

Reflections on / of Dickens

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Edited by

Ewa Kujawska-Lis
and Anna Krawczyk-Łaskarzewska

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

Reflections on / of Dickens,
Edited by Ewa Kujawska-Lis and Anna Krawczyk-Laskarzewska

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BH</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Bleak House</i>
<i>CC</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
<i>CB</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Christmas Books</i>
<i>DC</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>David Copperfield</i>
<i>DS</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Dombey and Son</i>
<i>GE</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Great Expectations</i>
<i>HD</i>	Evelyn Waugh, <i>A Handful of Dust</i>
<i>HT</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Hard Times</i>
<i>LD</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Little Dorrit</i>
<i>MC</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Martin Chuzzlewit</i>
<i>MJ</i>	Charles Dickens, "Mugby Junction"
<i>NN</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Nicholas Nickleby</i>
<i>OCS</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>The Old Curiosity Shop</i>
<i>OMF</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Our Mutual Friend</i>
<i>OT</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Oliver Twist</i>
<i>PI</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Pictures from Italy</i>
<i>PP</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>The Pickwick Papers</i>
<i>RP</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Reprinted Pieces</i>
<i>SB</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>Sketches by Boz</i>
<i>SC</i>	Bolesław Prus, "The Sins of Childhood"
<i>SM</i>	Charles Dickens, "The Signalman"
<i>TM</i>	Charles Dickens, "The Trial for Murder"
<i>TOTC</i>	Charles Dickens, <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>

INTRODUCTION

EWA KUJAWSKA-LIS
AND ANNA KRAWCZYK-ŁASKARZEWSKA

This volume of essays was inspired by *Reflections on / of Dickens*, an event that gathered Dickens researchers and enthusiasts from all over the world at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, in April 2013. Our primary focus was to draw attention to the various and complex ways in which Charles Dickens's texts (including his novels, short fiction and journalism) had been reflected upon by scholars, and re-imagined, transposed and transformed by writers, visual artists and filmmakers in the second decade of the twenty-first century, a time of arguably unprecedented challenges and opportunities as regards the cementing and undermining of literary reputations.

While the very name of the event implies a somewhat facile binary logic, in phrasing it we were especially motivated by the inherent ambiguity in the word "reflection," which encourages us to think not only of various intellectual processes (e.g., considering things in a serious, careful manner, meditating, writing down ideas, expressing veiled criticism), but also of mirrored images (both in terms of production and reception), clear demonstrations and symmetric transformations. Far from being a comprehensive and authoritative source for all things new in Dickens scholarship, our volume nevertheless offers a vast array of approaches to "an invented world that both entertains and disturbs" (Bloom 247), hopefully narrowing the gap between traditional textual analysis and more contextualised readings of the writer's literary output.

In one of the numerous 2012 articles proclaiming Dickens's continued topicality, it was suggested that although the commemoration hype surrounding the bicentennial of the literary icon's birth got slightly out of hand, "it's hard to imagine an author better able to stand up to this kind of excessive popular celebration" (Katz). It would seem that Dickens's highbrow status and indisputably central position in the British canon never prevented him from functioning as a master of populist entertainment and a paragon of social sensitivity, embraced with equal

zeal by story-hungry fandoms and justice-seeking movements, such as Occupy Wall Street.

Inspired by *Dickens in Cyberspace*, a collection of essays edited by Jay Clayton and emphasizing the role of the so-called new media in distributing, reinterpreting and re-appropriating Dickens, who “has one of the largest Web presences of any literary figure” (4), we almost expected to be inundated with proposals delineating, for example, new trends in Dickens-related reception studies or new patterns of commodifying his accomplishments in the era of social networking sites. Surprisingly, or perhaps not surprisingly at all, however, the central impetus for our publication was provided by scholars analysing *literary* aspects and affinities. In fact, literature turns out to be the principal medium in which Dickens’s narrative devices and social ideas are absorbed and reflected (upon). Therefore, in contrast to the above mentioned anthology, rather than treating Dickens as merely a representative of “larger cultural patterns” (Clayton 5), our volume recognizes his importance as first and foremost a major figure in literature.

Reflections on / of Dickens consists of twenty-seven chapters which are grouped in six distinct but thematically linked sections. Much in accordance with the “characteristic Victorian sense of being immersed, geographically and historically, in the very midst of things” (Davis 28), the first of these sections ventures outside texts and delves into various socio-cultural and historical circumstances that informed Dickens’s work (articles by Agnieszka Czarnecka, Jacek Mydla, Catherine Waters and Zygmunt Zalewski).

The subsequent parts are definitely more of a textual and/or intertextual orientation. The second section of the volume is devoted entirely to Dickens’s short fiction, in particular, his railway stories and their influences on the work of other writers, as well as their hitherto underappreciated formal ingenuity and innovativeness (chapters by Bożena Depa, Wolfgang G. Müller, Małgorzata Nitka and Sławomir Studniarz).

The diverse thematic preoccupations in the third section are firmly anchored in the critical practices espoused within the given academic areas of interest, ranging from familiar literary poetics through Victorian food studies to queer and gender studies. Dickens’s prose is treated by Holly Furneaux, Anna Grabowska, Aleksandra Kędzierska and Marlena Marciniak as a springboard for discussing such broad issues as the reconceptualisation of the notions of masculinity, expanding and decoding characters’ motivations, and the possibility of reading them through a non-heteronormative lens, etc.

The fourth, basically comparative literary studies section of our volume demonstrates the influence of Dickens's prose on other writers' *œuvre*, while at the same time transcending the inevitable limitations of English and Anglophone perspectives. The thematic and narrative parallels in the works of Nikolay Nekrasov, Bolesław Prus, George Gissing, Joseph Conrad, and H. G. Wells, are discussed at length by Olga Bondaruk, Barbara Kowalik, M. D. Allen, Ewa Kujawska-Lis and Halszka Leleń, respectively, whereas Aniela Korzeniowska uses the example of *A Christmas Carol* to comment on the peculiarities of the literary translation market in Poland.

The fifth part of *Reflections on / of Dickens* consists of articles written by Maria Teresa Chialant, Barbara Klonowska and Roksana Zgierska, who are interested primarily in the neo-Victorian strategies of appropriating canonical texts. The intertextual strategies employed in the novels by Peter Carey, John Fowles, Lloyd Jones, Richard Flanagan and Evelyn Waugh provide striking, if at times frustrating, examples of how contemporary culture revisits and refashions Dickens to suit its own agenda.

Finally, the sixth section focuses on selected visual interpretations and performances of Dickens's novels and characters as well as performances *within* them. Among other concerns, the chapters by Paul Vita, Philip V. Allingham, Michael Hollington, Anna Krawczyk-Łaskarzewska, Michał Leliński and Isabel Vila Cabanes analyse the importance of performing within Dickensian texts, their visual aspects and the impact of Dickens-based film and TV adaptations on pop culture-friendly audiences, which cannot help being fascinated by this highly-regarded writer, thus confirming and enhancing his exceptional, nearly mythical (Jordan xix) status and global appeal.

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PART I:

**THERE IS SOMETHING OUTSIDE
THE TEXT...**

CHAPTER ONE

VICTORIAN ENGLAND IN THE DAYS OF CHARLES DICKENS

ZYGMUNT STEFAN ZALEWSKI

When those wars fought against revolutionary and Napoleonic France ended, the British economy entered into a new era, one of unparalleled prosperity. Making use of numerous technical inventions, particularly that of the steam engine, as well as having a great amount of free capital, the British set about modernizing their mines, factories, shipyards, ports, as well as developing their networks of water canals and railway systems.

It was the railway that brought the most significant progress and prosperity. Only twenty-five years after George Stephenson's experimental locomotive, *The Rocket*, won the Rainhill Trials in October 1829 on the nearly completed Liverpool and Manchester Railway, England had become highly developed as a railway-connected nation, with some 100 000 km of track laid by 1854. This huge railway investment created unusual possibilities for economic and cultural developments for rotten boroughs and small villages situated outside main communication and merchant routes. Manchester exemplified that process. Only an isolated village in 1785, one of many such at the turn of the eighteenth century, Manchester achieved the status of third largest city in England during the early Victorian era. Britain encountered unprecedented social, political, and economic problems as its economy boomed after the Napoleonic wars. Especially in the new industrial towns and rapidly expanding cities of the kingdom, the English would have observed the simultaneous decline of the old social order and the rise of the burgeoning middle class, together with new social and political movements. Friedrich Engels (1820–95), researching *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, expressed what he observed in 1844 in this way: "The cities first saw the rise of the workers and the middle classes into opposing social groups. It was in the

towns that the trade union movement, Chartism and Socialism all had their origin” (137–38).

This was also the time when huge numbers of villagers, having abandoned lives devoted to agricultural labour and cottage industry, moved to towns and cities seeking jobs in newly built factories. However, working and living conditions as well as wages for newcomers were in most cases very poor. Furthermore, the capacity of manufacturing to employ all such people was still insufficient. Low wages, substandard housing, and high rates of unemployment resulted in miserable living conditions for many members of the new urban working class. The most significant *signum temporis* of those days was the economic and political antagonism that emerged between employers and employees. However, the early Victorian entrepreneurs’ and capitalists’ line of reasoning was close to the idea that “society will ever remain composed of classes. Some are born to fortune; more are born without, and the struggle for money is very serious” (Potter 54–55).

During the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century another strong economic and political antagonism emerged—between the aristocracy and the rich bourgeoisie. This social conflict was the direct result of economic guarantees made to the land-owning class. The Corn Laws enabled the ancestral aristocracy to earn high incomes from cultivating large stretches of land, but the high prices for corn and other agricultural products influenced the cost of living in England’s industrial cities. In the long term, to secure skilled labour factory owners were compelled to pay higher and higher wages, thereby affecting the prices of industrial products and diminishing their own profits. To counteract this situation, these capitalists demanded that Parliament repeal the protective tariff system of the Corn Laws and liberalise England’s antiquated customs and excise regulation, initiatives which factory-owners believed would enable them to compete more effectively in a liberalised free trade environment abroad.

However, as a result of its increasing efficiency, the British “workshop of the world” produced too great an amount of goods, which foreign and relatively weak domestic markets were then not able to absorb. For the first time in world history the country suffered from the so-called “overproduction disease” with all its negative consequences. Unsold products were now filling storehouses and shop shelves.

Stockpiles of accumulated inventory led to the dismissal of many factory workers. Unemployed and now embittered working-class men were inclined to undertake many anti-industrial campaigns which seriously threatened the social order. From the growing tidal wave of

worker discontent some important nineteenth-century leftist theories and workers' movements emerged, for example, Chartism and trade unionism.

Terrified at the prospect of revolution as a result of intolerable living conditions for their workers, the English bourgeoisie placed pressure on the government, including its ruling Whig and Tory elite, to introduce innovative legislation. In particular, the newly prosperous middle class envisaged the complete repeal of the long-established Corn Laws and the passing of free trade initiatives as necessary measures to avert a looming social revolution of the kind that erupted across the Channel in 1789.

During the last decades of the Hanoverian dynasty and in early Victorian era, the aristocracy and rich gentry were the two essential elements in the British political mosaic. Both dominated the Parliament as well as the governing élites; therefore, any political campaign which might have been undertaken by the bourgeoisie against them would prove difficult to win. But the approaching spectre of social revolution forced the aforementioned ruling classes to change their attitudes towards the less affluent members of British society. Confronted with this serious situation, a newly-elected Parliament passed the Great Reform Bill of 1832, greatly extending the franchise. Reporting on this watershed election was young short-hand writer Charles Dickens.

In the decade following the passage of the Great Reform Bill, Great Britain entered the next phase of its significant political crises. It was partly inflamed by the consequences of the Reform Act. This new law approved a £10 householder franchise qualification fee, and so many working-class men renting houses usually at £4 to £8 per year were thus excluded from public voting. Workers felt betrayed (Pugh 54). In 1839 Thomas Carlyle wrote: "A feeling very generally exists that the condition and disposition of the working classes is a rather ominous matter at present; that something ought to be said, something ought to be done in regard to it" (Pugh 54). It is easy to adopt the thesis that the radicalisation of public feeling had been the main factor that inclined, or even forced the aristocracy to resign from its privileged position, which then allowed Parliament to effect radical economic policies as demanded by the rising and newly prosperous middle class.

Yet the lower classes were still not satisfied. Social disruptions at the opening of the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, the period immediately preceding Victoria's ascension, led to the collapse of public confidence in the government. On August 30, 1841 one of the young Queen's most trusted advisers, Prime Minister Lord Melbourne, resigned (Ziegler 340-42). His successor, the Tory Party leader Robert Peel, undertook an heroic struggle against the dangerous crisis which would

become omnipresent during the next decade. New government circles spearheaded a series of fierce disputes concerning the urgent need for radical transformations of domestic and foreign policies. However, impatient for change, the working classes in general and union leaders in particular agitated vigorously for social and political change, the most significant of these left-wing forces being the Chartists. Increasing social tensions culminated in the assassination of Sir Robert Peel's secretary, Edward Drummond, whom the assailant had mistaken for the Prime Minister himself. Thus, in the midst of the Hungry Forties did England narrowly avoid political catastrophe.

Having heard more and more sinister rumbles of discontent which could lead to uncontrolled social riots, Peel's cabinet accepted a new kind of domestic and foreign policy, which one could describe as "escaping forward." This sort of government activity was strictly integrated with British long-term policy. But, concerning domestic affairs, Peelites fought against the rising strength of trade unions and other workers, particularly against leftist movements. Having hampered more and more uncontrolled claims of the trade unionists, the government attempted to reduce the costs of manufacturing, which would then improve the competitiveness of British goods in overseas markets.

In the meantime, in the early months of 1846, during the stormy Parliamentary debate concerning the necessity for repealing the Corn Laws, an apologist for free trade expressed himself very clearly: "Free trade—he said—was the principle by which 'foreign nations would become valuable colonies to us, without imposing on us the responsibility of governing them'" (Gamble 51). Soon, this concise and clever idea was willingly accepted by Richard Cobden and John Bright, who developed it into the so called "Manchester school of imperialism." The main principles of the "Manchester doctrine" were then adopted by many explorers, merchants, missionaries and other outstanding creators of the British Empire, for example, Cecil Rhodes, Joseph Chamberlain, David Livingstone, John Smith Moffat, Rudyard Kipling and many others who developed the British economic and political dominance worldwide (Chamberlain 15).

In the spirit of the aforementioned idea, British economic, political and even military activities were being strengthened in the Mediterranean, and in the territories around the isthmus of Suez, but particularly in Egypt, as well as in the Red Sea, in Aden and then towards India. The famous "imperial route" was being slowly created and like a bow-string joined together the Atlantic pole of British economic power with the Asiatic pole of military power, with London towering over all as the ruling centre. The

idea reached the point where British policy makers desired to extend their country's influence over East Africa. In the near future this continent was to be created as the west side of the Asiatic economic triangle, similar to that of the sixteenth century's Atlantic one.

In spite of multiple government attempts to obviate the domestic danger, the spectre of social disorder was still present. This exerted tremendous pressure on ruling élites, Parliament and government. Domestic problems became self evident, particularly during the next overproduction crisis which occurred in 1847. Having now been released, this huge grass-root social power forced the contemporary ruling élite to initiate the next phase of deep political transformation at home. As concerned the international arena, the process evoked the next and very brutal stage of British colonialism (Chamberlain 37).

By mid-century Great Britain was undergoing two other significant initiatives intended to reduce unemployment and alleviate social tensions. The governing classes believed that the panacea for England's domestic problems was the advancement of industry, rendering manufacturing more efficient and expanding overseas markets for British manufactured goods. Unfortunately, efficient industry did not necessarily mean safer working conditions.

The impacts of these initiatives were not immediately apparent, however. Acting out of fear of trade unionism and the unions' application of the strike tactic to improve pay and working conditions, the government acted against the formation of unions. To counteract growing social problems in the cities resulting from unemployment (what theorist Thomas Malthus had termed "the surplus population"), the government decided to "shovel out the paupers," exiling marginalised workers and in particular those among the working class whom the government regarded as agitators for revolution, union leaders (Knorr 269, 299-300).

These activities, difficult to imagine on a large scale, required some urgent and decisive efforts concerning ethical, moral, social, legislative and political stages, as well as concerning the creation of new cultural patterns. In their desire to face these difficult challenges, many outstanding British philosophers, economists, and politicians—for example, Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, David Ricardo, William Cobett and Thomas Robert Malthus—initiated a series of discussions during which they attempted to discover the answers to two fundamental issues. Concerning the first one, they raised the question of whether the country should try to enlarge empire in spite of the many serious consequences of doing so; or—according to the Manchester school's idea—should it develop free commerce which would intensify British economic overseas

expansion? The aforementioned “shovelling out the paupers” and a curious demographic theory delivered the answers to both issues.

In early nineteenth century Britain, some economic theorists propounded the notion that much of the British Isles was underpopulated, even as industrialism was accelerating the growth of population in a few select cities. However, during the first half of the century, there was widespread belief in the demographic theories of Anglican clergyman and economist Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834), who in 1805 became Professor of History and Political Economy at the British East India’s college at Haileybury, Hertfordshire. In his most popular work, *Essay on the Principle of Population as it Effects the Future Improvement of Society*, first published in 1798 and augmented in further editions, Malthus articulated the now-famous concept that a given population will increase faster than its food resources unless checked by famine and disease, the so-called principle of Malthusian Catastrophe (Malthus 18; Gayler, Richards and Morris, 122). He wrote: “The power of population is indefinitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for man” (Malthus 13). To make his idea clearer, he stated that a human population increases in a geometric progression and doubles every twenty-five years while goods needed to support the human flock increase much more slowly, in an arithmetic progression. In order to alleviate human misery and reduce such social problems as poverty and unemployment, Malthus proposed that the ruling elites should legislate “preventive checks” to limit working-class birthrates to ensure a higher standard of living for the entire society and increase economic stability (Malthus 18; Gayler, Richards and Morris 122).

Although younger economists reacted against Malthus and in favour of his rival, economist David Ricardo, and agitated for reform rather than abolition of the Poor Law, consecutive governments at Whitehall continued to justify drastic checks against the rise of surplus population. Economic troubles as well as the increasing fear of social riots prompted the ruling circles, at the time of the last two Hanoverians and in the early Victorian era, to adopt a much harder course of policy towards the lowest class as well as towards the soldiers of the Napoleonic wars who had now returned to the Motherland. Afraid that well trained combatants might join the poor and thus united bring on much more trouble, the government implemented its procedure of “shovelling out the paupers” towards them. Since 1816, potential troublesome elements were ordered out of the country, mainly to Canada. The entire procedure was supervised by the War Office (Hitchins 3).

However, in spite of many government large-scale undertakings, wide circles of British unemployed and poor people, mainly in the cities, were still posing serious troubles. These social environments were prone to causing social riots and were generally criminal in tendency. According to London authority's estimation, in 1790, 150 000 out of 800 000 Londoners came into conflict with the law (Dziewanowski 454). During and after the Napoleonic wars, but particularly in those years of economic troubles the mood and behaviour of these people were similar or even much worse.

To counteract a perceived growth in the criminal population, the authorities enacted a draconian law known as transportation, which Dickens as a boy had seen moored off Rochester and which he attacked in the 1861 novel *Great Expectations*. Hundreds of thousands, sentenced for crimes as minor as petty theft, could not be accommodated in the penal institutions of Great Britain; inveterate criminals thus sentenced to transportation (overseas penal servitude) were imprisoned in prison ships known as "hulks" moored in the Thames and Medway basin (Dziewanowski 456). Increasing costs of incarcerating criminals in British prisons and a general fear that such criminals could easily escape resulted in the government's moving these unruly elements out of the country, first to Canada, and then in greater numbers to "Botany Bay," the newly discovered continent of Australia.

As soon became apparent, exiling such a considerable number of people out of the country strained much of the domestic reservoir of labour forces which became very difficult or sometimes impossible to replace even by more and more perfect technical inventions. Thus labour force shortages resulted in a significant decrease in domestic production while world markets became broadly opened for British goods. Because of its suicidal demographic policy, England deprived itself of a huge amount of national income, and what was much worse, it allowed for the gradual reduction of its own economic influence through increased foreign competition, particularly American and French, as well as that of a rising Germany since the middle of the nineteenth century and even that of an emerging Italy.

Having considered a sinister vision of an extremely uncertain future, consecutive British governments rejected the Malthusian policy of shovelling out the poor people. The poor were allowed to stay in the British Isles and they were offered jobs in domestic factories and enterprises. Strengthened with the increased contribution of the working classes, the national economy was expected to improve and provide workers with a higher standard of living, and thus protect the country from any increase of negative social feelings and disturbances.

However, since the Corn Laws had been abolished the entire British market was flooded with cheaper American and Russian corn that contributed towards reducing prices of domestic agricultural production. This had very serious consequences. First, decreasing food prices allowed for keeping workers' wages at a relatively low level. This reduced the cost of manufacturing, enabling the selling of goods for competitive prices in overseas markets. Consequently the British economy was becoming stronger and in no time this brought financial stability and progress to the entire country.

The second aspect of this issue brought much more serious, even catastrophic, social consequences. With their low incomes, poor Irish leaseholders were in most cases not able to pay rents to their English land owners. Terrible poverty ensued and the potato blight of 1846–48 caused the famous and disastrous Great Famine in Ireland. Eight hundred thousand people died of hunger and about one million left the country and emigrated to America. On August 4, 1848, Queen Victoria embarked for Dublin. Her sad journey was to be a kind of expiation for the Irish people's sufferings. The Great Famine was the main factor that contributed to the collapse of Robert Peel's cabinet. The incoming Whig administration of Lord John Russell closed the early Victorian era of 1846 through 1852 with the intention of redressing the wrongs of the Hungry Forties and showcasing the innovations of British technology and industry at the first world's fair, about which I shall write shortly.

The mid-century promised a better standard of living and significant social reforms. Bearing in mind the conditions which gave rise to Chartism, public-spirited, patriotic British policy-makers brought long-lasting social, political, and economic reforms that laid the basis for British prosperity and imperial expansion in the second half of the century. Statesmen from both major political parties—including the Liberals Lord Melbourne, George Canning, Lord Grey, and Lord Grenville, and the Conservatives Sir Robert Peel, Sir Benjamin Disraeli, and Viscount Lord Palmerston—strengthened Britain's economy, modernized its armed forces, and administered the growing Empire with an efficient civil service. Under their guidance Parliament repealed many restrictive trade and commercial barriers—for example, the Navigation Acts of 1849, tariffs on raw materials and semi-finished products and all protective tariffs in 1860. Consequently, Great Britain entered an unprecedented period of high development and unusual economic growth and social stability. Now, Great Britain was able to import raw materials, sell vast amounts of manufactured products abroad, and accumulate huge capital

reserves so that, by mid-century, the City of London was the world's chief financial centre.

In large-scale private financial ventures at home and abroad the Bank of England played no small part. It was an old and well-established financial institution that since the turn of the seventeenth century had closely cooperated with all governments. Granting domestic businessmen low rate loans as well as a competent and flexible securities turnover, the Bank of England stimulated economic development at home and supported British overseas expansion (Churchill 17).

Significantly, the difficult political struggle that occurred mainly during 1832–46 between the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, as well as between the middle and working classes, had positive outcomes for the broad middle class, which achieved greater political and economic power:

The middle class played a crucial role in maintaining both social and political stability through its moral influence on the behaviour of both the workers and aristocracy; moreover, the middle class was the engine that drove the prosperity of mid-Victorian Britain. (Pugh 72)

As a showcase of British industry and technology, the world's first international fair opened in May, 1851, displaying Britain's wares and the diverse imports from its vast overseas colonies. British historian Martin Pugh wrote: "Six million visitors, including Queen Victoria, toured the 14 000 exhibits of machinery, raw materials, manufactured goods and fine arts" (72). Shown in the Crystal Palace, British technological power, as well as the enormous achievements of its industry, made clear the increasing social position of the bourgeoisie. Moreover, "Britain's national income rose from £523 million in 1851 to £916 million in 1871; per capita income stood at £32 in Britain in 1860 by comparison with £21 in France and £13 in Germany" (Pugh 73). All these cited official figures depict that contemporary England was becoming a very prosperous country in comparison to Western Europe and the USA.

Great Britain acquired additional territories in Africa and the Middle East as part of a widening Empire. Since mid-century Great Britain intensified its struggle for overseas markets by developing Canada, India, and Australia, as well as the Middle and Far East, developing a vast Empire over which the sun could literally never set. At the same time, British overseas investments rose from £225 million in 1850 to £1000 million in 1875 (Pugh 73). The time came, when having realized long-term "Pax Britannica" policy, the Island country achieved the zenith of its world power throughout its history.

However, other new overseas challenges soon manifested themselves. As long as the Latin American countries strengthened their struggle with Spain for freedom, the British intensified their economic penetration of this part of the world and step by step attempted to overtake Spanish economic and then political assets in South America.

Struggle for overseas markets spearheaded other disputes impacting on the British Empire's future. Some outstanding nineteenth century British thinkers and philosophers such as James Mill, John Stuart Mill, David Ricardo, Jeremy Bentham and Charles Darwin created another significant imperial doctrine that was called the "London School of Imperialism." According to their ideas, Great Britain should try to enlarge its world's empire in spite of many serious political and military consequences.

As was expected, soon the London school of imperialism gathered a great number of devoted followers, mainly politicians, traders, people who worked for colonial administrations, or even missionary men. All of them willingly supported the government's effort in establishing British colonial institutions, counting on many potential benefits such as social advances, becoming rich as well as fulfilling personal aspirations. So they broadly propagated the ideas of annexation, realized mainly through conquering the uncovered heart of equatorial Africa.

To advance its imperial interests in the Middle and Far East, under the Tory administration of Viscount Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister intermittently from 1855 through 1865, Great Britain fought several imperial wars. Between 1853 and 1856 Britain entered into a military alliance with France under Napoleon as the defenders of the Turkish Empire to check Russian expansion into the eastern Mediterranean and the Crimea; in 1856–57 Britain fought a war against Persia, and subsequently conquered Afghanistan. During 1857–58, British military forces suppressed the Indian uprising, sometimes called the Sepoy Mutiny (Ridley 425, *passim*). Simultaneously along with the two aforementioned wars, the British fought two Opium Wars in the Far East.

Provoked by British importation of Indian opiates into its Pacific ports, Imperial China started the second Anglo-Chinese Opium War in 1856 by attacking a private merchant ship "The Arrow" flying the British flag. The vessel was seized because it was smuggling opium, which was illegal according to the treaty of Nanking (1842). In 1858, a combined British and French task force shelled the port of Canton, after which the allies landed their troops and seized the capital, Beijing, securing their territorial gains and mercantile concessions under the terms of the Treaty of Tientsin (Ridley 537–39).

However, as dictated by Great Britain and France, peace conditions for the Chinese were very humiliating. The victors imposed considerable reparations on the defeated, demanding the opening of Chinese ports for international free trading. The refusal of the Chinese imperial government to ratify this humiliating treaty precipitated the third Opium War in 1860.

Soon Anglo-French military forces conquered Beijing, but this time they burned the imperial palace and destroyed many Chinese historic buildings, monuments and priceless relics (Ridley 538). The Chinese were forced to sign an unconditional, but this time even more humiliating peace treaty. The consequences were very significant both for the Far East and to a lesser extent the rest of the world until the eve of the First World War.

Lord Palmerston's death in 1865 closed the thirty-five year period of his overwhelming influence on British domestic and foreign policies. The next era of outstanding British prime ministers such as Benjamin Disraeli and William Ewart Gladstone was also very prosperous. One can say that nineteenth century England was very lucky in having prominent statesmen whose intelligence and unlimited devotion to Queen and Country resulted in Britain's avoiding labour disruptions, costly foreign military adventures, and the social problems such as crime, poverty, and unemployment that had dogged the nation in the 1840s. They brought about another stage of national progress and prosperity.

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CHAPTER TWO

DICKENS'S "YOUNG MEN," *HOUSEHOLD WORDS* AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VICTORIAN "SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT"

CATHERINE WATERS

In an 1895 article on the New Journalism published in the *New Review*, Evelyn March Phillipps begins with the following definition: "By the New Journalism, I take it, we mean that easy personal style, that trick of bright colloquial language, that wealth of intimate and picturesque detail, and that determination to arrest, amuse, or startle, which has transformed our Press during the last fifteen years" (182). The qualities Phillipps identifies with the New Journalism might be backdated a bit earlier, because her description could equally well be applied to the non-fictional prose of *Household Words*, the cheap weekly magazine "conducted" by Dickens throughout the 1850s. Indeed, the beginnings of that transformation in the nineteenth-century press remarked by Phillipps may be located in the popular appeal of Dickens's journal. Carefully positioned as a new miscellany within the mid-Victorian periodical market, *Household Words* was innovative, combining cheapness of form and price with the serialisation of original fiction, poetry and informational articles on a wide range of topics. But a dimension of this newness that has not yet received sufficient critical attention is its despatch of younger journalists and other contributors "out on the road to look for copy," as John Drew puts it (182), "in the same way that the daily newspapers had traditionally sent out 'our own reporter,' and engaged foreign correspondents"; namely, its role in the development of the Victorian special correspondent.

Phillipps is of course not alone in identifying the second half of the nineteenth century as crucial in marking the emergence of the press in its modern form. Newspapers had come to assume a more active role in