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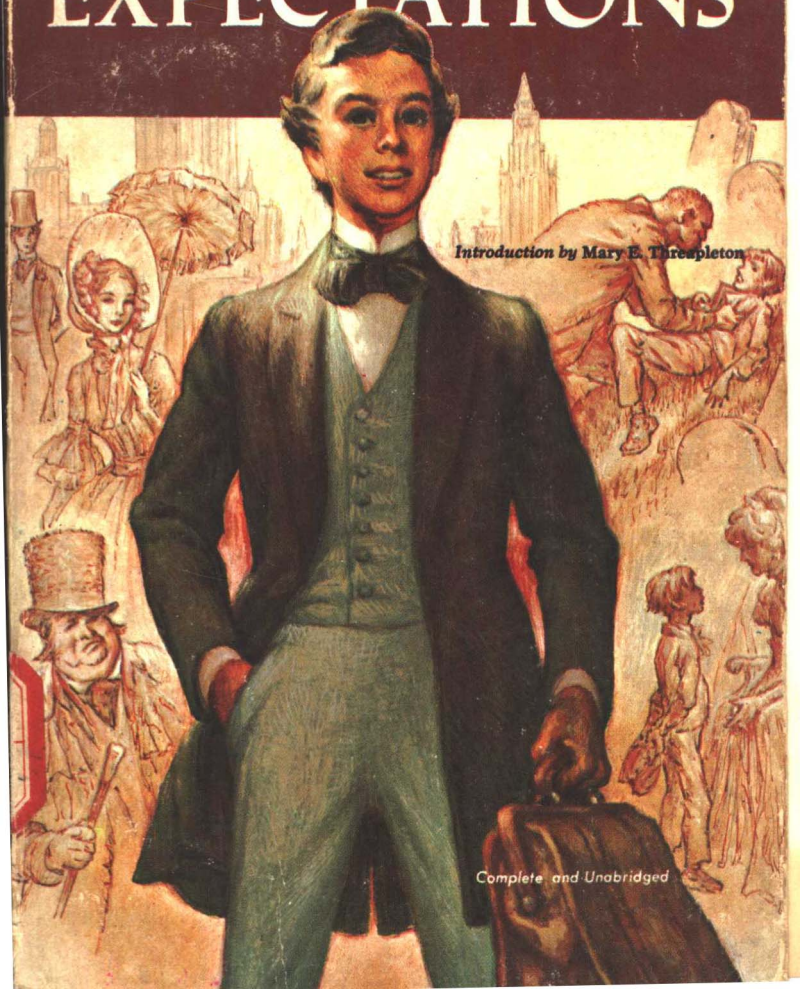
CHARLES DICKENS

GREAT EXPECTATIONS



Introduction by Mary E. Threapleton

Complete and Unabridged

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

MARY M. THREAPLETON

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Great Expectations

CHARLES DICKENS

Introduction

Great Expectations is often linked in readers' minds with the earlier *Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby,* and *David Copperfield,* in that all four trace the careers of young men through difficulties to a serene conclusion. But *Great Expectations* belongs to a much later period of Dickens' work, and blends the originality of invention which he had already demonstrated with a new maturity in handling structure, atmosphere, and tone. The fact that the book is called, not "The Adventures of Philip Pirrip," but "Great Expectations" shows a drawing away from a mere story unified by a principal character to a plot which develops a theme.

Dickens had used first-person narration once before, in *David Copperfield,* where it had given unity and discipline to his elaborate plot. But in *Great Expectations* it does much more than that. We are conscious of two Pips, one superimposed on the other. One experiences, and the other interprets that experience, emphasizing and condensing in the light of his mature knowledge. The result is a deep-seated irony, partly immediate, and partly recognizable in retrospect. The young Pip knows, as we do, that Estella would make him unhappy, and yet he continues to pursue her, aware of the irony of the situation. But the major irony lies in the mistake which Pip makes, and which we make

with him, about the source of his great expectations. Both the money and Estella derive, not from the genteel world which he seeks, but from the convict whom he loathes. In the light of this revelation, which is withheld from us until Pip himself realizes it, all his vanity, all his snobbery, and, most of all, his rejection of Joe, become profoundly ironic.

Added to this sustained ironic tone, there is a consistent atmosphere of dreary unhappiness and decay. The story opens at Christmastime, but not the kind of Christmastime Dickens was famous for celebrating. A shivering, unhappy child, spelling out his parents' names from their tombstones, is accosted by a horrible apparition in gray, who literally and figuratively turns his world upside down. Christmas dinner at the Gargerys' abounds in food, but not in the good will of the season, and it ends in the pursuit of the convict across the cold, dark marshes. Pip's story begins in terror, guilt, and shame, and these feelings dominate his life. He is unhappy as a child, at home and at Miss Havisham's; he is unhappy as an apprentice, and unhappy as a "gentleman." At the end, he does achieve peace, and a scarred kind of happiness, but the dominant impression of suffering remains. This is not to say that *Great Expectations* has no comic moments, but the comic vein is less pure than in earlier novels. The convict's treatment of Pip is funny, but it is also terrifying. We are amused when Mr. Pumblechook drinks tar water, but our enjoyment is tempered by our participation in Pip's guilty fear. Mr. Pumblechook is a marvelously comic figure, but we share Pip's bitterness toward him. There are chuckles throughout the book, but perhaps the only unshadowed comic scene of any length is Mr. Wopsle's performance of Hamlet—and even here we may remember that *Hamlet* is a tragedy.

Another dominant impression is that of deceit, most of all self-deceit. Pip deceives his sister; Compeyson deceives Miss Havisham; Estella deceives her lovers; Jaggers lives by deceit, for all his hand-washing. Pumblechook is a monstrous caricature of self-deceit. Miss Havisham deceives herself into thinking that she can turn Estella's heart to cold stone, and still have it warm toward her. Pip deceives himself into the belief that money, gentility, and "expectations" are his by desert, when in fact he does not deserve them at all. The characters who finally face their self-deceit—Miss Havisham, Estella, Pip—are redeemed

through suffering, but Pumblechook is unregenerate to the end. A further and related motif in the novel is a paradoxical combination of alienation and involvement. Many of the major characters are orphans, recluses, or outcasts. Pip, the orphan, feels that he does not belong at the forge, and yet he does not belong in the genteel world, either. Miss Havisham, herself an unhappy recluse, has so corrupted the "orphaned" Estella that she, too, is alone. Magwitch, the outcast, wants to become part of Pip's world, but Pip has trouble concealing his revulsion at the idea. Yet these essentially lonely, alienated people are deeply involved with one another, and essentially interdependent. When deceit and self-deceit end, this involvement can be acknowledged on all sides, and honest communication is achieved. Pip finally sees Joe for what he is when he sees himself for what he is, and the loving relationship is re-established. Love and gratitude interact between Pip and Magwitch; Miss Havisham asks for and is granted forgiveness; Estella learns her lesson and turns to Pip in true affection. In the original ending of the novel, Dickens married Estella to a Shropshire doctor, and left Pip still very much alone, but he changed the ending on the advice of Bulwer-Lytton to the promise of the eventual union of the hero and heroine. Many critics have deplored the change, claiming that Dickens sold out his artistic integrity for the sake of popularity, but most readers would not grudge the chastened Pip his reformed Estella.

Great Expectations is remarkable for its symbolic use of setting. The hostile world of the cold and lonely marshes is an apt background for the meeting of the lonely child and the outcast convict, both of whom have found the world hostile. Satis House, with its decay and its stopped clocks, represents not only the stopped world of Miss Havisham, and the corruption that Estella undergoes there, but also the corruption that the genteel world will bring to Pip. Mr. Jaggers' office, full of reminders of the criminal world, is Mr. Jaggers' life. Walworth is Wemmick's castle, not only because it has turrets and a drawbridge, but because it is his individuality, his humanity, which must be preserved and defended against the world of his employer and Little Britain. The isolated darkness of the sluice house is the isolated darkness of Pip's soul as he faces death unredeemed. The warmth of Joe's hearth is the honest warmth of Joe himself.

The best parlor of the house is a hostile, rigid place under Mrs. Joe's regime, but on Joe's and Biddy's wedding day "the window was open and gay with flowers."

Objects, gestures, and phrases take on symbolic value, too. The leg-iron, symbol of the guilt of Pip's first crime, becomes the weapon that destroys his sister. Mr. Jaggers is characterized by his accusatory forefinger, and in his use of scented soap we are reminded of "all the perfumes of Arabia." All of Pumblechook's servility is in his reiterated "May I?" The harsh and prickly Mrs. Joe is embodied in her unyielding apron, full of pins and needles that find their way into the very food she serves. Joe's phrases, "Wot larks" and "Ever the best of friends," are played on ironically throughout the book, as Pip and Joe grow further apart. Estella's heredity is traced through her hands, when Pip sees her slender knitting fingers superimposed on the twisting hands of Jaggers' housekeeper. This technique of superimposing is characteristic of *Great Expectations*, and gives it a nightmare quality. As Estella walks the casks in the brewery yard, Pip sees an illusory Miss Havisham hanging upside down—death superimposed on life.

The targets of satire in *Great Expectations* are not new ones for Dickens—education, the law, social climbing, self-deceit, and vanity. But here the satire is at once more subtle and more far-reaching. The whole of society seems to be weighed in the balance and found wanting, chiefly through its preoccupation with the cash nexus. Money and money alone can secure Jaggers' services; money can wheedle a smile out of Mrs. Joe; money makes Pip a hero in his village; Wemmick is obsessed with "portable property." Magwitch and Pip are both under the illusion that money can buy gentility. It is perhaps ironic that Pip can help Herbert only through money, and that Joe releases Pip from debt with the same commodity. But here the money is given through love, not sought through selfishness, and the transactions are redeemed thereby. Not money, but the love of it, is the root of evil.

Great Expectations is perhaps Dickens' masterpiece. The structure is skillful, the irony brilliant, and the theme sustained. The hero, unlike his earlier counterparts, is no pasteboard figure, but a fallible human being in seach of his identity. The comedy is less grotesque, and the pathos less sentimental than in the

earlier novels. In its exploration of guilt, the book anticipates a very modern theme. It may well turn out to be the most enduring, for the fastidious reader, of all the works of Dickens.

Charles Dickens, famous for his portrayals of unhappy childhood, had a far from happy one himself. He was the second of the six children of John Dickens, an improvident clerk in the Naval Pay Office, who managed to reduce the family to such desperate financial straits that at one period young Charles was sent to pawn everything of value that they owned, including his beloved books. When his father was arrested for debt, and his mother and the younger children joined Mr. Dickens in the Marshalsea prison, Charles was earning six shillings a week wrapping and labeling bottles in a blacking factory, and hating it. He was twelve years old.

He and his family were eventually released from their respective imprisonments, and Charles was sent to school. When he was fifteen, he went out to work again, this time as a clerk in a solicitor's office. In his spare time, he trained himself in the elaborate shorthand of the day for work as a parliamentary reporter, and at twenty was reporting House of Commons debates. At the same time, he began contributing humorous articles about London life to magazines. These "Sketches by Boz" brought him to the attention of the editors of *Monthly Magazine,* who contracted for a series for their periodical—and so was born the immortal Mr. Pickwick. The sales of the magazine soared, and Dickens was accepted into literary society as an original genius. He became editor of *Bentley's Miscellany,* in which *Oliver Twist* was serialized in 1837. There followed in rapid succession *Nicholas Nickleby, The Old Curiosity Shop, Barnaby Rudge,* and, after a visit to America, *Martin Chuzzlewit.*

Then came *A Christmas Carol, Dombey & Son, David Copperfield,* and *Bleak House.* By this time, Dickens was operating his own periodical, *Household Words.* His next two novels, *Hard Times* and *Little Dorrit,* were dark and disillusioned, perhaps darkened by trouble in Dickens' own life, for it was during this period that he became separated from his wife, after more than twenty years of marriage, and had a long love affair with a young actress.

In 1859, *A Tale of Two Cities* was serialized in Dickens' new

periodical, *All the Year Round,* which soon outsold *Household Words.* Restored to favor with the reading public, he settled down at his estate in Kent, and cut himself off from London society. *Great Expectations,* which many consider his masterpiece, came out in 1860-61, and the less-popular *Our Mutual Friend* in 1864-65.

For some time, Dickens had been giving frequent public readings of his works, which he found enormously enjoyable, but, his friends feared, almost equally exhausting. Despite failing health, he insisted on revisiting the United States on a reading tour. On his return, he began *The Mystery of Edwin Drood,* but, with the tale half-finished, he died on the 9th of June, 1870, at the age of fifty-eight. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Dickens' life was a fantastically busy one. Besides writing fifteen major novels and other minor works so rapidly that he sometimes began one before its predecessor was finished, he founded and edited three magazines, was active in the theatre, traveled extensively in Europe, gave readings and lectures, and worked indefatigably for various social reforms. But it is for his novels that he is remembered. He seems to have profited from his friend Wilkie Collins' formula for writing successful fiction: "Make 'em laugh, make 'em cry, make 'em wait." How successful Dickens was at this is perhaps best evidenced by the crowds at the dock in New York, during the serializing of *The Old Curiosity Shop,* shouting to incoming ships, "Is little Nell dead?" Despite the prediction of the *Quarterly Review* early in his career that "he has risen like a rocket, and he will come down like a stick," Dickens remained throughout his lifetime the most popular novelist in England—a title many would accord him still, after over one hundred years!

MARY M. THREAPLETON

原书缺页

原书缺页

Chapter 1

MY FATHER'S family name being Pirrip, and my christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I give Pirrip as my father's family name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister—Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. As I never saw my father or my mother, and never saw any likeness of either of them (for their days were long before the days of photographs), my first fancies regarding what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones. The shape of the letters on my father's gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, *"Also Georgiana Wife of the Above,"* I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly. To five little stone lozenges, each about a foot and a half long, which were arranged in a neat row beside their grave, and were sacred to the memory of five brothers of mine—who gave up trying to get a living exceedingly early in that universal struggle—I am indebted for a belief I religiously entertained that they had all been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers-pockets, and had never taken them out in this state of existence.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea. My first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things, seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. At such a time I found out for certain, that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana wife of the above, were dead and buried; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias, and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also dead and buried; and that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing, was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip.

"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!"

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and

smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

"Oh! Don't cut my throat, sir," I pleaded in terror. "Pray don't do it, sir."

"Tell us your name!" said the man. "Quick!"

"Pip, sir."

"Once more," said the man, staring at me. "Give it mouth!"

"Pip. Pip, sir."

"Show us where you live," said the man. "Pint out the place!"

I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat in-shore among the alder-trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church.

The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside down, and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself—for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeple under my feet—when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone, trembling, while he ate the bread ravenously.

"You young dog," said the man, licking his lips, "what fat cheeks you ha' got."

I believe they were fat, though I was at that time undersized, for my years, and not strong.

"Darn Me if I couldn't eat 'em," said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, "and if I han't half a mind to't!"

I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't, and held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

"Now lookee here!" said the man. "Where's your mother?"

"There, sir!" said I.

He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.

"There, sir!" I timidly explained. "Also Georgiana. That's my mother."

"Oh!" said he, coming back. "And is that your father alonger your mother?"

"Yes, sir," said I; "him too; late of this parish."

"Ha!" he muttered then, considering. "Who d'ye live with—supposin' you're kindly let to live, which I han't made up my mind about?"

"My sister, sir—Mrs. Joe Gargery—wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir."

"Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg.

After darkly looking at his leg and at me several times, he came closer to my tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked

most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his.

"Now lookee here," he said, "the question being whether you're to be let to live. You know what a file is?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you know what wittles is?"

"Yes, sir."

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

"You get me a file." He tilted me again. "And you get me wittles." He tilted me again. "You bring 'em both to me." He tilted me again. "Or I'll have your heart and liver out." He tilted me again.

I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands, and said, "If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps I could attend more."

He gave me a most tremendous dip and roll, so that the church jumped over its own weather-cock. Then, he held me by the arms in an upright position on the top of the stone, and went on in these fearful terms:

"You bring me, tomorrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to me, at that old Battery over yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted and ate. Now, I ain't alone, as you may think I am. There's a young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a secret way pecooliar to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think himself comfortable and safe, but that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him and tear him open. I am a keeping that young man from harming of you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it wery hard to hold that young man off of your inside. Now, what do you say?"

I said that I would get him the file, and I would get him what broken bits of food I could, and I would come to him at the Battery, early in the morning.

"Say, Lord strike you dead if you don't!" said the man.

I said so, and he took me down.

"Now," he pursued, "you remember what you've undertook, and you remember that young man, and you get home."

"Goo-good-night, sir," I faltered.

"Much of that!" said he, glancing about him over the cold wet flat. "I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!"

At the same time, he hugged his shuddering body in both his arms—clasping himself, as if to hold himself together—and limped towards the low church wall. As I saw him go, picking his way among the nettles, and among the brambles that bound the green mounds, he looked in my young eyes as if he were eluding the hands of the dead people, stretching up cautiously out of their graves, to get a twist upon his ankle and pull him in.

When he came to the low church wall, he got over it, like a man whose legs were numbed and stiff, and then turned round to look for me. When I saw him turning, I set my face towards home, and made the best use of my legs. But presently I looked over my shoulder, and saw him going on again towards the river, still hugging himself in both arms, and picking his way with his sore feet among the great stones dropped into the marshes here and there, for stepping-places when the rains were heavy, or the tide was in.

The marshes were just a long black horizontal line then, as I stopped to look after him; and the river was just another horizontal line, not nearly so broad nor yet so black; and the sky was just a row of long angry red lines and dense black lines intermixed. On the edge of the river I could faintly make out the only two black things in all the prospect that seemed to be standing upright; one of these was the beacon by which the sailors steered—like an unhooped cask upon a pole—an ugly thing when you were near it; the other a gibbet, with some chains hanging to it which had once held a pirate. The man was limping on towards this latter, as if he were the pirate come to life, and come down, and going back to hook himself up again. It gave me a terrible turn when I thought so; and as I saw the cattle lifting their heads to gaze after him, I wondered whether they thought so too. I looked all round for the horrible young man, and could see no signs of him. But now I was frightened again, and ran home without stopping.

Chapter 2

MY SISTER Mrs. Joe Gargery, was more than twenty years older than I, and had established a great reputation with herself and the neighbours because she had brought me up "by hand." Having at that time to find out for myself what the expression meant, and knowing her to have a hard and heavy hand, and to be much in the habit of laying it upon her hus-

band as well as upon me, I supposed that Joe Gargery and I were both brought up by hand.

She was not a good-looking woman, my sister; and I had a general impression that she must have made Joe Gargery marry her by hand. Joe was a fair man, with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with eyes of such a very undecided blue that they seemed to have somehow got mixed with their own whites. He was a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going, foolish, dear fellow—a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness.

My sister, Mrs. Joe, with black hair and eyes, had such a prevailing redness of skin, that I sometimes used to wonder whether it was possible she washed herself with a nutmeg-grater instead of soap. She was tall and bony, and almost always wore a coarse apron, fastened over her figure behind with two loops, and having a square impregnable bib in front, that was stuck full of pins and needles. She made it a powerful merit in herself, and a strong reproach against Joe, that she wore this apron so much. Though I really see no reason why she should have worn it at all; or why, if she did wear it at all, she should not have taken it off every day of her life.

Joe's forge adjoined our house, which was a wooden house, as many of the dwellings in our country were—most of them, at that time. When I ran home from the churchyard, the forge was shut up, and Joe was sitting alone in the kitchen. Joe and I being fellow-sufferers, and having confidences as such, Joe imparted a confidence to me, the moment I raised the latch of the door and peeped in at him opposite to it, sitting in the chimney-corner.

"Mrs. Joe has been out a dozen times, looking for you, Pip. And she's out now, making it a baker's dozen."

"Is she?"

"Yes, Pip," said Joe; "and what's worse, she's got Tickler with her."

At this dismal intelligence, I twisted the only button on my waistcoat round and round, and looked in great depression at the fire. Tickler was a wax-ended piece of cane, worn smooth by collision with my tickled frame.

"She sot down," said Joe, "and she got up, and she made a grab at Tickler, and she Ram-paged out. That's what she did," said Joe, slowly clearing the fire between the lower bars with the poker, and looking at it: "she Ram-paged out, Pip."

"Has she been gone long, Joe?" I always treated him as a larger species of child, and as no more than my equal.

"Well," said Joe, glancing up at the Dutch clock, "she's been on the Ram-page, this last spell, about five minutes, Pip. She's a-coming! Get behind the door, old chap, and have the jack-towel betwixt you."

I took the advice. My sister, Mrs. Joe, throwing the door

wide open, and finding an obstruction behind it, immediately divined the cause, and applied Tickler to its further investigation. She concluded by throwing me—I often served as a connubial missile—at Joe, who, glad to get hold of me on any terms, passed me on into the chimney and quietly fenced me up there with his great leg.

"Where have you been, you young monkey?" said Mrs. Joe, stamping her foot. "Tell me directly what you've been doing to wear me away with fret and fright and worrit, or I'd have you out of that corner if you was fifty Pips, and he was five hundred Gargerys."

"I have only been to the churchyard," said I, from my stool, crying and rubbing myself.

"Churchyard!" repeated my sister. "If it warn't for me you'd have been to the churchyard long ago, and stayed there. Who brought you up by hand?"

"You did," said I.

"And why did I do it, I should like to know?" exclaimed my sister.

I whimpered, "I don't know."

"I don't!" said my sister. "I'd never do it again! I know that. I may truly say I've never had this apron of mine off, since born you were. It's bad enough to be a blacksmith's wife, and him a Gargery, without being your mother."

My thoughts strayed from that question as I looked disconsolately at the fire. For, the fugitive out on the marshes with the ironed leg, the mysterious young man, the file, the food, and the dreadful pledge I was under to commit a larceny on those sheltering premises, rose before me in the avenging coals.

"Hah!" said Mrs. Joe, restoring Tickler to his station. "Churchyard, indeed! You may well say churchyard, you two." One of us, by-the-bye, had not said it at all. "You'll drive *me* to the churchyard betwixt you, one of these days, and oh, a pr-r-recious pair you'd be without me!"

As she applied herself to set the tea-things, Joe peeped down at me over his leg, as if he were mentally casting me and himself up, and calculating what kind of pair we practically should make, under the grievous circumstances foreshadowed. After that, he sat feeling his right-side flaxen curls and whisker, and following Mrs. Joe about with his blue eyes, as his manner always was at squally times.

My sister had a trenchant way of cutting our bread-and-butter for us, that never varied. First, with her left hand she jammed the loaf hard and fast against her bib—where it sometimes got a pin into it, and sometimes a needle, which we afterwards got into our mouths. Then she took some butter (not too much) on a knife and spread it on the loaf, in an apothecary kind of way, as if she were making a plaister—using both sides of the knife with a slapping dexterity, and trimming