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hers, and so are the legs. She is a nasty disagreeable thing and I know it will make her very cross when she sees it, and what I say is that I hope it may. You will say the same, I know — at least I think you will.

I meant to have written you a longer letter but I cannot write very fast when I like the person I am writing to, because that makes me think about them, and I like you and so I tell you. Besides it is just eight o'clock at night, and I always go to bed at eight o'clock except when it is my birthday, and then I sit up to supper. So I will not say anything more besides this — and that is my love to you and Neptune, and if you will drink my health every Christmas Day, I will drink yours — Come.

I am

Respected Sir

Your affectionate friend

CHARLES DICKENS

I don't write my name very plain, but you know what it is, you know, so never mind.



A NEW EDITION OF THE DICKENS *CAROL*

DICKENS lovers everywhere will, we feel sure, take pleasure in the recent publication by the Colby College Press of *A Christmas Carol* as abridged “for reading aloud at Christmas time” by that expert on such readings aloud, Mr. Philo C. Calhoun, of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Colby Library Associates will doubtless remember the amazing exhibition of copies of *A Christmas Carol* in the Colby College Library at the time of the centenary of that work —

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copies from Mr. Calhoun's magnificent *Carol* collection — and many will recall one or another of his addresses to the Library Associates, for he has come to Waterville on four occasions in the last decade and has shared his enthusiasm for books with Colby men and women.

We think that there can be no one in the United States better qualified than Mr. Calhoun to make an abridgement "for reading aloud." As he says in his "Introduction" to this new edition of the immortal work, "*A Christmas Carol* I have read aloud, in one form or another, every Christmas season, without a break, for more than fifty years. I shall read it next Christmas, please God, and on all the Christmases after that, as long as my voice holds out."

The whole of Mr. Calhoun's introduction makes delightful reading. "One may," he remarks, "get a certain pleasure in thumbing over *Les Miserables* on a park bench in Paris, or *Quentin Durward* in Tours, or the *Sonnets* with one's feet in the Avon, or *Stones of Venice* while sitting on one of them; but there is no satisfaction quite equal to that of reading the *Carol* during the 'good time,' the 'kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time' for which it was written."

A. Edward Newton once called the *Carol* "the greatest little book in the world" and declared that "it should be read . . . aloud every year before Christmas. . . . The boy who is permitted to grow up without being 'read Dickens to' should bring a suit . . . against his parents. . . ."

The version of the *Carol* just published by the Colby College Press* differs from any and all previously published abridgements of *A Christmas Carol*. The editor has entitled it "The Little Carol" but that is Dickens' own phrase, used in several of his letters. The Colby edition leaves out certain material which, to the editor, seems

* *The Little Carol*, being *A Christmas Carol in Prose*, by Charles Dickens, abridged and edited by Philo Calhoun, for reading aloud at Christmas time. Waterville, Maine: Colby College Press, 1954. With 4 illustrations. Cloth: \$3. Paper: \$2. Dust-wrapper.

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“dated” and it cuts to a minimum that part of the story which concerns Scrooge’s early “affair of the heart.” And it includes, among the things never before published, a reproduction of Charles Dickens’ letter accepting an invitation to read the *Carol* in Peterborough, England, in the Christmas season of 1855, almost exactly a hundred years ago. The Colby *Carol* also reproduces a photograph which Mr. Calhoun believes to be hitherto unpublished showing Dickens at his reading desk.

The Colby College Press has obviously tried hard to bring this new edition within the reach of all, and has issued it in two formats: a cloth-bound edition at three dollars, and a paper-bound edition in red at two dollars. A. Edward Newton’s advice is worth repeating: “Buy two copies: one to give away and one to read, as the Christmas season rolls around.” And Mr. Calhoun explains why: “because every lover of the *Carol* is a missionary for its message. He has come to recognize that message as the hope of the world.”



THOMAS HARDY AND MILTON ABBEY

By THE REVEREND CANON HERBERT PENTIN, M.A.

Ericeira, Portugal

THE first five years of my clerical life were spent in Warwickshire, as Curate of George Eliot’s parish at Nuneaton, and of Shakespeare’s Church at Stratford-on-Avon. Then, Sir Everard Hambro, by presenting me with the Living of Milton Abbey in the year 1901, brought me back to Dorset where my boyhood and youth had been spent.

Thomas Hardy and I soon met at meetings of the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club, of which I