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BARNABY RUDGE

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BARNABY RUDGE

BY
CHARLES DICKENS

A REPRINT OF THE FIRST EDITION,
WITH THE ILLUSTRATIONS, AND AN INTRODUCTION,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL, BY
CHARLES DICKENS THE YOUNGER.

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INTRODUCTION.

SHORTLY after the signing of the agreement with Mr. Bentley of the 22d of August, 1836, under which Charles Dickens accepted the post of editor of *Bentley's Miscellany*, and undertook to furnish the magazine with a serial story—*Oliver Twist*—he further agreed to write two other stories for Mr. Bentley, one of which was to be published at a very early date, “the express remuneration in each case,” Mr. Forster says, although he does not give the figures for *Barnaby*, being certainly inadequate to the claims of a writer of any marked popularity. For the third book the payment was to be £500, with an additional £250 on its sale reaching 3000.

Under the first agreement the first half of *Oliver Twist* for Mr. Bentley was going on *pari passu* with *Pickwick* for Messrs. Chapman and Hall; the full terms of the contract under the second it was found impossible to carry out. The subject and title for *Barnaby Rudge* had already been selected, and the story to some extent planned out; but even Charles Dickens's restless and insatiable industry was not equal to carrying on three books at once, and some alteration in the arrangements became inevitable. Under a compromise which was effected in September, 1837, the third novel—the actual date for the appearance of which had never been fixed—was abandoned altogether on satisfactory terms, and Charles Dickens undertook to finish *Barnaby Rudge* by November, 1838. This, of course, afforded some relief, but not much after all; for the new arrangement necessitated the completion of *Barnaby* while *Oliver Twist* was still going on, and took no account of the work which would be involved by anything with which it might be found desirable to follow *Pickwick* for Messrs. Chapman and Hall. It is not surprising that Mr. Forster should describe himself as doubting its wisdom.