GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XX.

The journey from our town to the Metropolis was a journey of about two hours. It was a little last mid-day when the four-horse stage-coach by which I was a passenger, got into the ravel of traffic frayed out about the Cross Keys, Wood Street, Chelsea, London. We Britons had at this time particularly settled that it was treasonable to doubt our having and our being the best of everything: otherwise, while I was scared by the immensity of London, I think I might have had some faint doubts whether it was not rather ugly, crooked, narrow, and dirty.

Mr. Jaggers had duly sent me his address; it was Little Britain, and he had written after it on his card, "Just out of Smithfield, and close by the coach-office." Nevertheless, a hackney-coachman, who seemed to have as many capes to his grey great-coat as he was years old, picked me up in his coach and hemmed me in with a folding and jingling barrier of steps, as if he were going to take me fifty miles. He got on his box, which I remember to have been decorated with an old weather-stained pea-green hammock, no members into rage, was quite a work of time. It was a wonderful equipage, with six great cornets outside, and ragged things behind for I don't know how many feetmen to hold on by, and a narrow below them, to prevent our further feetmen from yielding to the temptation.

I had scarcely had time to enjoy the coach and to think how like a squire's it was, and yet how like a rag-shop, and to wonder why the lowest none-stage were kept inside, when I observed the coachman beginning to get down, as if we were going to stop presently. And stop we presently did, in a gloomy street, at certain offices, with an open door, whereas was painted Mr. Jaggers.

"How much?" I asked the coachman.

The coachman answered, "A shilling--unless you wish to make it more."

I naturally said I had no wish to make it more.

"Then it must be a shilling," observed the coachman. "I don't want to get into trouble."

I knew him!" He darkly closed an eye at Mr. Jaggers's name, and shook his head.

When he had got his shilling, and had in course of time completed the ascent to his box, and had got away (which appeared to relieve his mind), I went into the front office with my little portmanteau in my hand and asked, Was Mr. Jaggers at home?

"He is not," returned the clerk. "He is in Court at present. Am I addressing Mr. Pip?"

I signified that he was addressing Mr. Pip.

"Mr. Jaggers left word would you wait in his room? He couldn't say how long he might be, having a case on. But it stands to reason, his time being valuable, that he won't be longer than he can help."

With these words, the clerk opened a door, and ushered me into an inner chamber at the back. Here we found a gentleman with one eye, in a velveteen suit and knee-breeches, who wiped his nose with his sleeve on being interrupted in the perusal of the newspaper.

"Go and wait outside, Mike," said the clerk.

I began to say that I hoped I was not interrupting—when the clerk shoved this gentleman out with as little ceremony as I ever saw used, and tossing his fur cap after him, left me alone.

Mr. Jaggers's room was lighted by a skylight only, and was a most dismal place; the skylight obscuredly patched, like a broken head, and the distorted adjoining houses looking as if they had twisted themselves to peep down at me through it. There were not so many papers about, as I should have expected to see, and there were some odd objects about, that I should not have expected to see—such as an old rusty pistol, a sword in a scabbard, several strange-looking boxes and packages, and two dreadful casks on a shelf of parquet peculiarly swollen, and twitchy about the nose. Mr. Jaggers's own high-backed chair was of deadly black horseshair, with rows of brass nails round it like a collar; and I fancied I could see how he leaned back in it, and hit his forfanger at the clients. The room was but small, and the clients seemed to have had a habit of breaking up against the wall; for the wall, especially opposite to Mr. Jaggers's chair, was gummy with simulacral. I recollected, too, that the one-eyed gentleman had shuffled forth against the wall when I was the innocent cause of his being turned out.
I sat down in the cliental chair placed over against Mr. Jaggers's chair, and became fascinated by the dismal atmosphere of the place. I called to mind that the clerk had had the same air of knowing something to everybody else's disadvantage as his master had. I wondered how many other clerks there were up-stairs, and whether they all claimed to have the same detrimental mastery of their fellow-creatures. I wondered what was the history of all the odd litter about the room, and how it came there. I wondered whether the two swollen faces were of Mr. Jaggers's family, and if he were so unfortunate as to have had a pair of such ill-looking relations, why he stuck them on that dusty perch for the blacks and flies to settle on, instead of giving experience of a London summer day, and my spirits may have been expressed by the hot, exhausted air, and by the dust and grime that lay thick on everything. But I sat wondering and waiting in Mr. Jaggers's close room, until I really could not bear the two cases on the shelf above Mr. Jaggers's chair, and got up and went out.

When I told the clerk that I would take a turn in the air while I waited, he advised me to go round the corner and I should come into Smithfield. So I came into Smithfield, and the shameful place, being all seamed with filth and fat and blood and foam, seemed to stick to me. So I rubbed it off with all possible speed by turning into a street where I saw the great black dome of Saint Paul's bulging at me from behind a grim stone building which a bystander said was Newgate Prison. Following the wall of the jail, I found the roadway covered with straw to deaden the noise of passing vehicles; and from this, and from the quantity of people standing about, smelling strongly of spirits and beer, I inferred that the trials were on.

While I looked about me here, an exceedingly dirty and partially drunk minister of justice asked me if I would like to step in and hear a trial or so: informing me that he could give me a front place for half-a-crown, wisdom I should command a full view of the Lord Chief Justice in his wig and robes—mentioning that awful personage like waxwork, and presently offering him the reduced price of eightpence. As I declined the proposal on the plea of an appointment, he was so good as to take me into a yard and show me where the gallowes were kept, and that two men were put to them. He showed me the Doctors' Door, out of which culprits came to be hanged: heightening the interest of that dreadful portal by giving me to understand that “four on 'em” would come out at that door the day after to-morrow at eight in the morning, to be killed in a row. This was horrible, and gave me a sickening idea of London: the more so as the Lord Chief Justice's proprieotor wore (from his hat down to his boots and up again to his pocket-handkerchief inclusive) muddled clothes, which had evidently not belonged to him originally, and which, took it into my head, he had bought cheap of the executioner. Under these circumstances I thought myself well rid of him for a shilling. I dropped into the office to ask if Mr. Jaggers had come in yet, and I found he had not, and I stalked out again. This time I made the tour of Little Britain, and turned into Bartholomew Close; and now I became aware that other people were waiting about for Mr. Jaggers, as well as I. There were two men of secret appearance lounging in Bartholomew Close, and thoughtfully fitting their feet into the cracks of the pavement as they talked together, one of whom said to the other when they first passed me, that “Jaggers would do it if it was to be done.” There was a knot of three men and two women standing at a corner, and one of the women was crying on her dirty shawl, and the other comforted her by saying, as she pulled her own shawl over her shoulders, “Jaggers is for him, Melia, and what more could you have?” There was a red-eyed little Jew who came into the Close while I was listening there, in company with a second little Jew whom he sent upon an errand; and while the messenger was gone, I remarked this Jew, who was of a highly excitable temperament, performing a fit of anxiety under a lamp-post, and accompanying himself, in a kind of frenzy, with the words, “Oh Jaggers, Jaggers, Jaggers! all other folk are hanged, give me Jaggers!” These testimonies to the popularity of my guardian made a deep impression on me, and I admired and wondered more than ever.

At length, as I was looking out at the iron gate of Bartholomew Close into Little Britain, I saw Mr. Jaggers coming across the road towards me. All the others who were waiting saw him at the same time, and there was quite a rustle at him. Mr. Jaggers, putting a hand on my shoulder and walking me on at his side without saying anything to me, addressed himself to his followers.

“First, he took the two secret men.

Now, I have nothing to say to you,” said Mr. Jaggers, twirling his finger at them. “I want to know no more than I know. As to the result, it's a toss-up. I told you from the first it was a toss-up. Have you paid Wemmick yet?”

“We made the money up this morning, sir,” said one of the men, submissively, while the other paused Mr. Jaggers's face.

“I don't ask you when you made it up, or where, or whether you made it up at all. Has Wemmick got it?”

“Yes, sir,” said both the men together.

“Very well; then you may go. Now, I won't have it,” said Mr. Jaggers, waving his hand at them to put them behind him. “If you say a word to me, I'll throw up the case.”

“We thought, Mr. Jaggers—one of the men began, pulling off his hat.

Then I told you not to do,” said Mr. Jaggers. “You thought? I think for you; that's enough for you. If you want you, I know where to find you; I don't want you to find me. Now I've a word.”

The two men stood there, but not to do business with him longer, but to stand for the hangman, and mutter the words that were to be spoken so soon.

A tall man covered with a red coat and a large hat, and wearing a sash, came into the street, and rapped on the iron gate. I thought myself well rid of him. Wemmick went out. The tall man was the Lord Chief Justice's proprietor more (from Lia...
find me. Now I won't have it. I won't hear a word.

The two men looked at one another as Mr. Jaggers waved them behind again, and humbly fell back and were heard no more.

"And now you?" said Mr. Jaggers, suddenly stopping, and turning on the two women with the alacrity, from whom the three men had meekly separated.—"Oh! Amelia, is it?"

"Yes, Mr. Jaggers." "And do you remember," retorted Mr. Jaggers, "that but for me you wouldn't be here and couldn't be here?"

"Oh yes, sir!" exclaimed both women together. "Lord bless you, sir, we know that!"

"Then why," said Mr. Jaggers, "do you come here?"

"My Bill, sir!" the crying woman pleaded. "Now, I tell you what!" said Mr. Jaggers. "Once for all. If you don't know that your Bill's in good hands, I know it. If you come here, bothering about your Bill, I'll make an example of both you and me, and let him slip through my fingers. Have you paid Wemmick?"

"Oh yes, sir! Every farthing."

"Very well. Then you have done all you have got to do. Say another word—one single word—and Wemmick shall give you your money back.

This terrible threat caused the two women to fall off immediately. No one remained now but the excitable Jew, who had already missed the kettle of Mr. Jaggers's cup to his lips several times.

"I don't know this man!" said Mr. Jaggers, in the same devastating strain. "What does this fellow want?"

"My dear Mr. Jaggers. Hown brother to Habiblah Latharith!"

"Who's he?" said Mr. Jaggers. "Let go of my coat."

The suitor, kissing the hem of the garment again before relinquishing it, replied, "Habiblah Latharith, on thumphision of plate."

"You're too late," said Mr. Jaggers. "I am over the way."

"Holy father, Mr. Jaggers!" cried my excitable acquaintance, turning white, "don't you see you're again Habiblah Latharith?"

"I am," said Mr. Jaggers, "and there's an end of it. Get out of the way." "Mr. Jaggers! Half a moment! My hown authentick gone to Mr. Wemmick at thith pretiun minute, to hoist him high ternath. Mr. Jaggers! Half a quarter of a moment! If you'd have the condintom to be bought off from the other side—at least superior justice—money no object!—Mr. Jaggers!—Mr. Jaggers!—Mr. Jaggers!"

My guardian throw his suppliant off with suspense and incomprehension, and left him dancing on the pavement as if it were red-hot. Without further interruption, we reached the front office, where we found the clerk and the man in velveteen with the fur cap.

"Here's Mike," said the clerk, getting down from his stool, and approaching Mr. Jaggers confidentially. "Oh!" said Mr. Jaggers, turning to the man, who was pulling a lock of hair in the middle of his forehead, like the Bull in Cock Robin pulling at the balloon; "your man comes on this afternoon. Well?"

"Well, Mr. Jaggers," returned Mike, in the voice of a sufferer from a constitutional cold; "after a deal o' trouble, I've found one, sir, as might do."

"What is he prepared to swear?"

"Well, Mr. Jaggers," said Mike, wiping his nose on his fur cap this time; "in a general way, anything."

Mr. Jaggers suddenly became most irate. "Now I warned you before," said he, throwing his forefinger at the terrified client, "that if you ever presumed to talk in that way here, I'd make an example of you. You infernal scoundrel, how dare you tell me that!"

The client looked scared, but bewildered too, as if he were unconscious what he had done. "Spoonery!" said the clerk, in a low voice, giving him a stir with his elbow. "Soft Head! Need you say it face to face?"

"Now, I ask you, you blundering booby," said my guardian, very sternly, "once more and for the last time, what the man you have brought here is prepared to swear?"

Mike looked hard at my guardian, as if he were trying to learn a lesson from his face, and slowly replied, "A yeller to character, or to having been in his company and never left him all the night in question."

"Now, be careful. In what station of life is this man?"

Mike looked at his cap, and looked at the floor, and looked at the ceiling, and looked at the clerk, and even looked at me, before beginning to reply in a nervous manner, "We've dressed him up like—— when my guardian blistered out;

"What? You will, will you?"

("Spoonery!" added the clerk again, with another stir."

After some helpless casing about, Mike brightened and began again: "He is dressed like a spectable pizen. A sort of a pastry-cook."

"Is he here?" asked my guardian.

"I left him," said Mike, "a settin' on some door-steps round the corner."

"Take him past that window, and let me see him."

The window indicated was the office window. We all three went to it, behind the wire blinds, and presently saw the client: go by in an accidental manner, with a murderous-looking tall individual, in a short suit of white linen and a paper cap. This guileless confectioner was not by any means sober, and had a black eye in the green stage of recovery, which was painted over.

"Tell him to take his witness away directly," said my guardian to the clerk, in extreme dis-
gust, "and ask him what he means by bringing such a fellow as that?"

My guardian then took me into his own room, and while he lunched, standing, from a sandwich-box and a pocket flask of sherry (he seemed to bully his very sandwich as he ate it), informed me what arrangements he had made for me. I was to go to "Barraud's Inn," to young Mr. Pocket's rooms, where a bed had been sent in for my accommodation; I was to remain with young Mr. Pocket until Monday; on Monday I was to go with him to his father's house on a visit, that I might try how I liked it. Also I was told what my allowance had been sent in for accommodation; I must be it was a liberal one—and had handed to me from one of my guardian's drawers, the cards of certain tradesmen with whom I was to deal for all kinds of clothes, and such other things as I could in reason want. "You will find your credit good, Mr. Pip," said my guardian, whose desk of sherry smelt like a whole cask-full, as he hastily refreshed himself. "Wemmick should call round with me, if I am so near my destination; I could send for a coach from the constables."

Of course you'll go up to be shown these their mean establishment to be an hotel kept by a mere public-house.

We entered this haven through a wicket-gate, and were disgorged by an introductory passage into a meanly small square that looked to me like a flat burying-ground. I thought it had the most dismal trees in it, and the most dismal sparrows, and the most dismal cats, and the most dismal dogs (if numbers half a dozen or so), that I had ever seen. I thought the windows of the sets of chambers
Mr. Pocket, Junior's idea of Shorty was not
meant maliciously to a horrid, but rather
looking out for half an hour, and had written
my name with his finger several times in the dirt of

Charles Dickens

AN ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

(February 21, 1861.) 401

into which these houses were divided, were in
every stage of dilapidated ruin, and carpet,
cracked flower-pot, cracked glass, dusty trunks,
and miserable mending; while To Let To Let
To Let, stared at me from empty rooms, as
it no new wrecks ever came there, and the
vastness of the soul of Barnard were being
slowly appeased by the gradual suicide of the
present occupants and their unholy interment
under the gravel. A frowzy mourning of soil
and smoke attired this forlorn creation of Bar-

and it had strung ashes on its head, part of the country at mid-day, and

try at Wemmick.

country, you might like a little quiet after

and it had strung ashes on its head, part of the country at mid-day, and

the retirement reminds you of the door sticks so

and I acknowledged his attention incoherently, and began to think
this was a dream.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Pocket, Junior. "This
doctor sticks at!"

As he was fast making jam of his fruit by
wrestling with the door while the paper-bags
were under his arms, I begged him to allow me
to hold them. He relinquished them with an
agreeable smile, and combated with the door as
if it were a wild beast. It yielded so suddenly
at last, that he staggered back upon me, and I
staggered back upon the opposite door, and we
both laughed. But still I felt as if my eyes
must start out of my head, and as if this must
be a dream.

"Pray come in," said Mr. Pocket, Junior.
"Allow me to lead the way. I am rather bare
here, but I hope you'll be able to make out
tolerably well till Monday. My father thought
you would get on more agreeably through to-
morrow with me than with him, and might like
to take a walk about London. I am sure I
shall be very happy to show London to you. As
to our table, you won't find that bad, I hope, for
it will be supplied from our coffee-house here, and
(it is only right I should add) at your expense,
which being Mr. Jaggers's directions. As to our
floor, just such chairs and tables and carpets
and so forth, you see, as they could spare from
home. You mustn't give me credit for the
tablecloth and spoons and carvers, because they
come for you from the coffee-house. This is
my little bedroom; rather musty, but Barnard's
is musty. This is your bedroom; the furniture's
hired for the occasion, but I trust it will answer
the purpose; if you should want anything, I'll

as if this must be a dream.

As I stood opposite to Mr. Pocket, Junior,
delivering him the bags. One, Two, I saw the starting appearance come into his own eyes that I knew to be in mine, and he said, falling back:

"Lord bless me, you're the prowling boy!"

"And you," said I, "are the pale young gentleman!"

CHARLESTON CITY.

It seems but yesterday that I was standing on the pleasant battery terrace at Charleston, looking out across the tumbling green waves towards the forts that guard the harbour; and now here I am, in a dull house, buried, as all London founded for the green coolness of the pine boughs above, opaque fog, above which I see St. Paul's alone.

Black agress nurses wander, with their faces turned to the sea, wooring the fluttering breeze that fans black cheeks and white cheeks with divine impartiality.

I am leaning over the clean-cut warm stones of the battery wall, only the faintest bonds of the spray now and then reaching my hot face, and am dying to map in my mind the chief features of the land-locked bay. I hear from the public gardens behind me, where the pines grow so tall and massy, the laughing voices of the playing children. Suddenly the deep bay of a large St. Bernard dog arouses me from my brown study. I look round, and see a gentleman-like well-dressed man, with two large dogs riotous at his heels, one of whom, as he flings his stick into the leaping waves, dashes in with the boisterous alacrity of a faithful body-guard, not with the lazy sullenness of a demoralized slave.

The dog reappears with the stick, and shaking himself till he looks like a trampled mop, half drenches us in the triumph of his joy.

The master's apologies for his thoughtless companion, and my regrets that any apologies should be thought needful, lead to a friendly conversation.

Venatio, as I will call him, begins to talk about the floating vessels that lie in flocks and spots out yonder to the west, fishing for a fish with a wonderful Indian name that I cannot spell nor pronounce, and which is only found in the sea round Charleston. The crews are all hired negroes, he says, and are very profitable to their temporary masters. Venatio bids me also remark, that, like Venice, at first view Charleston city seems growing out of the waves.

He points me out the chief features of the harbour. The low dark lines of shore, the white houses of Mount Pleasant, and the low light-coloured forts, black-dotted where the cannons' eyes look out for the enemy blankly.

That block of a fort there, full at the entrance, is Fort Pinckney. It is built on what was formerly a dangerous shoal, but I believe is not strong, or was not when Carolina first ascended.

Close by this fort is the only true channel, for, nearer to the right, by Sullivan's Island, where Fort Moultrie stands, it is impassable to any but fishing-boats, the water runs so shallow.

This rising ground to the left is Mount Pleasant, where the Charleston people retreat to taste and sleep during the midsummer, when King Yellow Fever too often hoists his sickly banner over this low-lying city. Nor must I forget James's Island, with its old ruined fort, or threatening Fort Sumter, that can, if it choose, sweep the bay with its fire-breathing cannon.

Venatio points me out also, the sandy corner of Mount Pleasant behind which lie sea-side country-houses, the quiet joys of which he expatiates on. Neatly to the left are the low swampy fields that render the city at times so unhealthy; for they breathe out their poison at night, and the great heat is by day perpetually distilling fever from their steamy vapour.

Do I see that steam, that blows and