

DICKENS, CHARLES, one of the most popular of English novelists, was born at Portsmouth in 1812. His father, who had a situation in the Navy Pay-Office, removed soon after to Chatham, and in 1821 to London. The son, after a childhood passed in hardships and privations, was placed in a lawyer's office; but, attracted by the charms of literature, he began to write and to report for newspapers. His reputation as a novelist and humourist began with the publication of the "Sketches by Boz" in 1836, and was greatly increased by the appearance in the following year of the famous "Pickwick Papers." These were followed by the long series of tales, the titles of which are household words wherever the English language is spoken. In 1841 he visited America, and Italy three years later. On the establishment of the "Daily News" he was appointed chief editor. In 1856 he originated "Household Words." In the same year he took up his residence at Gad's Hill, near Rochester, which was his home till his death. In 1859 he started and edited the well-known periodical "All the Year Round," to which he was also a constant contributor. He visited America a second time in 1867. During his later years he gave public readings of his own works, which, however, his health compelled him to discontinue in March 1870. He was a man as deeply beloved by his personal friends as he was admired by his readers, genial and generous to a rare degree, and remarkable for his business-like punctuality, his sagacity, and integrity. He took a warm interest in the social and philanthropic movements of the day, and both in his books and in his public speeches eloquently exposed and denounced many wrongs and shames. Of his very numerous works it may suffice to name here, in addition to those already mentioned, and in the order of their publication—"Oliver Twist," "Nicholas

Nickleby," "Master Humphrey's Clock," "American Notes" (which brought on him some violent attacks), "Martin Chuzzlewit," "Dombey and Son," "David Copperfield" (confessedly his own favourite of all his works), "Hard Times," "Great Expectations," and "Our Mutual Friend." The first in the series of his short Christmas stories appeared in 1843. His "Child's History of England" appeared in "Household Words," and was separately published in 1852-53. At the time of his death he was engaged in writing "Edwin Drood," which now remains a fragment. He was married about 1837. Died at Gad's Hill, 9th June 1870.

Immediate

To
The managers
at the exhibits

Charles Dickens.

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