NEW UNCOMMERCIAL SAMPLES. BY CHARLES DICKENS.

"A Small Star in the East,

From All the Year Round, I had been looking, yesternight, through the famous "Dance of Death," and to-day the grim old woodcus arose in my mind with the new significance of a ghastly monotony not to be found in the organal. The weird skeleton rattled along the streets before me, and struck flericly, but it was never at the paths of assuming a disguise. It placed on no dulcimer here, was crowned with no flowers, wavel no plame, minced in no flowing robe or train, litted no wine-cop, sat at no feast, cast no dice, counted no gold. It was simply a bare, gaunt, famished It was simply a bare, gaunt, faulshed

no gold. It was simply a bare, gaunt, famished shelcton, slaying its way along.

The borders of Ratcuife and Stepney, eastward of London, and giving on the impureriver, were the scene of this uncompromising Dance of Death, upon a drizzing November day. A squalid maze of streets, courts, and alleys of miserable houses let out in single rooms. A wilderness of dirt, rags, and hunger. A muddeseri, chiefly inhabited by a tribe from whom employment has departed, or to whom it comes employment has departed, or to whom it comes but fisfully and rarely. They are not skilled mechanics in any wise. They are but laborers. Docs laborers, water-side laborers, coal-porters, ballast-heavers, such like hewers of wood and drawers of water. But they have come into existence, and they propagate their wretched

One grisly joke alone, methought, the skeleton seemed to play off here. It had stuck election bills on the walls, which the wind and rain had deteriorated into suitable rags. It had even summed up the state of the poll, in chalk, on the shutters of one rained house. It saijured the free and independent starvers to vote for Thisman and vote for Thatman; not to plume, as they valued the state of parties and the national prosperity (both of great importance to them, I think!), but, by returning Thisman and Thatman, each anught without the other, to compound a glorious and immortal whole. Surely the skeleton is nowhere more cruelly ironical in the original monkish idea!

Pondering in my mind the lar-seeing schemes and Thatman, and of the public blessing called Party for staying the degeneracy. physical and moral, of many thousands (wao shall say how many?) of the English race; for devising employment useful to the community, for those who want but to work and live; for equalizing rates, cultivating waste lands, facilitating emigration, and, above all things, saving and utilizing the oncoming generations, and thereby changing ever-growing national weakness into strength; pondering in my mind, 1 say, these hopeful exercious, I turned down a narrow street to look into a house or two.

It was a dark street with a dead walt on one Nearly all the outer doors of the houses stood open. I took the first entry, and knocked at a parior door. Might I come in? I might, if I plased, sur.

The woman of the room (Irish) had picked up some long strips of wood, about some wharf or parge, and they had just now been thrust into the otherwise empty grate to make two iron pots boil. There was some fish in one, and there were some potatoes in the other. The flare of the burning wood enabled me to see a table and a broken chair or so, and some old cheap crockery ornaments about the chimney-plece. It was not until I had spoken with the roman for a few minutes that I saw a horrible brown heap on the door in a corner, which, but for previous experience in this dismal wise, I might not have suspected to be "the bed." There was something thrown apon it, and I asked what that was.
"Tis the poor craythur that s'ays here, sur,

and tis very bad she is, and its very bad she's been this long time, and 'us better she'll never be, and 'tis slape she does all day, and 'tis wake she does all night, and 'tis the lead, sur." The what?

"The lead, sur. Sure 'tis the lead-mills, where the women gets took on at eighteen pence a day, sur, when they makes applicaytion early enough and is lucky and wanted, and 'tis lead-pisoned she is, sur, and some of them gits leadoisoned soon and some of them gits lead pisoned later, and some but not many niver, and 'tis all according to the constituent, sur, and some constitutions is strong and some is weak, and her consutoosuun is leadpisoned bad as can be, sur, and her brain is coming out at her ear, and it hurts her dreadful. and that's what it is and niver no more and niver no less, sur,"

The sick young woman mosning here, the head, and threw open a back door to let in the daylight upon it, from the smallest and most miserable back-vard I ever saw.

"That's what cooms from her, Sur, being lead-pisoned, and it cooms from her night and day the poor sick craythur, and the pain of it is dreadful, and God he knows that my has band has walked the sthreets these four days being a laborer, and is walking them now and is ready to work and no work for him and no fire and no food but the bit in the pot, and no m re thau ten shillings in a fortnight, God be good to us, and it is poor we are and dark it is and could it is indeed !"

Knowing that I could compensate myself thereafter for my self-demal, it I saw tit. I had resolved that I would give nothing in the course of these visits. I did this to try the people. I may state at once that my closest observation could not detect any indication whatever of an expectation that I would give money; they were grateful to be talked to about their miserable affairs, and sympathy was plainly a comfort to them; but they neither asked for money in any case, nor showed the least trace of surprise or disappointment or resentment at my giving

The woman's married daughter had by this time come down from her room on the floor above, to join in the conversation. She herself had been to the lead-mills very early that morning to be "took on," but had not succeeded. She had four on," but and not succeeded. She water side children, and her husband, also a water side laborer and then out seeking work, seemed in no better case as to finding it than her father. She was English, and by nature of a baxon figure and cheerful. Both in her poor dress and in her mother's there was an effort to keep up some appearance of meatness. She knew all about the sufferings of the unfortunate invalid, and all about the lead-poisoning, and how the symptoms came on, and how they grew—having often seen them. The very smell when you stood inside the door of the works was enough to knock you down, she said, yet she was going back sgain to get "took on." What could she do? Better be ulcerated and paralyzed for eighteen pence a day, while it lasted, than see the children starve.

A cark and squalld cupboard in this room, touching the back door and all manner of offense, had been for some time the sleepingplace of the sick young woman. But the nights being now wintry, and the blankets and coverlets "gone to the leaving shop," she lay all night where she lay all day, and was lying then. The woman of the room, her husband, this most miserable patient, and two others, lay on the one brown heap together

"God bless you, sir, and thank you!" were the

parting words from these people—gratefully spoken too—with which I left this place.
Some streets away, I tapped at another parlor door on another ground-floor. Looking in, I found a man, his wife, and four children sitting at a washing stool by way of table, at their dinner of bread and infused tea leaves. There was a very scanty cinderous fire in the grate by which they sat, and there was a tent bedstead in the room with a bed upon it and a coverlet. The man did not rise when I went in, nor during my stay, but civilly inclined his head on my pulling off my hat, and, in answer to my inquiry whether I should ask him a question or two, said "Uertainly." There being a window at each end of this room, back and front, it might have been ventilated; but it was shut up tight, to keep the cold out, and was very sickening.

The wife, an intelligent, quick woman, rose and good at her husband's gloow, and he gianced up at her as if for help. It soon ap-peared that he was rather deaf. He was a slow, simple tellow of about thirty.
"What was he by trace?"

'Gentleman asks what are you by trade,

"I am a boiler maker"; looking about him with an exceedingly perplexed air, as if for a boiler that had unaccountably vanished.

"He ain't a mechanic, you understand, sir," the wife put in, "he's only a inborer." "Are you in work?"

He looked up at his wife again. "Gentleman asys are you in work, John?"

"In work!" cried this forlorn boller maker, staring agast at his wife, and then working mys

vision's way very slowly round to me; "Lord.

"Ah! He ain't, indeed!" said the poor woman, susking her head, as she looked at the four children in succession, and then at him. "Work!" said the bouer-maker, still seeking that evaporated boiler, first in my countenauce, then in the air, and then in the features of his second son at his knee, 'I wish I was in work! I haven't had more than a day's work to do tais three weeks."

'How have you lived ?" A faint gleam of admiration lighted up the face of the would-be boiler-maker, as he stretched out the short sieeve of his threadbare canvas jacket, and replied, pointing her out, "On the

I forgot where boiler-making had gone to, or where he supposed it had gone to; but he added some resigned information on that head, coupled with an expression of his belief that it was never coming back.

The cheery helpfulness of the wife was very remarkable She did slop-work; made peasckets. She produced the pea-jacket then in band, and spread it out upon the bed-the only prece of furniture in the room on which to See showed how much of it she made, and how much was afterwards finished off by the machine. According to her calculation at the moment, deducting what her trim ming cost her, she got for making a pea-jacket tenpence baifpeaux, and she could make one in something less than two days.

But, you see, it come to her through two hands, and of course it didn't come through the second hand for nothing. Why did it come through the second hand at all? Why, this way. The second hand took the risk way. The second hand took the risk of the given-out work, you see. If she had money enough to pay the security deposit -call it two pound-she could get the work from the first hand, and so the second would not have to be deducted for. But, having no money at all, the second hand came in and took its profit, and so the whole worked down to tenpence hal/penny. Having explained all this with great intelligence, even with some little pride, and without a whine or murmur, she folded her work again, sat down by her husband's side at the wasning-stool, and resumed her dinner of dry bread. Mean as the neal was, on the bare board, with its old gallioots for cups, and what not other sordid make shifts; shabby as the woman was in dress, and toping down towards the Bosjesman color, with want of nutriment and washing—there was positively a dignity in her, as the family anchor just holding the poor ship-wrecked builer-maker's bark. When I left the room the boiler-maker's eyes were slowly turned towards her, as if his last hope of ever again seeing that vanished boiler lay in her direction.

Tuese people had never applied for parish relief but once; and that was when the husban i met with a disabling accident at his work. Not many doors from here I went into a room on the first floor. The woman apologized for its being in "an untidy mess." The day was Saturday, and she was boiling the children's clothes in a saucepan on the hearth. There was nothing else into which she could have put them. There was no crockery, or tinware, or tub, or bucket. There was an old galiipot or two, and there was a broken bottle or so, and there were some broken boxes for scats.

The last small scraping of coals left was raked together in a corner of the floor. There were some rags in an open cupboard, also on the In a corner of the room was a crazy old French bedstead, with a man lying on his back upon it in a ragged pilot jacket, and rough cilskin fantail hat. The room was perfectly black. It was difficult to believe, at first, that te was not purposely colored black, the walls As I stood opposite the woman boiling the

children's clothes—she had not even a piece of soap to wash them with—and apologizing for her occupation, I could take in all these things without appearing to notice them, and could even correct my inventory. I had missed, at the first glance, some half a pound of bread in the otherwise empty safe, an old red ragged crinone hanging on the handle of the door by which had entered, and certain fragments of rusty iron scattered on the floor, which looked like broken tools and a piece of stove-pipe. A child stood looking on. On the box nearest to the pretty little creature whom the other sometimes

This woman, like the last, was wofully shabby, and was degenerating to the Bosiesman complexion But her figure, and the ghost of a certain vivacity about her, and the spectre of a dimple in her cneek, carried my memory strangely back to the old days of the Adelphi Thea re. London, when Mrs. Fitzwilliam was the friend of Victorine.

'May I ask you what your husband is ?" "He's a coal porter, sir,"-with a glance and a sign towards the bed. "Is he out of work?"

"O yes, sir, and work's at all times very, very scanty with him, and now he's laid up."
"It's my legs," said the man upon the bed,
"I'll unroll 'em." And immediately began,
"Have you any older children?"

"I have a daughter that does the needle-work and I have a son that does what he can. She's at her work now, and he's trying for work."

Do they live here?" "They sleep bere. They can't afford to pay more rent, and so they come here at night. The rent is very hard upon us. It's rose upon us too, now-sixpence a week-on account of these new changes in the law about the rates. We are a week behind; the landlord's been shaking and rattling at that door trightful; he says he'

turn us out. I don't know what's to come of it.' The man upon the bed ruefully interposed: "Here's my legs. The skin's broke, besides the swelling. I have had many kicks, working, one way and another.'

He looked at his legs (which were much dis-colored and misshapen) for awhile, and then appearing to remember that they were not popular with his family, rolled them up again, as if they were something in the nature maps or plans that were not wanted to be referred to, iay hopelessly down on his back once more with his tautail hat over his face, and stirred not.

"Do your eldest son and daughter sleep in that cupboard?

Yes," replied the woman. With the children ?"

We have to get together for warmth. We have little to cover us."
"Have you nothing by you to eat but the plece of bread I see there?"
"Nothing. And we had the rest of the loaf for our breakfast, with water. I don't know what's to come of it."

'Have you no prospect of improvement?" 'It my eldest son earns anything to-day, he'll bring it home. Then we shall have something to eat to-night, and may be able to do some-thing towards the rent. If not, I don't know what's to come of it."

This is a sad state of things." "Yes, sir, h's a hard, hard life. Take care of stairs as you go, sir-they're broxen-and There people had a mortal dread of entering workhouse, and received no out-or-door

In another room, in still another tenement, I found a very decent woman, with five children the last a baby, and she her-elf a patient of the parish doc or-to whom, her ha band being in the hospital, the Union allowed for the support of heiself and her family four shillings a week and five lo wee. I suppose when Thisman, M. P., and Thatman, M. P., and the public blessing party lay their heads together in course of time, and come to an equalization of rating, the may go down the Dance of Death to the

tune of suspence more.

I could eater no other houses for that one while, for I could not bear the contemplation of the children. Such heart as I had summoned to sustain me against the miseries of the adults failed me when I looked at the children. I saw how young they were, how hungry, how serious and still. I thought of them, sick and dying in those lairs. I could think of them dead without auguish; but to think of them so suffering and so dving quite unmanued me.

Down by the river's bank in Ratchiffe, I was

turning upward by a side street, therefore, to regain the rail any, when my eye tested on the inscription across the road, "Fast London Children's Hospital," I could scarcely have seen an inscription better suited to my frame of mind, and I went across and went atraight in.

I found the Children's Hospital established in an old sall-loft or stor-bou-e, of the roughest nature, and on the surplest means. There were trap-doors in the floors where goods had been

hoisted up and down: heavy feet and heavy weights had started every knot in the welltrodden planking; incorvenient bulks and beams and awkward staircases perpiexed my passage through the wards. But I found it airy, sweet, and clean. In its seven-and-thirty beds I saw but little beauty, for starvation in the second or third generation akes a pinched look; but I saw the sufferings both of lufancy and childhood tenderly assuaged; I heard the little patients answering to pet playful names, the light touch of a delicate lady laid bare the wasted sticks of orms for me to pity; and the claw-like little hands, as she did so, twined themselves lovingly around her wedding-ring.

One baby mite there was as protty as any of Raphael's angels. The tiny head was banda ed for water on the brain, and it was suffering with acute bronchitts too, and made from time to ime a plaintive, though not impatient or com plaining, little sound. The smooth curve of the cheeks and of the chin was faultless in its condensation of infantine beauty, and the large bright eyes were most lovely. It happened, as I stopped at the foot of the bed, that these eyes rested upon mine with that wistful expression of wondering thoughtfulness which we know sometimes in very little children. They remained fixed on mine, and never turned from me while I stood there. When the utterance of that plaintive sound shook the little form, the gaze still remained unchanged. I lelt as though the child implored me to tell the story of the little hospital in which it was sheltered to any gentle heart I could address. Laying my world-worn hand upon the little unmarked clasped hand at the chin, I gave it a silent promise that

would do to. A gentleman and lady, a young husband and wile, have bought and ditted up this building for its present noble use, and have quiety settled themselves in it as its medical officers and directors. Both have had considerable practical experience in medicine and surgery; he as house-surgeon of a great London hospital; she as a very carnest student, tested by severe examination, and also as a nurse of the sick poor

during the prevalence of cholera.

With every qualification to lure them away, with youth and accomplishments and tastes and habits that can have no response in any breast near them, close begirt by every repuisive circumstance inseparable from such a neighbor-bood, there they dwell. They live in the hospital steels, and their rooms are on its first floor. sitting at their dinner table, they could hear the cry of one of the children in pain. The lady's piano, drawing materials, books, and other such evidences of refinement, much a part of the rough place as the fron bedsteads of the little patients. They are put to shifts for room, like passengers on board ship. The dispenser of medicines (attracted to them, not by self-interest, but by their own magnetism and that of their cause) sleeps in a recess in the dining room, and has his washing apparatus in the sideboard.

Their contented monner of making the best of the things around them, I loundiso pleasantly inseparable from their usefulness! Their pride in this partition that we nut up our cives, or in that partition that we took down, or in that other partition that we moved, or in the stove that was given us for the waiting-room, or in our nightly conversion of the little consultingroom into a smoking room. Their admiration of the situation, if we could only get rid of its one objectionable incident, the coal-yard at the back! "Our hospital carriage, presented by a friend, and very useful." That was my prescutation to a perambulator, for which a coachhouse had been discovered in a corner down stairs, just large enough to hold it. Colored prints, in all stages of preparation for being added to those already decorating the wards, were plentiul; a cuarming woolen phenomenon of a bird, with an impossible too-knot, who ducked his head when you set a counter weight going, had been manugurated as a public statue that very morning; and trotting about among the beds, on familiar terms with all the patients, was conical mongrel dog, called Poodles. This comical dog (quite a topic in himsel) was found characteristically starving at the door of the institution, and was taken in and fed, and has tived here ever since. Au sented him with a collar bearing the legend. Judge not Poodles by ex ernal appearances. He was merrily wagging his tail on a boy's pillow when he made this modest appeal to me. When this Hospital was nrst opened, January of the present year,

people could not possibly conceive but that somebody patd for the services rendered there; and were disposed to claim them as a right, and to find fault if out of temper. They soon came to understand the case better, and have much increased in gratitude. The mothers of the patients avail themselves very irrely of the visiting rules; the fathers often on Surdays. There is an unreasonable (but still, I think, touching and intelligible) tendency in the parents to take a child away to its wretched home, if on the point of death. One boy who had been thus carried off on a rainy night, when in a violent state of inflammation, and who had been afterwards brought back, had been recovered with exceeding difficulty; but he was a jolly boy, with a specially strong interest in his dinner, when I saw him.

Insufficient food and un wholesome living are the main causes of disease among these small patients. So nourishment, cleanliness, and ventilation, are the main remedies. Discharged patients are looked after and invited to come and dine now and then; so are certain famishing creatures who were never pa ients. Both the lady and the gentleman are well acquainted not only with the histories of the patients and their families, but with the characters and cir-camstances of great numbers of their neignbors; of these they keep a register. It is their common experience that people, staking down by inches into deeper and deeper poverty, will conceal it even from them, if possible, unto the very last extremity.

The nurses of the Hospital are all very young, ranging, say from nine een to four and twenty. They have, even within the e narrow limits, what many well-endowed hospitals would not give them, a comfortable room of their own to which to take their meals. It is a benefitted traib, that interest in the children and synpathy with their sorrows bind these young women to their places far more strengt; than any other consideration could. The best skilled of the nurses came originally from a kindred neighborhood, almost as poor, and she knew how much the work was needed. She is a fair dressmason The Hospital carnot pay her as many pounds in the year as there are mouths in it, and one day the lady regarded it as a duty to speak to her about her improving her prospects and following her trade. "No," sue said; she could never be so useful or so happy elsewhere any more; she most stay among the children. And she stays. One of the nurses, as I passed her, was washing a baby boy. Liking her pleasant face, I stopped to speak to her charge—a common. bullet-readed, frowning charge enough, laying hold of his own nose with a slippery grasp, and staring very sciennly out of a blunket. The melting of the pleasant face into delighted smiles as this joung gentleman gave an unex-pected kick, and laughed at me, was almost

worth my previous pain. An affecting play was acted in Paris years ago, called The Chi dren's Doctor. As I parted from my Children's Doctor now in question, I his casy black neestle, in his loose but toned black frock-coat, in his pensive face, in the flow of his dark hair, in his eyelashes, in the very turn of his moustable, the exact realization of the Paris artist's ideal, as it was presented on the stage. But no remander that I know of has had the boldness to prefigure the life and home of this young husband and young wife in the Children's Hospital in the cast of

I came away from Raicliffe by the Stepney railway station to the terminas at Fencharch street. Any one who will reverse that route may retrace my steps.

-There is a Horse-thief Detective Society in Richland, Ohio.

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