

A BRITON IN AMERICA

**MEN, MANNERS AND
MORALS IN SOUTH
AMERICA.**

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Westminster Gazette.

A Briton in America

BY
HAROLD SPENDER

" We're born to be good friends and so we oughta,
In spite of all the fools both sides the water ! "

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.
The Biglow Papers.

19 21



London : William Heinemann

**TO
THE TRUE AMERICA**

**"THE HOPE OF THOSE WHO SUFFER,
THE FEAR OF THOSE WHO WRONG!"**

(On a War Memorial in Bloomington, Illinois)

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APPENDIX

IN contrast and comparison with these notes of an American tour, it may be worth while to add here some account of

CHARLES DICKENS' VISITS IN 1842 AND 1868 ¹

The Charles Dickens who felt the call of the "West" in 1842 was a young, slim man of thirty years, with a rich crop of black curly hair, a beardless face, a keen, attractive manner, and an eager, passionate interest in all things human. He was already well on the way towards that giddy pinnacle of fame which he reached in the mid-century. Three of his greatest masterpieces—*The Pickwick Papers*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Nicholas Nickleby*—had already appeared, and the noise of his achievements had already rolled round the world. He had acquired fame not only as a writer, but as one who loved the common people. Pity for the poor and helpless—that was the new note that he sounded; and it was a note that was sure to echo across the Atlantic, where, as de Tocqueville had already

¹ This article is reprinted, by permission, from *The Fortnightly Review* of March, 1921.

shown,¹ a new State had arisen dedicated to the idea of the equality of man.

It is now nearly eighty years since Dickens started from Liverpool on January 4, 1842, in a small paddle steamer of one thousand tons, built by an ingenious man of the name of Cunard, to face a fearful winter crossing of the Atlantic. There is no doubt that the sketches of American life, both in fact and in fiction, given to the world on his return by Dickens largely affected the relations of the two continents to one another for many years after. Dickens's descriptions of American characters—Colonel Diver, Mr. Jefferson Brick, Major Pawkins, General Fladdock and Mr. La Fayette Kettle—probably even to-day still colour most British thought and feeling about the United States. For the publishers tell us that the novels of Charles Dickens are still immensely read by the British-speaking folk, and his opinion of men and things is still so much in tune with the British temperament that he continues to assert an amazing authority over the British world.

Yet the America of Dickens's first visit has actually vanished into history. The New York which he describes in the *American Notes* as "a long, flat, straggling city" now towers to heaven in a series of breathless architectural leaps. The Washington which he dismisses as "a city of Mag-

¹ *Democratie en Amerique* (1835), translated by H. Reeve into *Democracy in America* (1835-40) and with biography (1875).

nificent Intentions " has become a great and beautiful town. " Spacious avenues that begin in nothing and lead nowhere " have now a definite scheme and meaning : and the " streets a mile long that only want houses, roads and inhabitants " are now the finished, inhabited parts of a finely ordered city. His audacious prophecy about Washington : " Such as it is, it is likely to remain," has met the fate of a defeated forecast. For at the present moment—1921—Washington, girded by mountains and laved by its mighty river, is one of the most beautiful capitals of the civilised world.

As with Washington, so with the Far West. The Swamp of Eden, of which Dickens gave us in *Martin Chuzzlewit* so terrible and gloomy a picture, has now blossomed into a hundred beautiful cities. The morass has gone : the piles have been driven in ; and on that foundation has arisen a mighty and splendid civilisation.

Dickens happened to visit America at a moment of extreme fever in Western land speculation. Doubtless there was much that was shady in that wild land " ramp." But his description of Eden has the fault of a caricature and the errors of exaggeration. It was apparently suggested to him by his experiences during an adventurous journey taken by himself and his wife in a canal boat along the Mississippi. He was shocked and scandalised by the spectacle of the new settlements, the forlorn appearance of the cabins in which the settlers lived,

and the general air of desolation that hung over this country during the winter months.¹ He appears to have forgotten that the American winter is always hard and bitter, and that it is the characteristic of new settlements to wear an air of disreputable untidiness, which, though it closely resembles the symptoms of decay, is really the raggedness and unsettlement of a new and growing life.

He would be a bold man who denied that such things as the Eden fraud did not happen in the time of this wild land gamble. I have known them happen even in this settled land of England. But in the America of to-day, at any rate, that phase has passed, and, though all offers of land should everywhere always be received with a wise and prudent scepticism, yet we need not suppose that the land speculators of America to-day are any worse than land speculators in any other part of the world. *Caveat emptor*—the purchaser must look after himself—must always be the golden rule, both in regard to horses and land.

As with Eden, so with its inhabitants.

Since Dickens's visit of 1842 there has been a complete change in American habits and manners. Both in *Martin Chuzzlewit* and in *American Notes*, Dickens is never tired of referring to the offensive personal habits of the Americans of that day. We are all familiar with his highly-coloured pictures

¹ See his description in a letter to Forster, *Life of Dickens*, Vol. I., p. 343. (Chapman and Hall.)

of Americans, not so much spitting as emitting continuous streams of liquid into distant spittoons. We remember his doubtful humour about their bad shooting at those receptacles. We caught from him a vision of the Yankee as a man who sat continually with his feet on the mantelpiece chewing endless tobacco. Now all this has gone like a bad dream. The American of to-day spits no more than the European: the notice that "Spitting is strictly prohibited" is quite as common in American tramcars as in British. True, the spittoon still continues to occupy part of the floor space in the American hotels—just as it does in certain famous London clubs and houses. But the American of to-day is quite as well behaved as any European—and considerably more sober. True, in America there is more equality of mutual courtesy, and perhaps less deference. There are fewer who rise above the general level of manners, just as there are fewer who fall below it.

In the same way, to anyone who has to-day just returned from daily association with American journalists and public men, Dickens's sketches of those types in the 'forties seem singularly remote. We all remember the editor who met Martin Chuzzlewit at New York, and on introducing him to his war correspondent, Mr. Jefferson Brick, put this amiable question to Martin:—

“Now let me ask you, sir, which of Mr.

Brick's articles had become at that time the most obnoxious to the British Parliament and the Court of St. James's? "

Or the toast given by the war correspondent himself :—

“ I will give you, sir, the *Rowdy Journal*, and its brethren ; the well of Truth, whose waters are black from being composed of printer's ink, but are quite clear enough for my country to behold the shadow of her Destiny reflected in.' ”

Now American journalists of to-day do not talk like that. The type has changed, and the style has changed with the type.

The questions, indeed, which keep recurring the more one reads these pages are : Was Dickens's picture ever true ? Did he give a really faithful description of the America of 1842 ? Or was he blinded by some remnant of deep national aversion, perhaps still traceable to the War of Independence and the war of 1812 ? For, after all, only thirty years had intervened since the two nations had been at war.

There was, indeed, no personal reason why Dickens should have conceived any actual aversion from the American people. I turn to the volumes of his letters, and I find him writing from Boston on January 31, 1842, in the following terms :—

' I can give you no conception of my welcome

here. There never was a king or emperor upon the earth so cheered or followed by crowds, and entertained in public at splendid balls and dinners, and waited on by public bodies and deputations of all kinds. I have had one from the Far West—a journey of two thousand miles. If I got out in a carriage the crowd surround it and escort me home; if I go to the theatre the whole house (crowded to the roof) rises as one man, and the timbers ring again. You cannot imagine what it is. I have five great public dinners on hand at this moment, and invitations from every town and village and city in the States.”¹

It is clear that in the affluence of its hospitable welcomes the America of 1842 was very much like the America of to-day. But as the weeks passed on it is equally clear that the tumultuous side of this reception began to fatigue Dickens, and perhaps to vex him. America has several democratic habits which are not always quite popular with European public men. An American crowd now, as then, not only insists on seeing a visitor, but generally desires to shake hands with him. They also wish to speak to him, and generally refuse to be denied. Now it is possible, with training, to accept these habits with patience and good temper. But the literary temperament is proverbially apt to be irritable at small shocks, and rarely goes

¹ *Letters of Charles Dickens* (Chapman and Hall), Vol. I., p. 59. There is a similar description in his letter to John Forster. Vol. I., p. 376.

along with that large, easy geniality which loves the easy access of crowds. Writing from Baltimore on March 22, 1842, Dickens expresses this mood :—

“ Think of two hours of this every day, and the people coming in by hundreds, all fresh, and piping hot, and full of questions, when we are literally exhausted and can hardly stand. I really do believe that if I had not a lady with me, I should have been obliged to leave the country and go back to England. But for her they would never leave me alone by day or night, and as it is, a slave comes to me now and then in the middle of the night with a letter, and waits at the bedroom door for an answer.”¹

Students of Dickens will remember how he revenged himself for this experience by the famous description of the great *soirée* given to Martin Chuzzlewit in the National Hotel before his departure to Eden. Mark was tremendously puzzled over this *soirée*. At the last moment, before the ship left the wharf, he ran back to Captain Kedgick and asked him why they had made so much fuss over Martin :—

“ ‘ What have they been making so much of him for, now ? ’ said Mark slyly. ‘ Come ! ’

“ ‘ Our people like ex-citement,’ answered Kedgick, sucking his cigar.

“ ‘ But how has he excited ’em ? ’ asked Mark.

¹ *Letters*. Vol. I., p. 66.

The Captain looked at him as if he were half inclined to unburden his mind of a capital joke.

“ ‘ You air a-going ? ’ he said.

“ ‘ Going ? ’ cried Mark ; ‘ an’t every moment precious ? ’

“ ‘ Our people like ex-citement,’ said the Captain, whispering. ‘ He an’t like emigrants in gin’ral ; and he excited ’em along of this. Scadder is a smart man, and—and—nobody as goes to Eden ever comes back a-live ! ’ ”

In view of the enthusiasm with which America greeted Dickens it really seems a little unkind that he should have taken the *soirée* and given to it such a sinister ending.

But as we read these letters, and compare them with *American Notes*, we begin dimly to perceive that there were several features of American life which were gradually creating the hatred and aversion which found such violent expression in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. It was not merely their manners that irritated Dickens, or their crowds that crushed him. There was one disease of human character which Charles Dickens profoundly detested, and that was hypocrisy. It was hypocrisy which he had begun to detect beneath the surface of American life.

It was in Virginia that he first came across the institution of slavery, and it seems to have aroused in him the same horror and hatred as it aroused in

Abraham Lincoln when he saw it for the first time travelling on the steamboat down the Mississippi to St. Louis. But what shocked Dickens was not merely the institution of slavery. It was the terrible contrast between that institution and all the spread-eagled chatter about rights and liberty which deafened his ears at every turn. For instance, take the talk of Colonel Diver in the office of the *Rowdy Journal* :—

“ ‘ In general we have a hold upon our citizens, both in public and in private life, which is as much one of the ennobling institutions of our happy country as——”

“ ‘ As nigger slavery itself,’ suggested Mr. Brick.

“ ‘ En-tirely so,’ remarked the Colonel.”

In *American Notes* Charles Dickens supplied the world with evidences of the horrors of slavery in America which stand for all time as justifications for the Abolition movement, and for the great war which ended that evil. If anyone to-day wishes still to sentimentalise about domestic slavery—and there are such people in the world even now—I would advise him to read again that terrible and scathing chapter entitled “ Slavery ” ¹ (Chapter XVII.), in which Dickens merely gives the evidence that came to his hand in the course of his journey.

¹ Here Dickens collected instances of atrocity with all the care and method which gives him a claim to be regarded as the greatest of agitators.

Of course, Dickens could not then foresee that the great American people would, in the end expiate this crime in blood and tears. The extraordinary thing is that, when that great issue of humanity rose in America, Charles Dickens, like so many other Englishmen, took the side of the South and not the North, and threw his influence against those who were fighting for the abolition of that very institution which he himself did so much to unveil and expose in all its nakedness and horror. No wonder that even to-day the average American is a little puzzled by the attitude of Europe towards his institutions and his politics.

There was another issue on which Dickens felt very strongly, and which affected at that time the relations between England and America. It was the question of international copyright. In 1842, and for more than a generation afterwards, there was no law of international copyright in the United States, and every English writer visiting that country enjoyed the questionable experience of seeing his works sold in immense quantities at a mere song, without the smallest power of claiming any fraction of profit for his own pocket. Now Charles Dickens felt very strongly on the subject of copyright. All through his life he was a crusader for the rights of the author, both in this country and abroad. No wonder that when he was in America his deepest indignation was aroused, and in a letter to Henry Austin, written from Niagara

on May 1, 1842, he gave full vent to this fury:—

“Is it not a horrible thing that scoundrel booksellers should grow rich here from publishing books, the authors of which do not reap one farthing from their issue by scores of thousands; and that every vile, blackguard, and detestable newspaper, so filthy and bestial that no honest man would admit one into his house for a scullery door mat, should be able to publish those same writings side by side, cheek by jowl, with the coarsest and most obscene companions with which they must become connected, in course of time, in people’s minds? Is it tolerable that besides being robbed and rifled an author should be forced to appear in any form, in any vulgar dress, in any atrocious company; that he should have no choice of his audience, no control over his own distorted text, and that he should be compelled to jostle out of the course the best men in this country who only ask to live by writing? I vow before high heaven that my blood so boils at these enormities, that when I speak about them I seem to grow twenty feet high, and to swell out in proportion ‘Robbers that ye are,’ I think to myself when I get upon my legs, ‘here goes!’”¹

There is no doubt that much of this fury remained

¹ *Letters.* Vol. I., p. 71.

with Dickens when he returned to England and that it partly inspired the vehement invective of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Perhaps it to some extent explains the following remarkable outburst of Martin himself :—

“As Martin ascended to his bedroom his eye was attracted by the Republican banner which had been hoisted from the house-top in honour of the occasion, and was fluttering before a window which he passed.

“‘Tut!’ said Martin. ‘You’re a gay flag in the distance. But let a man be near enough to get the light upon the other side, and see through you, and you are but sorry fustian!’”

Or this other passage, which was Charles Dickens’s last parting shot at the United States :—

“Cheerily, lads, cheerily. Anchor weighed. Ship in full sail. Her sturdy bowsprit pointing true to England. America a cloud upon the sea behind them!

“‘Why, cook, what are you thinking of so steadily?’ said Martin.

“‘Why, I was a-thinking, sir,’ returned Mark, ‘that if I was a painter and was called upon to paint the American Eagle, how should I do it?’

“‘Paint it as like an Eagle as you could, I suppose?’

“‘No,’ said Mark; ‘that wouldn’t do for me,

sir. I should want to draw it like a Bat, for its short-sightedness ; like a Bantam, for its bragging ; like a Magpie, for its honesty ; like a Peacock, for its vanity ; like an Ostrich, for its putting its head in the mud, and thinking nobody sees it——' ”

But at that point Dickens obviously thought that he had gone too far. For he makes Martin interrupt Mark with this assuaging comment :—

“ ‘ And like a Phoenix, for its power of springing up from the ashes of its faults and vices, and soaring up anew into the sky ! ’ said Martin. ‘ Well, Mark, let us hope so ! ’ ”

It was indeed time that the great author made Martin interrupt his friend, whose famous geniality and good-heartedness had for the moment failed him. For in that correction of Martin's Dickens packed a whole world of insight and observation about the United States. Matthew Arnold practically said the same thing at much greater length in his famous speech on “ Numbers ” which he gave to a New York audience sixty years later ; and all the shrewdest observers of America have noted this same remarkable feature in her life. It is her amazing power of moral recovery, this surprising reserve of national virtue, which again and again draws America back from the brink of ruin, and not once, but many times, in history has surprised

her best friends by the valour and splendour of her sudden deeds.

* * * * *

It was twenty-six years later when Dickens paid a second visit to the United States. Nearly a whole generation of human time had intervened, and both America and Dickens himself had passed through great changes. He was now well past middle age—bearded and grizzled. He had acquired certain gifts of patience and restraint that come with years. He was less liable to sudden storms, more tolerant of human feelings, with that wider vision that comes to a man who feels that his own pilgrimage is drawing towards a close. On the side of America there had been even greater changes. Slavery had vanished, and Dickens was to see the spectacle of the black man groping his way into freedom like a blind man who has just emerged into light. In spite of the immense losses of the great Civil War, the United States had also practically passed from one stage of civilisation to another. Thanks to her immense energy and resourcefulness, she had already almost repaired the terrific waste of life and substance which had taken place in the earlier 'sixties. The victory which crowned the efforts of the more progressive North had given to the people of the Northern States a more sober pride and hopefulness. For it was a pride based upon suffering and won by sacrifice.

We find, therefore, a complete change of judgment in the letters which Dickens wrote from the United States during this second visit. He is even inclined to retract some of his earlier judgments, and, indeed, before quitting America in 1868 he actually declared his intention to publish in every future edition of his *American Notes* and *Martin Chuzzlewit* his testimony to the great and mighty changes that he had witnessed during his second visit to the United States.

Perhaps in this mood of repentance he forgot that the changes lay not so much in his point of view as in the facts of American life. For he stepped into the first phase of that marvellous new mechanical civilisation which America has since given to the world: the magnificent hotels, the steam-heated houses, the Pullman cars, and all the hundred and one trifles of life which make up together an easier and more adaptable way of living than we know in Europe. The invention of the telegraph was already the first step in that wonderful capture of electricity to the service of man which has now carried America a further stage on her triumph over matter, distance and time. Now Dickens loved all such things. It is the tradition of the *Daily News* office that, during the brief period of his editorship of that great journal, he filled the rooms with cushioned armchairs and was waited upon by footmen dressed in velvet plush.

Thus it is clear that Dickens liked a comfortable

life, and it was indeed to obtain the money for that life that he had set forth on the marvellous and tireless lecturing tour which was the object of his second visit to the United States. He was, therefore, all the more relieved and pleased to find that after the winter rigours of the Atlantic he had landed in a country where the hotels were now well warmed and the railway trains were beginning to be comfortable.

On March 21, 1868, Dickens wrote from Springfield in Massachusetts a letter to his friend, the actor Macready, which was practically a recantation of the remarkable letter in condemnation of America which he had written to the same correspondent from Baltimore on March 22, 1842. Then he had placed upon paper that famous historic judgment :—

“ But however much I like the ingredients of this great dish, I cannot but come back to the point upon which I started, and say that the dish itself goes against the grain with me, and I don't like it.”¹

But now, in 1868, he writes to the same correspondent :—

“ You will find the general aspect of America and Americans decidedly much improved. You would find immeasurably greater consideration and respect for your privacy than of old. You

¹ *Letters.* Vol. I., p. 62.

would find a steady change for the better everywhere." ¹

Then he gives us a glimpse of what he means by some of these improvements in American life :—

“ When the railroad straight away to San Francisco (in six days) shall be opened through, it will not only have drawing-rooms but sleeping-rooms, too ; a bell in every little apartment communicating with a steward’s pantry, a restaurant, a staff of servants, marble washing-stands, and a barber’s shop ! I looked into one of these cars a day or two ago, and it was very ingeniously arranged and quite complete.” ¹

Thus did Charles Dickens, far out in that Western world, obtain the first glimpses of that new and wonderful civilisation which is now the marvel of mankind.

It is not recorded that the American public displayed during this second visit of Charles Dickens any resentment for the criticisms which he had uttered after his return from the first visit. They crowded to his readings in such immense masses that the sale of his tickets became a whirl of speculation. Thousands were unable to hear him and went away disappointed. They acclaimed him as if he had been a god. Crowds would assemble in the streets to see him pass. He toured throughout New England, and then visited Philadelphia,

¹ *Ibid.* Vol. II., p. 374.

Baltimore and Washington, afterwards travelling up north to Cleveland and Buffalo. His fatigues were immense, and undoubtedly laid the seeds of that fatal seizure which cut short his life only two years later. But he loved this existence, and it brought him gigantic profits. He was the first of that long line of British authors who have gone to America to earn the wealth which is denied to them in their own country. But it was not only dollars that Dickens was after. He loved the applause of the multitude with a great passion. His readings for the first time brought him face to face with that world to whom he always made his appeal. A great wave of affection seemed to pass between him and that great common people whose joys and sorrows he had depicted with such supreme pathos. It was the crown of his career—this discovery of that vast store of human affection that he had won by his life's work. Now that the sands of his life were running out we need not grudge him the joys of those last two years.

This tremendous experience seemed to draw him nearer to the heart of the American people. Perhaps it helped him to understand better that collective side of the American nature which is, if we understand it rightly, its most impressive feature.

* * * * *

It is now fifty years since Charles Dickens returned from this second visit. Unhappily, his life was too far spent for him to place on permanent

record those changes in his impressions about the American people. He was to produce no second novel on American life which would unwrite the harsh judgments of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. That was an unhappy accident. For it would have been better for the relations between the two countries if he could have built up into one of his immortal novels the various kindly impressions of the American folk which are now contained only in his *Biography and Letters*. There is nothing, for instance, in *Martin Chuzzlewit* to convey the judgment everywhere recorded by Dickens in his intimate writings, both in 1842 and 1868, as to the amazing courtesy of the Americans towards women. It was in 1842 that he wrote from Boston :—

“There is universal deference paid to ladies, and they walk about at all seasons wholly unprotected.”¹

A remarkable tribute to a rough and early civilisation. Or, again, his description of their habits at the rough meals which he otherwise loved so little :—

“Nobody will sit down to any one of these meals, though the dishes are smoking on the board, until the ladies have appeared and taken their chairs”¹

At the present day in America (1921), if a woman enters an “elevator,” every man takes off his hat, and women travellers will tell you that America

¹ These passages are from the letters to Forster contained in his *Biography*.

is the safest country in the world for them to wander alone. Throughout that has been the high credit of that country ; and it seems unfair that so little tribute is given to Americans in English fiction for this great quality of chivalry.

Not that it means that women in America are any less beautiful or attractive than in other countries. Here, again, we have Dickens's judgment as early as 1842 :—

“ The ladies of America,” he says, “ are decidedly and unquestionably beautiful.”

And Dickens had a distinct eye for beauty. Everyone who visits America to-day will bear evidence that there is here no falling away.

But it is even more remarkable to find scattered through Dickens's letters to Forster tributes to American men which certainly do not seem wholly consistent with the sketches contained in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. “ Americans,” he says, “ are friendly, earnest, hospitable, kind, frank, very often accomplished, far less prejudiced than you would suppose. Warm-hearted, fervent, enthusiastic.” After that it surely matters little that Dickens goes on to say that he does not want to live in America. because it seems a fitting thing that every man should live in his own country. The great fact is that he gives to Americans this great tribute, and no one who visits that country to-day will say that they have done anything to lose that praise. They are as a

people still as friendly, hospitable and kindly as they have ever been. Whatever faults they have seem the faults of excess in these admirable virtues. They are still "warm-hearted, fervent, enthusiastic," and if some of these qualities sometimes show themselves in excess, then they ought not to be judged too harshly by those whose hearts are more frigid and whose tempers are less eager.

But the most remarkable thing is to find in Dickens's letters some very notable tributes to American politicians, the very class which he has so bitterly caricatured in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. In a letter contained in Forster's *Life*, and written from Washington in 1842, he thus speaks of the very men whom he was so soon to caricature:—

"There are some very noble specimens out of the West. Splendid men to look on, hard to deceive, prompt to act, lions in energy, Crichtons in varied accomplishments, Indians in quickness of eye and gesture, Americans in affectionate and generous impulse."¹

That is certainly not the impression of these men which he conveys when he draws his pictures of General Cyrus Choke or Mr. Scadder. In those descriptions the men from the West are simply depicted as intriguing scoundrels, distinguished from that type in Europe only by the brassiness of their

¹ Vol. I., p. 330.

boastings and the insolence of their absurd self-esteem.

The fact is that the young Dickens of 1842 was essentially pugnacious and impetuous. He loved a fight, but he disliked contradiction. Thus it was that when he bumped into conflict with the America of that day on the questions of slavery and copyright, he met men of very much the same temper as himself, and this aroused in him an amazing bitterness. "I believe," he wrote to Forster in a very remarkable letter of February 24, 1842,¹ "that there is no country on the face of the earth where there is less freedom of opinion on any subject in reference to which there is a broad difference of opinion than in this country." But what Dickens forgot was that he was expressing opinions on definite subjects of acute domestic controversy; and few countries like to hear such questions discussed by a visiting foreigner.

That is still the chief danger to-day in the relations between Great Britain and the United States. We are both countries in which every man likes to "say the thing he will" and therefore we have always indulged in amazing freedom in our criticism of one another. A whole line of English writers have followed in the track of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and there have been some American writers who have retaliated. But these things do not add to the friendship between nations. It

¹ *Life*. Vol. I., p. 299.

does not follow that because there is kinship between men criticism is more readily accepted. It is recorded of Dr. Jowett that he said in a sermon to two young people whom he was marrying: "Above all, remember to be polite to one another." The same advice seems to be desirable for two nations of the same speech aiming at a friendship which is often achieved, not on account of kinship, but in spite of it.

Reflecting on the situation to-day between the two countries, I would suggest some such counsel to those writers and speakers who are now labouring to improve the relationship between Great Britain and the United States. Let them, at all costs, resist the cheap and easy temptation to mutual criticism. Let us remember that the depreciation of kindred peoples is not, as so many imagine, a mark of superior culture, but the common vice of uncultured humanity. Let us mutually learn to select what we can admire in one another—"whatsoever things are of good report"—and dwell on those. If Dickens had done so, then we might have lost a great satire, but he would have worked better for the things that belong unto our peace.

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