description represented in Fig. 12, and in another view in Fig. 13. This young lady was delicate and frequently suffered from indigestion, pain in the side, and palpitation of the heart. The curvature of the spine was first noticed about six years before Mr. Amesbury was consulted. She had been subjected to various modes of treatment, with country air and exercise, during the previous six years, which, however, did not prevent the curvature from increasing.
been subjected to the consequence of the curvature from increasing.

Fig. 12. A young lady aged 14 was brought to Mr. Ansberry in consequence of a curvature which existed in the spinal line of the description represented in Fig. 13, and in another view in Fig. 15. This young lady was delicate and frequently suffered from indigestion, pain in the side, and palpitation of the heart. The curvature of the spine was first noticed about six years ago. Mr. Ansberry had having observed the body had been subjected to various modes of treatment, with country air and exercise, during the previous years, which, however, did not prevent the curvature from increasing.

Fig. 14. This young lady came under Mr. A.'s care in the autumn of 1857, and was then directed to use his "Patent Exercising Frame," and wear his "Patent Spine Support," and was subjected to such other exercises as her health and the condition of the parts required. In the course of six months the restoration of the figure, as shown in Fig. 14, was produced. The spine was now brought up to its natural line, though the parts had not become sufficiently firm for her to tolerate the "Support" with impunity.

Fig. 15. In a front view of this young lady as she appeared dressed over the "Patent Spine Support." She states that the Support is easy and comfortable, and in spite willing to wear it as long as its use may be considered adhesive. She was more sufficiently enabled to leave the Orthopedic Establishment, with directions to call upon, Mrs. A., some months, or five weeks.

Mr. Ansberry's Patent Orthopedic Establishments are warranted, on its desire to have a curve in the spine may be considered adhesive. She was more sufficiently comforted to leave the Orthopedic Establishment, with directions to call upon, Mrs. A., some months, or five weeks.

Mr. Ansberry, Private Orthopedic Establishments and have in his possession the author's plates of Mr. Ansberry's Spine. Hence it will be seen that the long confinement in the inclined or horizontal posture which has been had recourse to, and considered by many to be necessary in the treatment of spinal curvature, may be done advantageously, and all its attendant evils consequently avoided. In the treatment of curvatures of the spine Mr. A. has recourse to the use of his "Patent Exercising Frame," and "Patent Spine Support," either separately or in connection, as the condition of the parts and other circumstances might require, and with these he employs such medical and other Several agents as his judgment is calculated to facilitate the restoration of the spine and chest, and improve the natural powers of the patient.

Mr. A.'s "Supports" are not only used with amatory intention, but also in certain cases with a view simply to give support, and to reduce the lucky weakness and sufferings of the sufferer. For further particulars and Illustrations of Mr. Ansberry's treatment in stiffness, weakness, or disability of the spine, chest, or limbs, see his Pamphlet on Deformities, entitled NOTICES OF PATENTS.

Granted to Joseph Ansberry, Surgeon. Published by Lea & Blanchard, Philadelphia, 1843.

The great object which a support should have to be treated of at the outset of the various deformities of the human body is to restore the affected parts to their natural position, without altering the patient, and without depriving the body of the free exercises during the progress of restoration, or it is found to be of the greatest importance for the preservation of health, and for the proper development of the human form. This principle has been borne in mind by Mr. A. in the construction of one of the various "Supports" and other devices which he employs in the treatment of these cases. His Supports continue their beneficial operation in rendering and protecting the deformed or weak parts under all the varying positions of the body, whether the person be placed in the standing, or lying, or any other posture, or taking exercise in the open air, or otherwise. These supports are derivable, not only from the pathological management of the Supports which Mr. A. employs in the treatment of deformities and weaknesses of the limbs, but also from that which he uses in the treatment of curvatures and weaknesses of the spine. Hence it will be seen that the long confinement in the inclined or horizontal posture which has been had recourse to, and considered by many to be necessary in the treatment of lateral spinal curvatures, may be done advantageously, and all its attendant evils consequently avoided. In the treatment of curvatures of the spine Mr. A. has recourse to the use of his "Patent Exercising Frame," and "Patent Spine Support," either separately or in connection, as the condition of the parts and other circumstances might require, and with these he employs such medical and other Several agents as his judgment is calculated to facilitate the restoration of the spine and chest, and improve the natural powers of the patient.

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