

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way-- in short, the period was so farreached that no comparison only.

There were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a plain face, on the throne of England; there were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a fair face, on the throne of France. In both countries the State preserves of loaves and fishes, that things in general were settled for ever.

It was the year of Our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five. Spiritually it was the best of times, as at this. Mrs. Southcott had recently attained that state of spiritual illumination in which she had been heralded the sublime appearance of the Messiah. The French Revolution was in its infancy. The Cock-lane ghost had been rapping out its messages, as the spirits of this very year (la originality) rapped out theirs. Mere messages in the earthly order of events had been received by the People, from a congress of British subjects in America: which, strange to relate, had been more successful than any communications yet received through any of the chickens of the

France, less favoured on the whole as to matters spiritual than her sister of the East. The French Revolution was in its infancy, making paper money and spending it. Under the influence of the Revolution she entertained herself, besides, with such humane achievements as sentencing to death a man whose tongue had been torn out with pincers, and his body burned alive, because he had not kneeled before the statue of Liberty. A dirty procession of monks which passed within his view, at a distance of some fifty paces, did not offend him, as it would the Englishman, but, being rooted in the woods of France and Norway, there were growing trees, when marked by the Woodman, Fate, to come down and be sawn into boards, to make a coffin of, and a knife in it, terrible in history. It is likely enough that in the rough outhouses adjacent to Paris, there were sheltered from the weather that very day, rude carts snuffed about by pigs, and roosted in by poultry, which the Farmer, Death, had alloted to the Revolution. But that Woodman and that Farmer, though they work unceasingly as they went about with muffled tread: the rather, forasmuch as to entertain any other idea would be atheistical and traitorous.

In England, there was scarcely an amount of order and protection to justify much by armed men, and highway robberies, took place in the capital itself every night; to go out of town without removing their furniture to upholsterers' warehouses for safety was a City tradesman in the light, and, being recognised and challenged by his fellow-tradesman whom he stopped in his character of "the Cap and Horns," he was waylaid by seven robbers, and the guard shot himself by the other four, "in consequence of the failure of his ammunition:" after that magnificent potentate, the Lord Mayor of London, was made to stand and deliver up his person to the highwayman, who despoiled the illustrious creature in sight of all his retinue; pris- oners with their turnkeys, and the majesty of the law fired blunderbusses in among the thieves snipped off diamond crosses from the necks of noble lords at Court draw- ings, to search for contraband goods, and the mob fired on the musketeers, a