

Tales from Dickens.

BY
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"The Castaway"
"Hearts Courageous,"
etc.

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Charles Dickens

No. XI. Martin Chuzzlewit

HOW MARTIN LEFT ENGLAND

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT was an old man who, from being poor, became so rich that he found not only that people bowed low and flattered him, but that many of his relatives were trying by every trick to get some of his money.

He was naturally a suspicious, obstinate man, and when he saw this he began to distrust everybody and to think every one selfish and deceitful. He had loved most of all his grandson, Martin, but in the end his heart became hardened to him also. This was partly Martin's own fault, for he was somewhat selfish, but he had, nevertheless, a great deal of good in him. And perhaps his selfishness was partly his grandfather's fault, because the latter had brought him up to believe he would inherit all his money and would be very rich.

At last, ill and grown suspicious of every one he met, old Chuzzlewit adopted a beautiful orphan girl named Mary Graham, and kept her near him as his nurse and companion. In order that she might not have any selfish interest in being kind to him, he took an oath in her presence that he would not leave her a cent when he died. He paid her monthly wages and it was agreed that there would be no affection between them. In spite of his seeming harshness, Mary knew his heart was naturally kind, and she soon loved him like a father. And he, softened by her affection, came in spite of himself to love her as a daughter.

All might have been well but for young Martin's falling in love with Mary. He concluded too readily that his grandfather would not approve of his marrying her, and told the old man his intentions in such a fiery way that Chuzzlewit resented it. He accused Martin of a selfish attempt to steal from him Mary's care, and at this, Martin, whose temper was as quick as his grandfather's, flew to anger. They quarreled and Martin left him, declaring he would henceforth make his own way until he was able to claim Mary for his wife.

While he was wondering what he should do, Martin saw in a newspaper the advertisement of a Mr. Pecksniff, an architect living not many miles from London, who wished a pupil to board and teach. An architect was what Martin wanted to be, and he softened by the advertisement at once and accepted Pecksniff's terms. Now to tell the truth, Martin had another reason for this. Pecksniff was his grandfather's cousin, and he knew the old man thought him a good boy, and that his relatives and disliked him accordingly. And Martin was so angry with his grandfather that he went to Pecksniff's nearly to spite his grandfather.

Pecksniff was just the man old Chuzzlewit thought him. He was a smooth, sleek hypocrite, with an oily manner. He had wary eyes and a wide, whiskered throat, and was full of the most virtuous sayings, for which people thought him a most moral and upright man. He was a widower with two daughters, Charity and Mercy, the older of whom had a very bitter temper, who made it hard for the few students as long as they stayed there.

After Pecksniff had once got a pupil's money in advance, he made pretense of teaching him. He kept him drawing designs for buildings, and that was all. If any of the designs were good, he said nothing to the pupil, but if they were bad, he was a muscular, tough, and played the organ in the village church, which was a credit to Pecksniff. With all this, Pecksniff was a generous, open-hearted lad, who believed every one honest and true, and he was so grateful to Pecksniff (whose hypocrisy he never imagined) that he was always stinging his praises everywhere. In return, for all this, Pecksniff treated him with contempt and made him quite like a servant.

Tom Pinch, however, was a favorite with every one else. He had a sister, Ruth, who loved him dearly, and he seldom saw her, for she was a governess in the house of a brass and iron founder, who did not like her to have company. One of Tom's greatest friends had been a pupil named John Westlock, who in vain had tried to open the other's eyes to Pecksniff's real character. When Westlock came to his money he left and went to live in London, and it was to take his vacant place that the new pupil, Martin, was now coming.

Another friend of Pinch's was Mark Tapley, a raskish, good-humored fellow, whose one ambition was to find a position so uncomfortable and dismal that he would get some credit for being jolly in it. Tapley was an assistant at the Blue Dragon, a village inn, whose plump, rosy landlady was so fond of him that he might have married her if he had chosen to. But, as Tapley said, there was no credit in being jolly where there was so comfortable, so he left the Blue Dragon and went off, too, to London.

With neither Westlock nor Mark Tapley there, Tom Pinch was lonely and welcomed the arrival of Martin, with whom he soon made friends, while Mr. Pecksniff folded his new pupil to his breast, shed a crocodile tear and set him to work designing a grammar school.

Old Chuzzlewit soon heard where Martin, his grandson, was, and wrote to Pecksniff asking him to meet him in London. Pecksniff was so anxious to curry favor with the rich old man that, taking his daughters with him, he left at once for London, where they put up at a boarding-house kept by a Mrs. Todgers, while Pecksniff awaited the arrival of old Chuzzlewit.

Mrs. Todgers' house smelted of cab-

both of them to influence old Chuzzlewit. It would be easy to do what they pleased with him, and with his money, too. With this end in view, he began to persecute poor Mary with his attentions, squeezing her hand and throwing kisses to her when no one else was looking.

Charity, Pecksniff's older daughter, was not blind to his plan. She was in a sour temper because the miserly Jonas, who came from London often now to see them had begun to make love to Mercy instead of to her. To see her father now paying so much attention to Mary Graham made Charity angry, and she left her father's house and went to live in London at Mrs. Todgers' boarding-house, where she set her cap to catch a young man, whether he wanted to marry her or not. As for Mercy, the younger sister, she was leading Jonas such a dance that she thought very little of her father's schemes.

The vinegary Charity out of the way, Pecksniff began to persecute Mary more and more. One day he made her so angry by holding her hand and kissing it that she threatened to complain to old Chuzzlewit, who thought he had got under his thumb, was a very deep and knowing old man indeed. He had

offer to his friend Tom Pinch a position as a librarian at a good salary. Who the employer was Tom was not to know. Here was a rare mystery, and Ruth in her mingled excitement and peevishness looked so sweet and charming that then and there Westlock fell in love with her. Tom and he went at once to the agent who had made this extraordinary offer, and he took them to an unoccupied house, to a dusty room whose floor was covered all over with books. Tom, he said, was to arrange and make a list of these. Then he gave him the key, told him to come to him each week for his salary, and disappeared.

Still wondering, the two friends went back together, for of course Westlock had to taste the beefsteak pudding. Ruth had supper waiting for them. Every minute Westlock thought she grew more lovely, and as he walked home he knew he was in love at last.

Now, the mystery of Tom's library, and of the banknote that Martin had received when his money was all gone, would have been a very joyful one to them both if they could have guessed it. Old Chuzzlewit, whom they believed so harsh, and whom the city Pecksniff thought he had got under his thumb, was a very deep and knowing old man indeed. He had

never ceased to love Martin, his grandson, though he had misunderstood him at first, but he had seen very plainly the lad was growing selfish and wished to save him from this. He had longed for nothing more than that Martin and Mary should marry, but he wished to try their love for each other as well as Martin's affection for her. It was to test Pecksniff that Chuzzlewit had asked the architect to send Martin from his house, and when he saw that Pecksniff was fawning hound enough to do it, he determined to punish him in the end. It was Chuzzlewit who had found where Martin lodged in London, and had sent him the banknote. And, now by Tom Pinch's goodness and honor, it was he who now, secretly, made this position for him.

If Pecksniff had guessed this, he would probably have had a stroke of apoplexy. Unluckily while they talked there was an eavesdropper near. It was Pecksniff himself. He had gone into the church to rest, and lying down in one of the high back pews, had gone to sleep, and now the voices of Tom and Mary had awakened him. He listened and waited till they had both gone; then he stole out and went home by a roundabout way. That night he went to old Chuzzlewit and told him of the church. Making a great show of his respect and regard for old Chuzzlewit, he told him this villain should not remain under his roof so long longer. Then he called in Tom Pinch and, abusing and insulting him in Chuzzlewit's presence, sent him away as he had sent away Martin.

Tom was feeling so bad over his loss of faith in his idol, Pecksniff, that he did not greatly mind this last blow. In fact, he had not concluded he could not live any longer with such a wicked hypocrite anyway. He packed his things and set off for London, feeling almost as if the world had come to an end.

Once there, however, he plucked up spirit and felt better. First of all he looked up Westlock, the former pupil of Pecksniff, whom he had found the same friendly, clever fellow now in his riches as he was of old. Westlock was glad that Pinch had at last found his master out, and began at once to plan for his future. Next Tom went to see his sister Ruth at the house where she was governess.

He arrived there at a fortunate time, for the vulgar brass-and-iron founder who had hired her to try to teach his spoiled little daughter, was at that moment scolding Ruth harshly for not being under her own influence. When she was alone with him he seemed more and more to love her, but only let Pecksniff appear and he would seem only anxious to ask his advice about the smallest matter.

Little wonder Pecksniff concluded he could win his victim around his finger. At length he proposed that old Chuzzlewit and Mary leave the Blue Dragon, where, he said, he felt sure they were not comfortable, and come and live with him at his own house. To Mary's dismay, the old man consented, and they were soon ensconced in the architect's house.

The only thing that now seemed to stand in Pecksniff's way was Mary, and he decided that, as old Chuzzlewit was fond of her he himself would marry her. Once married to her, he reasoned, with

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What Came of Martin's Trip to America

WHILE these things were occurring, so much had happened to Martin and Mark Tapley far away in America.

The sailing vessel on which they crossed was crowded and dirty, and in order to husband their money they had taken passage in the steerage. For a long time Martin was very seasick, and even when he grew better he was so ashamed at having to travel in the worst and cheapest part of the vessel that he would not go on deck. But Tapley had none of this false pride. He made friends with all, helped every one he could and soon became such a general favorite that (as he thought sadly) he was having more than good time for him to be jolly with any crew.

The long voyage of so many weeks came to an end at last when they reached New York. They found it a strange place indeed. Only one they met pleased them; a gentleman named Eves, an old friend of their father's, who had come to New York to buy their train tickets. Martin had already sold the diamond ring which Mary had given him, and he had just enough left to purchase a tract of land in "Eden" and to pay their fare there. Martin looked over the agent's splendid plans of the new town, showing wharves, churches and public buildings, and thought it a capital thing for a young architect like himself to bargain without more ado and to take the next steamer down the desolate Mississippi.

A terrible disappointment awaited them when they found what "Eden" really was—a handful of rotting log cabins set in a swamp. The wharves and public buildings existed only on the agent's map with words to be cruelly checked off them. There were only a few wretched men alive there—the rest had succumbed to the sickly hot vapor that rose from the swamp and hung in the air. At the sight of what they had come to, Martin fell down and wept in very despair. But for his comrade's cheerfulness he would have wholly given up hope.

Next morning Martin found himself in the grip of the deadly fever with which the place reeked, and for many days thereafter he lay helpless and burning with fever, like a child by the faithful Mark Tapley. When he had begun to recover it came the other's turn to fall sick and Martin took his place at nursing.

Through all Tapley never complained. At last he found himself in circumstances where to be jolly was really a credit to anybody. He always insisted that he was not a selfish man, and when he was weakest and unable to speak he wrote "Jolly" on a slate for Martin to see.

Watching his sick friend day by day Martin came to know himself truly and to see his own selfishness. He nursed Tapley to health again he determined to try it out of his nature and to return to England a nobler man. He began to think not of what he had sacrificed for Mary, but of what she would have sacrificed for him, and to wish with all his heart that he had not parted with his grandfather in anger. And even before he was able to take the train he had determined to return as soon as possible to England.

He laid aside his pride and wrote to Eves, who had befriended them in New York, to let him know that he was returning both to that city. Once there, Tapley found a position as cook in the same ship that had brought them from America to New York. So Martin started back to the home he had parted from a year before, poorer than he had left it, but at heart a better and a more cheerful man.

Most of the first man they saw on land, almost the first man they saw on land, was as poor as a pauper as Mark Tapley was at that time.

They finally reached the Blue Dragon inn, and there next day Jonas brought Pecksniff to dine with Tigs. Though Pecksniff pretended he took the idea as a joke, yet the thought of cheating other people for big profits was very attractive to him, and before evening he had himself dressed himself in a rough suit that he had prepared for disguise, let himself be carried by a back way and took the stage back again to the village where he had left Tigs with Pecksniff.

He lay in wait in a wood through which Tigs passed after his last call on Pecksniff and there he killed him with a club. Thus he went strictly back to London in

talked, Mary had hidden her face in her hands and was weeping, for she believed his grandfather wholly Pecksniff's power that she had no hope for Martin.

Pecksniff was in rare good humor, for it was that very day that he had turned his money over to Tigs to make a fortune for him in the new Anglo-Bengalee Company. Now, rejoicing in his opportunity, he took it upon himself to answer. He called Martin a shameless, cowardly scoundrel and ordered him from the door. Then he gave his arm to the old man and led him from the room.

Martin clasped Mary for a moment in his arms as he kissed her and told her to be good and to wait for him in the house and set out with Mark Tapley for London.

Old Chuzzlewit's Plot Succeeds

WHERE was the guilty Jonas meanwhile? Shivering at every sound, listening for the news that Tigs' body had been found in the wood, wondering if by any chance the crime might be laid on him.

Already fate was weaving a net about his feet. The men from whom he had bought the poison to kill his father had fallen very ill, and in his illness had repented of the part he had played. He had confessed to Westlock, whom, before he had fallen into wicked company, he had once known. Westlock, since old Chuzzlewit had been the brother of Jonas' father, sent for him, and he confessed to him the whole story of the purchased poison. Then together the three went to Jonas' house and brought him face to face with his accuser.

Confronted with their evidence Jonas gave himself up for lost, but old Chuffey, whom he had so abused, eluded the watchful eye of "Sairy" Gamp and entered just in time to keep his promise to his dead master and to clear Jonas, the son. He told them how he had really happened; how Jonas had intended to kill his father and how his death had been due not to the poison, which he had never taken, but to the knowledge of his son's wickedness.

Jonas, in the reaction from his fear, laughed aloud, and was abusively ordering them to leave, when the door opened and the color suddenly left his cheeks. Policemen stood there, and at their head was a dignified man in a top hat. There were only a few wretched men alive there—the rest had succumbed to the sickly hot vapor that rose from the swamp and hung in the air. At the sight of what they had come to, Martin fell down and wept in very despair. But for his comrade's cheerfulness he would have wholly given up hope.

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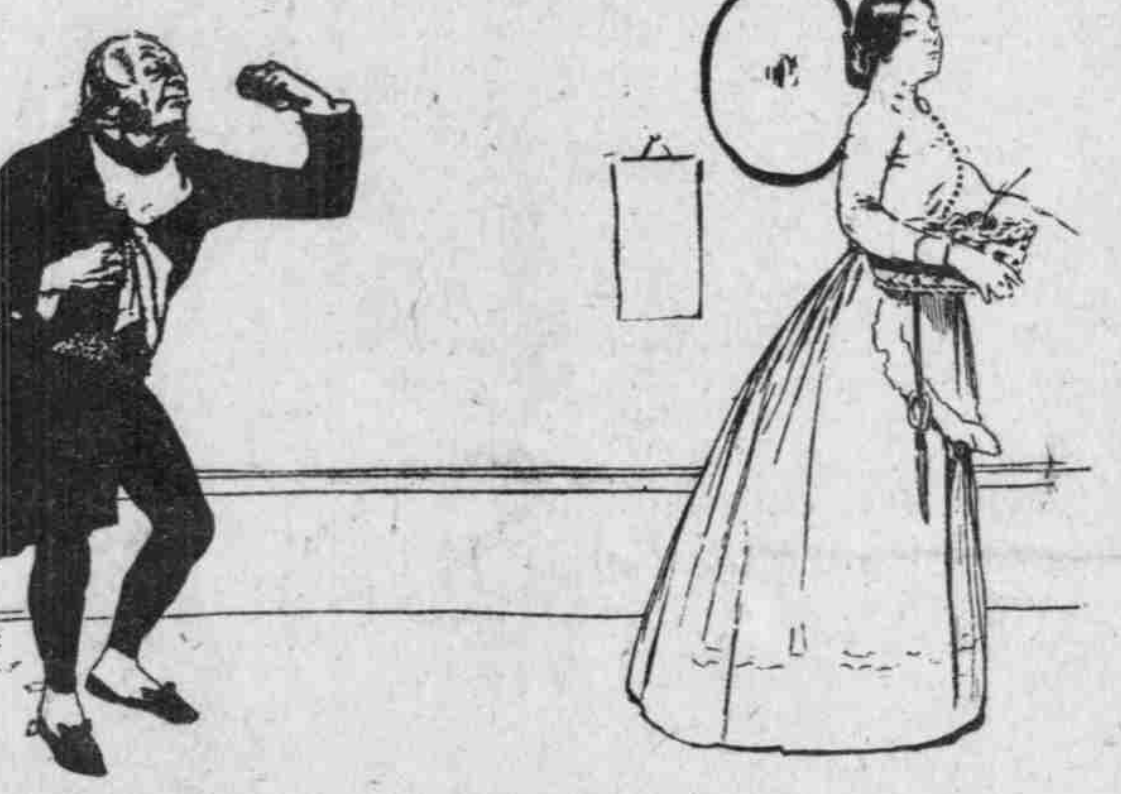
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WITH THIS END IN VIEW PECKSNIFF BEGAN TO PERSECUTE POOR MARY WITH HIS ATTENTIONS.