not leave wooden monuments as symbols of an immaterial and more permanent substance.

When a person is dead, there is something inexpressibly pathetic in a cheap tombstone. It is a confession of earthly poverty, of having failed to get on, which does not seem fair when the person is no longer there, to keep up a brave show of gentility. Far over in an obscure corner of the cemetery stood the home-made tombstone of an old man. Some one had cast cement in the shape of a small church-window, and painted the rough pebbly surface with white. Many rains had cracked the impermanent stuff, and washed the paint down in uneven streaks. Had some friend made it for him, or had the penniless old fellow cast it for himself before he died? Whoever made the stone, it was some one unskilled in lettering who had printed his short and simple annals on the painted cement. "B. F. ERWAY"—the letters started bravely enough, with painstaking and awkward carefulness; "BORN DEC. 12, 1842"—here they were not quite so well-formed, and some of them sloped downhill; "DIED JULY 11, 1908"—on the last line the words were frankly too close together, and the letters scratched on with sad irregularity.

Are lots cheaper near the edge of the cemetery, or did some proud and sensitive souls, like Propertius, prefer remote tombs far from the crowd?

> *Di faciant, mea ne terra locit ossa frequenti*
> *Qua facit adsiduo tramite fulgus iter,*
> *Post mortem tumuli sic inflamantur amantum*
> *Me tegat arborea devia terra coma,*
> *Aut humer ignotae cumulis vallatus harenae*
> *Non iuvat in media nomen havere via.*
> —*Prop. III*, 16, 25.

For myself, I do not see that it matters either way; but if a choice of the tombstone's location had to be made, mine should be with all the others. If it is necessary to return to dust, there is something consoling in Addison's thought of "the innumerable multitudes of people confused together under the pavement . . . men and women, friends and enemies, priests and soldiers, monks and prebendaries . . . . crumbled against one another and blended in the same common mass; beauty, strength, and youth, with old-age, weakness, and deformity, lying undistinguished in the same promiscuous heap of matter." Yes, I should, with Tibullus, ask my tomb to be placed *in celebri fronte*.

Another monument set apart on a little hill, and shadowed by a drooping willow-tree, had what seemed to me the most perfect epitaph in the cemetery.

MOTHER
Lavinia
Wife of Rev. Wm. F. Smith
Born Dec. 5, 1810
Died Nov. 13, 1892
"She hath done what she could"

There it was, a life epitomized in six words. Can you not see this gaunt, righteous woman, Lavinia Smith? She was a "good woman," the strict and dutiful mother of a large family, eminently faithful in her duties as the minister's wife, one of the "mothers in Israel." I am sure Rev. Smith did not intend that we should read in the Biblical quotation a hint of sadness, a suggestion that Lavinia Smith, in her stern devotion to piety, had neglected the lovely little expressions of human affection to one's family. But there stands the epitaph telling more than her husband meant: "She hath done what she could."

In almost every case the epitaphs which revealed much concerning the departed persons were Biblical quotations. Any one not sure of his ability to compose a suitable epitaph is wise to select a quotation from the classics or the Bible. What a happy gain there is in permanence and beauty, what a superiority and dignity is transferred to the frail skeleton below, when the stone bears immortal words! On other tombstones I saw many incongruous abbreviations, but not a word was ever changed in a Biblical quotation. "Laura dau of J. M. Godfrey" there might be, but no one dared to write "Suffer the little children to come unto me" in anything but its completeness. Why do not these words seem trite? They have been repeated oftener than other once worthy phrases now gone to the Never Never Land of Worn-Out Words. "Her eyes as stars of twilight fair" was original at the beginning of the nineteenth century; it is only now, in the twentieth, after eyes have been likened to stars so many times, that the figure has come to be called trite. Why is it, then, that some combinations of words are never called hackneyed, but seem rather to gain in value, with the years? "We are such stuff as dreams are made of and our little life is rounded with a sleep." . . . . "Love suffereth long, and is kind." Some sentences are like organ-notes. They cannot be said too many times.

Before leaving the grave-yard, I noted, with astonishment mounting to horror, a number of inscriptions like the following:

STONEBRAKER

Geo. F.	Victoria L.
Born June 10, 1851	Born Oct. 22, 1860
Died Nov. 28, 1911	Died

Old Mrs. Stonebraker, the energetic old lady on Chestnut Street, always to be seen at every church service and public gathering! Mrs. Stonebraker, her inscription engraved, ——— waiting to die. Or, if not waiting, at least resigned to the realization that death would come. Do all older people, then, admit that they will die? . . . . Yes, I too philosophize in generalizations, "Death has to come to everyone;" and in the background of consciousness is the vague realization of its inevitability for me. But oh, do we not think, each one of us, that somehow *we* shall escape this thing of death? Do we not feel the impossibility of not being keenly and tinglingly alive? When one reaches the point of preparing his epitaph and tombstone, then life has indeed become for him only a "permanent possibility of sensation."

But the most unified and striking impression one receives from a cemetery is, I believe, the prevalence of resignation in the epitaphs, of restraint in the expression of the grief. None of them say fully the despair and sorrow the persons felt. Sometimes the resignation is superhuman, and terrible. "He hath called his own." "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away—Blessed be the name of the Lord."

The most sorrowful of the inscriptions never express the passionate mourning, the burning sense of injustice one often hears expressed before and after the funerals by the most devout Christians, the most earnest believers in the Resurrection story. "I can't understand. She was only a baby. She had never done anything wrong." . . . . The cry is as old as Lear's to Cordelia:

> Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,
> And thou no breath at all?

On the grave-stones, nothing of this. The unseemly crying out at Fate, the devastating tears and protests are accomplished at home. Convention must mask the grief, and on the smooth surfaces of the tombstones they cut the peaceful epitaphs, "*Requiescat.*" . . . . "*Farewell.*"

Dickens and the Childlike Mind

(Continued from Page One)

up readers will sniff at the sentimentality which surrounds these poor chaps, but where's the harm in that kind of sentimentality?

But to depart from these distressing themes, even as Dickens himself does, suddenly, without warning, there must be good things to eat in novels. Christmas dinners, holiday feasts of all descriptions, picnics, all make toothsome reading, with their pictures of hearty English viands, meat pies, and plum puddings ablaze in brandy and holly. And—sh!—there must be good things to drink, too; wassail, and megus, and port, claret, and sherry, and hot pineapple rum with sugar in it, as the reverend Mr. Stiggens consumed it in the bar of the Marquis of Granby. No matter if people do enjoy their eating and drinking; no matter if Mr. Pickwick does like the punch wisely but too well, and does end up in some inexplicable manner at the Pound, in a wheelbarrow. So much the merrier.

There must be utterly ridiculous situations, too, like Mr. Pickwick's in the spinster lady's bedroom by mistake, with his night-cap tied on in a very hard knot, so that he can't get it off, ma'am, embarrassing though it is to be addressing a lady in one's night-cap. Or like Mr. Winkle's deplorable situation when the door blew to, and his subsequent flight from the house. Or like Mr. Fledgeby's painful condition when little Jenny Wren found the black pepper as well as the vinegar and brown paper, and applied all three with a judicious hand. Situations like these abound in Dickens.

I need not pretend, however, that even the childlike mind reads Dickens solidly and indiscriminately. There is a childlike procedure in reading him, just as there is a childlike appreciation of him. The childlike mind balks at too flagrant sentimentality, and, feeling no Puritanical obligation to the unpleasant, serenely avoids it. The proper procedure in reading Dickens is to skip merrily through him very much as one skips merrily through the streets on a rainy day. For there are puddles in Dickens, of course. But after one has charted a course one can easily avoid them. When one has read *Dombey and Son* several times, one knows that at page 207 one is to take a little run, and jump over into the next chapter, on page 212, thus avoiding the death of little Paul. So, too, in *David Copperfield* one skips airily over most of Dora's housekeeping, her untimely, but not wholly unfortunate death, and Trotwood's ridiculous proposal to Agnes. And truly, the exercise of such skipping is invigorating, rather than wearying.

But your grown-up readers of Dickens, not knowing their ground, blunder into all the puddles. Of course the water oozes up through their elderly shoes; of course they get soggy and irritable; is it any wonder that, when they have gone home and acquired bad colds directly, they anathematize the weather? Unfortunately, they can not be persuaded to venture forth again; they have little use for a book in which one has to skip. Sometimes one feels that they have a moral scruple against skipping; that it would be cheating to skip a paragraph here, or a chapter there. They feel it their duty to wade through every puddle, no matter how disagreeable it may be. Then, of course, they are prejudiced against Dickens, and their contempt of him knows no bounds.

But to the childlike mind there are so many compensations for the puddles that it forgets them almost entirely, once it has leaped nimbly over them. If one manages to avoid a ducking, or a splashing, there is nothing more delightful than a spring rain. And when one is not caught unexpectedly, sometimes even the ducking or the splashing is enjoyable. After all, it is only when one is unprepared for them that the spring showers are disagreeable.

There are a half dozen vigorous characters for each weak one in Dickens; a dozen inimitable situations for each conventional one; a whole gross of exquisitely absurd speeches for each stupid or commonplace one. Betsey Trotwood is one of these vigorous characters who help to make up for Agnes; Captain Tuttle's escape from his landlady partially atones for Florence's disinheritance by her father; Mrs. Nickleby's enlightening reminiscences make up entirely for all the Nicholas-Madeline dialogues in the book. At all events, the childlike mind is satisfied with these adjustments.

But there are portions of Dickens which need no adjustment at all; they suit the childlike mind exactly as they are; some of the *Sketches*, many of the short stories, like the *Christmas Carol*, and most of all, the little group of short stories called *Holiday Romance*, exactly hit the fancy and capture the affection of the childlike reader. *Holiday Romance* purports to come from the pens

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