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DOCUMENT A

. The old gentleman with the spectacles, gradually dozed off, over the little bit of parchment; and there was a short pause, after Oliver had been stationed by Mr. Bumble in front of the desk.

"This is the boy, your worship," said Mr Bumble.

5 The old gentleman who was reading the newspaper, raised his head for a moment, and pulled the other gentleman by the sleeve; whereupon, the last-mentioned old gentleman woke up.

"Oh, is this the boy?" said the old gentleman.

"This is him, sir," replied Mr Bumble. "Bow to the magistrate, my dear."

10 Oliver roused himself, and made his best obeisance. He had been wondering, with his eyes fixed on the magistrates' powder, whether all boards were born with that white stuff on their heads, and were boards from thenceforth on that account.

"Well," said the old gentleman, I suppose he's fond of chimney-sweeping?"

15 "He dotes on it, your worship," replied Bumble: giving Oliver a sly pinch, to intimate that he had better not say he didn't.

"And he *will* be a sweep, will he?" inquired the old gentleman.

"If we was to bind him to any other trade to-morrow, he'd run away simultaneous, your worship," replied Bumble.

20 "And this man that's to be his master - you, sir - you'll treat him well, and feed him, and do all that sort of thing, - will you?" said the old gentleman.

"When I says I will, I means I will," replied Mr. Gamfield doggedly.

25 "You're a rough speaker, my friend, but you look an honest, open-hearted man," said the old gentleman: turning his spectacles in the direction of the candidate for Oliver's premium, whose villainous countenance was a regular stamped receipt for cruelty. But, the magistrate was half blind and half childish, so he couldn't reasonably be expected to discern what other people did.

"I hope I am, sir," said Mr. Gamfield, with an ugly leer.

"I have no doubt you are, my friend," replied the old gentleman: fixing his spectacles more firmly on his nose, and looking about him for the inkstand.

30 It was the critical moment of Oliver's fate. If the inkstand had been where the old gentleman thought it was, he would have dipped his pen into it, and signed the indentures; and Oliver would have been straightway hurried off. But, as it chanced to be immediately under his nose, it followed, as a matter of course, that he looked all over his desk for it, without finding it; and happening in the course of his search to look straight before him, his
35 gaze encountered the pale and terrified face of Oliver Twist: who, despite all the admonitory looks and pinches of Bumble, was regarding the repulsive countenance of his future master: with a mingled expression of horror and fear, too palpable to be mistaken, even by a half-blind magistrate.

40 The old gentleman stopped, laid down his pen, and looked from Oliver to Mr Limbkins: who attempted to take snuff with a cheerful and unconcerned aspect.

"My boy!" said the old gentleman, leaning over the desk. Oliver started at the sound. He might be excused for doing so; for the words were kindly said; and strange sounds frighten one. He trembled violently, and burst into tears.

45 "My boy!" said the old gentleman, "you look pale and alarmed. What is the matter?"

"Stand a little away from him, Beadle," said the other magistrate laying aside the paper, and leaning forward with an expression of interest. "Now, boy, tell us what's the matter: don't be afraid."

50 Oliver fell on his knees, and clasping his hands together, prayed that they would order him back to the dark room - that they would starve him - beat him - kill him if they pleased - rather than send him away with that dreadful man.

"Well!" said Mr. Bumble, raising his hands and eyes with most impressive solemnity, "Well! of all the artful and designing orphans that ever I see, Oliver, you are one of the most bare-facedest."

55 "Hold your tongue, Beadle," said the second old gentleman, when Mr. Bumble had given vent to his compound adjective.

"I beg your worship's pardon," said Mr. Bumble, incredulous of his having heard aright. "Did your worship speak to me?"

60 "Yes. Hold your tongue."

Mr. Bumble was stupefied with astonishment. A beadle ordered to hold his tongue! A moral revolution!

The old gentleman in the tortoise-shell spectacles, looked at his companion; he nodded significantly.

65 "We refuse to sanction these indentures," said the old gentleman: tossing aside the piece of parchment as he spoke.

"I hope," stammered Mr. Limbkins: "I hope the magistrates will not form the opinion that the authorities have been guilty of any improper conduct, on the unsupported testimony of a mere child."

70 "The magistrates are not called upon to pronounce any opinion on the matter," said the second old gentleman sharply. "Take the boy back to the workhouse, and treat him kindly. He seems to want it."

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Chapter 3, pp 20-25, 1837-38.

Oxford University Press.1999

Robert Owen, *A New View of Society*, 1813.

Civilisation Britannique Documents Contemporains - Danielle Friaux, Nicole Benoitson, Wesley Hutchinson, Editeur Ellipses, 1993 (Chapter 6 Pp. 210-211)

Document B

In the year 1784, the late Mr Dale of Glasgow founded a manufactory for spinning of cotton near the falls of the Clyde, in the county of Lanark in Scotland; and about that period cotton mills were first introduced into the northern part of the kingdom.

* 5 It was therefore necessary to collect a new population to supply the infant establishment with labourers. This however was no light task; for all the regularly trained Scotch peasantry disdained the idea of working early and late, day after day, within cotton mills. Two modes then only remained of obtaining these labourers; the one, to procure children from the various public charities of the country; and the other, to induce families to settle around the works.

10 To accommodate the first, a large house was erected, which ultimately contained about five hundred children, who were procured chiefly from the workhouses and charities in Edinburgh.

15 The benevolent proprietor spared no expense to give comfort to the poor children. The rooms provided for them were spacious, always clean, and well ventilated; the food was abundant, and of the best quality; the clothes were neat and useful; a surgeon was kept in constant pay to direct how to prevent or to cure disease; and the best instructors whom the country afforded were appointed to teach such branches of education as were deemed likely to be useful to children in their situation. Kind and well disposed persons were appointed to superintend all these proceedings. Nothing, in short, at first sight seemed wanting to render it a most complete charity.

20 But to defray the expense of these well devised arrangements, and support the establishment generally, it was absolutely necessary that the children should be employed within the mills from six o'clock in the morning till seven in the evening, summer and winter; and after these hours their education commenced. The directors of the public charities, from mistaken economy, would not consent to send the children under their care to cotton mills, unless the children were received by the proprietors at the ages of six, seven, and eight. And Mr Dale was under the necessity of accepting them at those ages, or of stopping the manufactory which he had commenced.

* 25 30 It is not to be supposed that children so young could remain, with the intervals of meals only, from six in the morning until seven in the evening, in constant employment on their feet within cotton mills, and afterwards acquire much proficiency in education. And so it proved; for many of them became dwarfs in body and mind, and some of them were deformed. Their labour through the day, and their education at night, became so irksome, that numbers of them continually ran away, and almost all looked forward with impatience and anxiety to the expiration of their apprenticeship of seven, eight and nine years; which generally expired when they were from thirteen to fifteen years old. At this period of life, unaccustomed to provide for themselves, and unacquainted with the world, they usually went to Edinburgh or Glasgow, where boys and girls were soon assailed by the innumerable temptations which all large towns present; and to which many of them fell sacrifices.

Robert Owen, *A New View of Society*, 1813.

Civilisation Britannique Documents Constitutionnels. Danièle Frison, Nicole Bensoussan, Wesley Hutchinson. Editeur Ellipses.1993 (Chapter 6 Pp. 210-211)



KIT'S WRITING LESSON. R. B. Martineau's painting (1852) of a scene from *The Old Curiosity Shop* is one of many contemporary representations of characters from Dickens's novels. The picture also usefully suggests