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A Tale of Two Cities: Carlyle and Dickens

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A Tale of Two Citiesの序文に記された Carlyleの名に着眼して両者における evidential documents/writing (証拠/文書/文献/記述) に対する姿勢を調べてみた。この小説では evidential documentsは、Sydney Cartonが Charles Darnayを擁護する方法に最も良く表れているように、それを処理するsubject (主体) によってその独立性を侵害されるばかりでなく、それ自体の真偽性から掛け離れたprocess of persuasion (説得過程) に組み込まれた時に、その use value (使用価値) としてのみしかその存在理由を与えられていない。Carlyleにおいては逆に evidential documentsはその不可侵な実体性の故に、その全体への組み込みの過程において、evidential documentsを処理している subjectに抵抗する力を保持していると共に、そのsubjectの独立性を脅かす存在でもある。

Dickens' historical novel *A Tale of Two Cities* is striking because of its lack of source references. While Dickens amply acknowledges his indebtedness to the "parliamentary records" and the "raven's account" for the creation of Barnaby Rudge, he cites no authority except Carlyle as a possible source of *A Tale of Two Cities*: "It has been one of my hopes to add something to the popular and picturesque means of understanding that terrible time, though no one can hope to add anything to the philosophy of Mr. CARLYLE's wonderful book."¹ However, since Dickens specifically mentions Carlyle's name, I consider it worthwhile to investigate Carlyle's works in their relation to *A Tale of Two Cities*. Indeed, Dickens' admiration for Carlyle and Carlyle's contributions to *A Tale of Two Cities* have long been substantiated. Besides his own history, Carlyle provided Dickens with other books on the French Revolution, and, when the novel was completed, he even commented on it before publication.² Most significantly, the plot of Dickens' novel revolves around a secret document that records cruel aristocratic misdeeds, as Dickens describes the events that are consequent upon the Marquis de St. Evremonde's crimes, and the unpredictable nature of documentary evidence. Since Carlyle's works are also marked by their insistence upon written evidence, they could have inspired Dickens with ideas about the power of documentation.

Carlyle was the author who was fascinated, and at the same time frustrated, by documentary evidence. In one of his historical works entitled *The French Revolution*, Carlyle shows signs of his yearning for the certainty that only ascertainable evidence can secure. The chaos that precedes *The French Revolution* can be explained, Carlyle observes, because "ours is a most fictile world; and man is the most fingent plastic of creatures. A world not fixable; not fathomable! An unfathomable Somewhat, which is Not we; which we can work with and live amidst,—and model, miraculously in our miraculous Being, and name World."³ The transitional nature of the world holds a potential danger, for the transformations he records are those of decay and disintegration. "The world is all so changed," he remarks, "so much that seemed vigorous has sunk decrepit, so much that was not is beginning to be!" (*The French Revolution*, 11). Documentary evidence is the only antidote to such an "unfixed world," because it can provide the ductile world with stabilizing concrete details based on alternative beliefs and practices. Carlyle always

gives an account of the state of the documents upon which he relies. His other work, *Past and Present* indeed pauses for such an account, as the author—cum—editor attributes the source of “The Ancient Monk” to a “foreign Book.”⁴ Carlyle then praises another editor, the Camden Society’s Rokewood, translator of the “certain confused papers” (*Past and Present*, 56) containing the Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond, for the tremendous contribution he makes toward a better comprehension of the Chronicle.

Jocelin’s Editor has done his editorial function well. Not only has he deciphered his crabbed Manuscript into clear print; but he has attended, what his fellow—editors are not always in the habit of doing, to the important truth that the Manuscript so deciphered ought to have a meaning for the reader. “he has taken care by some note to indicate…errors, and what the correction of them ought to be. …at any stop that may occur. …we have the comfortable assurance that a meaning does lie in the passage, and may by industry be got at; that a faithful editor’s industry had already got at it before passing on (*Past and Present*, 61).

Carlyle continues to compliment Rokewood’s notes, glossary, and index, and remarks that Jocelin’s record is “unwrapped from its thick cerements and fairly brought forth into the common daylight.” By incorporating the editorial information in the main text, Carlyle points the reader’s attention to the fact that what constitutes Jocelin’s chronicle is written documentation.

However, Rokewood’s emendation has a limit, for no editorial effort can totally overcome the gap left by the original writer. To make the matter worse, even when documents become legible, they can remain extremely reticent. Carlyle confesses that Jocelin’s “light is most feeble, intermittent…the good Jocelin…is but an altogether imperfect ‘mirror’ of these old—world things!” (*Past and Present*, 62). This is the limit of historical evidence beyond which no editor can go without being stricken with self—doubt. Because of the limit, the editor has to concede autonomy to documentation. However earnestly Carlyle begs for more evidential information, he is only frustrated: “O Jocelin, what did he say, what did he do: how looked he, lived he; —at the very lowest, what coat or breeches had he on! Jocelin is obstinately silent. Jocelin marks down what interests him; entirely deaf to us” (*Past and Present*, 64). Because of their inalterability, historical documents preserve a life of their own, and resist any attempt to penetrate into the evidential boundaries. The independence of documentation, which is demonstrated in *A Tale of Two Cities* when a written document serves as an unforgiving witness at a trial for Charles Darnay’s life, generates a disturbing power in *Sartor Resartus*. The attempt to reach the source by the editor—cum—translator of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh’s “Autobiography” entails an infinite frustration when

in place of this same Autobiography with “fullest insight,” we find—Six considerable PAPER—BAGS, carefully sealed…in the inside of which sealed Bags, lie miscellaneous masses of Sheets, and oftener Shreds and Snips, written in Professor Teufelsdröckh’s scarce—legible cursiv—schrift; and treating of all imaginable things under the Zodiac and above it, but of his own personal history only at rare intervals, and then in the most enigmatic manner!⁵

This inability to make the documents yield their full contents results not only in a helpless predicament but also in a physical as well as psychological malaise. Consequently, the editor finds “his otherwise robust health declining; some fraction of his allotted natural sleep nightly leaving him, and little but an inflamed nervous—system to be looked for” (*Sartor Resartus*, 62).

However, the editor overcomes the obstacle and manages to incorporate the erratic documents into the text. In the end, the information provided by the “Scrappy documents” is made to play a central role in the creation of Teufelsdröckh’s Clothes Philosophy, and the intractable documents are transformed into a structural and rhetorical centerpiece of the autobiography. Apropos of the documentary “Sheets,”

“Shreds,” and “Snips,” G.B. Tennyson observes that “*Sartor* is studded with literal fragments of every imaginable kind of writing. The very feel of the book depends on these fragments, the titles, the passages taken from here and there, the works unfinished or stopped in mid—passage.”⁶ The evidential value of the documents for Carlyle, therefore, is paramount. What he is afraid, and at the same time disdainful of, is the part that obstinately remains silent even after a recuperative effort has been made. The silence sometimes results from the irretrievability of the content as in the case of the pre—revolutionary paper Carlyle cites in the context of the French Revolution. Indeed, Carlyle’s derision of the period preceding the French Revolution as “The Paper Age” derives from the status of the paper that is contentless: “Bank—paper, wherewith you can still buy when there is no gold left; Book—paper, splendent with Theories, Philosophies, Sensibilities,—beautiful art, not only of revealing thought, but also of so beautifully hiding from us the want of Thought!” (*The French Revolution*, 37).

The editor of Teufelsdröckh’s autobiography, on the other hand, concentrates on retrieving the full, and correct, content of documents. Even though he thinks that “the Clothes volume itself was too like a chaos” (*Sartor Resartus*, 61), the editor tries to interpret it appropriately so that he can construct the autobiography meaningfully enough to render the Clothes Philosophy comprehensible to the reader. Insofar as any written evidence contributes to the constructive attempt, Carlyle admits the usefulness of even such sources as the six paper—bags. The fault of French aristocrats lies not so much in their inability to comprehend the paper but in their rejection of the existence of tangible evidence, or more specifically, documentary autonomy. Needless to say, however, this documentary autonomy entails potentially dangerous ramifications, if sinister history—mongers like Madame Defarge appropriate documents and interpret them to their own advantage.

One more problem associated with documentary autonomy is that it tends to obstruct editorial synthesis. The case in point is Carlyle’s project to write Cromwell’s biography. After spending seven years in an earnest attempt to complete the work, he found that he “could not find his way through the morass of materials on the Civil War or find the thread that would lend coherence to a life of Cromwell.”⁷ Although he finally settles on letting Cromwell speak in his own words, Carlyle cannot but confess to the unmalleability of documents in the process of creating a unified whole that will sufficiently do justice to the figure of Cromwell. In his introduction to the first edition of *Oliver Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches*, Carlyle compares the editing work to a descent into the underworld: “I have gathered them [letters] from far and near; fished them up from the foul Lethean quagmires where they lay buried; I have washed, or endeavoured to wash them clean from foreign stupidities (such a job of buckwashing as I do not long to repeat).”⁸ After all, from a perspective of the editor who tires to sort and organize documents in a meaningful order, the sheer amount of the past records that have to be sifted through alone poses a great challenge:

They lie there, printed, written, to the extent of tons and square miles, as shot—rubbish; unedited, unsorted, not so much as indexed; full of every conceivable confusion; —yielding light to very few; yielding darkness, in several sorts, to very many. ... huge piles of mouldering wreck, wherein, at the rate of perhaps on pennyweight per ton, lie things memorable (*Oliver Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches*, 16).

Now I would like to turn to Dickens and see how he treats the material out of which he creates the historical account of *A Tale of Two Cities*. Anyone might agree that *A Tale of Two Cities* is filled with historical events. What they give rise to is a sense of immense force that is beyond human control. From the foreboding footsteps in the quiet corner where Dr. Manette and his daughter take shelter, to the

portrait of the French people finally rebelling against the tyrannical regime, Dickens describes an ineffable power that will reduce everyone involved in the historical process to a helpless slave to it. Indeed, Robert Alter writes that the novel “is intended to dramatize the ways in which human beings become the slaves of impersonal forces.”⁹ There are other critics who also emphasize the helplessness of individual effort to influence the historical process. David D. Marcus, for example, comments that “Darnay’s very reasonable point of view is a misunderstanding, a projection of his own humanity into a very inhumane situation,” for “[a]t the end of the novel, Darnay and Dr. Manette retreat into the tranquillity of the domestic circle, and that retreat has to be seen in the light of their failure as public men to influence the course of events.”¹⁰

However, this seemingly impersonal historical tale is personalized in an unexpected manner. A closer look at the historical process developed in *A Tale of Two Cities* reveals that Alter’s definition of “impersonal forces” does not exactly correspond to the way history is treated in the novel. Dickens in fact never fails to endue the French Revolution with a human quality, as demonstrated when he imagines the historical event as a process of anthropomorphic transformation:

All the devouring and insatiate Monsters imagined since imagination could record itself, are fused in the one realisation, Guillotine. And yet there is not in France, with its rich variety of soil and climate, a blade, a leaf, a root, a sprig, a peppercorn, which will grow to maturity under conditions more certain than those that have produced this horror. Crush humanity out of shape once more, under similar hammers, and it will twist itself into the same tortured forms. Sow the same seed of rapacious license and oppression over again, and it will surely yield the same fruit according to its kind (353).

In this case, it is possible to identify the exact person who has sown the “seed of rapacious license and oppression” as the corrupt aristocrat of the ancient regime, the Marquis de St Evremonde. In a sense, Dickens can focus on the cause of the revolution largely because he creates an irredeemable figure epitomizing the evil of the ruling class. Considering the impact the passage has on the reader when the marquis threatens the Parisian poor that “I would ride over any of you very willingly, and exterminate you from the earth” (105), it seems safe to say that Dickens is justified in his personalization of the impersonal historical force.

The attention to individuals persists in Dickens’ portrayal of those who continue the Marquis’ legacy of cruelty. Rather than describing prominent revolutionary leaders or general shift of events, the novel offers a congerie of workers such as a wine merchant of St. Antoine and his wife, an upstart juryman, and a woodsawyer, i.e., people who have now become a creative force of history. These revolutionaries are also concerned with evidence that is to be inscribed in history. Madame Defarge, for example, insists on keeping a physical record of the condemned, a coded document concealed in her knitting, despite her husband’s guarantee that “if madame my wife undertook to keep the register in her memory alone, she would not lose a word of it—not a syllable of it” (164). Madame Defarge confirms the importance historical evidence holds in the novel by actually acting on it, as the spy Barsad recalls observing her “over and over again produce her knitted register, and denounce people whose lives the guillotine then surely swallowed up” (286). Similarly, her husband, fascinated by the charm of evidence, deserts the attack on the Bastille, and indulges his curiosity about the deserted North Tower, where he believes the details of aristocratic injustice can be found. The significance of evidence is highlighted when Defarge’s craving for it forces the popular leader to leave even the site of historic struggle, and when he and his companions return to the “raging flood [of people]” in the court-yard, “[t]hey found it surging and tossing, in quest of Defarge himself. Saint Antoine was clamorous to have its wine-shop keeper foremost in the

guard upon the governor who had defended the Bastille and shot the people” (208-09).

Evidence tends to be turned into a deadly means of persecution in *A Tale of Two Cities*. In fact, the written word in the novel is associated with danger even before Dr. Manette's letter threatens his son-in-law's life. The Marquis confirms Charles Darnay's suspicion that, were the Marquis not in disfavor with the aristocracy, “a letter de cachet would have sent [Charles Darnay] to some fortress indefinitely” (115). When the aristocracy falls, the revolutionaries soon use writing to their advantage. Whereas the ancien regime preferred secrecy, the new tyranny resorts to writing for the control of the public: “It was an ordinance of the Republic One and Indivisible of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, or Death, that on the door or doorpost of every home, the name of every inmate must be legibly inscribed in letters of a certain size, at a certain convenient height from the ground” (274). The implication is clear even before the Republic arrests Darnay in the house to which his name has just been added. No one is safe under the regulation of writing, for the inscriptions prevent anyone from hiding. Worse yet, individuals relying on documentary defenses find themselves vulnerable, since even the most shrewdly chosen and carefully preserved piece of written evidence may prove a greater weapon to an adversary. Trying to refute Sydney Carton's claim that he had seen Roger Cly in Paris, John Barsad shows him “a certificate of Cly's burial, which I happen to have carried in my pocketbook...ever since” (288). To Barsad's dismay, the attempted deception only strengthens Carton's “hand at cards” when Jerry Cruncher attests to the inauthenticity of the death certificate that rather incriminates Barsad as a spy.

A document in less experienced hands entails more serious consequences. When Darnay departs for Paris, Gabelle's letter is supposed to take him to his destination without any mishap, but instead it turns against him, and conveys Darnay to La Force. That misfortune is even overshadowed by the disaster Dr. Manette's letter occasions. What most characterizes this document in *A Tale of Two Cities* is its material status. Dickens focuses on its materiality by emphasizing the process of its creation. Manette notes that “I write it at stolen intervals, under every difficulty,” and the words of the letter “are formed...by the rusty iron point with which I write with difficulty in scrapings of soot and charcoal from the chimney, mixed with blood” (303). As Manette recounts his travail, he repeatedly alludes to the cold, the lack of light, the danger, and the fear of losing the document. Despite his adverse condition, Manette is determined to leave a record. His fatal letter describing the Marquis's crimes to the Minister originates in his desire to write regardless of apparent futility, for he admits that “I expected the matter would never be heard of; but, I wished to relieve my own mind” (313). Ironically, however, Manette's condemnation of the Marquis imperils Darnay rather than the person the letter was meant to indict. Eventually, the potency of the documentary autonomy reveals its power when “Madame Defarge's use of that document for a vindictive purpose puts Dr. Manette (so to speak) back into the Bastille: he has his most serious relapse” into insanity.¹¹

The autonomy and ineradicability of evidential document pursue Manette throughout his unfortunate life. Although placed in the chimney of his cell for many years, the letter remains unaltered. It is as if the words inscribed on the paper assert their independent status, and reject any interference, including Manette's, as they take on different significations depending on the circumstances. When the doctor produces the letter, its meaning is defined by the relation between him and his oppressors who had initially educated the doctor's particular sentiment: “them and their descendants, to the last of their race, I, Alexandre Manette, unhappy prisoner, on this last night of the year 1767, in my unbearable agony, denounce to the times when all these things shall be answered for. I denounce them to Heaven and to earth” (315). When the Revolution takes place, however, the words in the letter assume an unexpected

signification, and transform themselves into an agent that empowers the revolutionaries to accuse the man whom Manette's daughter marries. Once released from the author's hand, as it were, the words float in the air, and attach themselves to the power that is willing to appropriate them. As a result, the document develops a closer affiliation with Madame Defarge than with Manette. Her triumphant remark to him expresses the importance of the possession of the document, "Save him now, my Doctor, save him!" (316).

Thus, the best method to prevent inconvenient situations from arising is to eliminate written documents at the earliest convenient moment, or, since they become so intractable once they have found their existence, not to produce them at all. Throughout the novel, the wisest and most circumspect decisions regarding written evidence invariably require minimizing and obscuring it. Although careless himself, Charles Darnay at least shows his concern for his friends' safety. When he asks Mr. Lorry to carry a verbal message to Gabelle, he does not forget to add that "I would not consent to your being charged with any written answer" (232); Darnay sends his wife letters from prison but "never by the Doctor's hand" (258), for Darnay does not want to incriminate him for possession of material evidence. The astute Jarvis Lorry employs precautions against written evidence from his first appearance in the novel. As he explains Lucie the operation to rescue Manette, he clearly indicates that he understands the importance of suppressing evidence: "Even I, safe as an Englishman, and even Tellson's, important as they are to French credit, avoid all naming of the matter. I carry about me, not a scrap of writing openly referring to it. This is a secret service altogether. My credentials, entries, and memoranda, are all comprehended in the one line, 'Recalled to Life,' which may mean anything" (24). Accordingly, the letter sent to Lucie deliberately confuses the reader by its disorganized content: "some intelligence—or discovery—respecting the small property of my poor father, whom I never saw—so long dead" (19). Even the brief message Jerry Cruncher delivers to Lorry—"Wait at Dover for Mam'selle" (8)—is characterized by its anonymity and minimalization. Later, the evidential nature of documents forces Lorry to undertake another journey to France, because, according to him, "[t]he Lord above knows what the compromising consequences would be to numbers of people, if some of our documents were seized or destroyed" (225). Throughout the narrative, his objective is consistent; it is obfuscation of the documents, and "the burying of them, or otherwise getting of them out of harm's way" (225).

What appears in Mr. Lorry as a business skill manifests itself in Sydney Carton as a personality trait that contributes to the defeat of Madame Defarge's expertise in the realm of evidence. In *A Tale of Two Cities*, Carton is depicted as someone who is most dissociated from documents. That detachment makes him an unstable entity amidst the fixedness of written evidence, but the unpredictability that status generates gives him a peculiar power. In the fictional space where Carton resides, one's identity is defined by written evidence that is attached to him. When Carton leaves the "certificate which enables me to pass out of this city" (326) with Mr. Lorry, he abandons the identity created by that document—"Sydney Carton. Advocate. English" (338). Since he has transformed himself into a non-entity, he might as well become the "other" as "himself," as indicated by his casual reference to the person "stretched insensible on the ground" (335) as "me." This identity confusion seems to be repeated by Barsad's dismay when the man in Darnay's clothes directs him to "take me to the coach" (335). The concept of detachable identity is also applicable when the little seamstress remains satisfied with the identity that is merely based on the external appearance, and does not ask her companion's other name, even though she is cognizant that a different man now responds to the name Evremonde.

Throughout the novel, Dickens hints at Carton's aversion to writing. When Carton writes, he

produces only notes of extreme brevity. One such note comes into being during Darnay's English trial. In order to remark on his resemblance to Darnay, Carton jots for Stryver "a word or two on a little piece of paper" (65). Another one, written "with his pencil on a scrap of paper" (297), is produced when he visits the Parisian chemist. The note apparently contains nothing more than the names of the drugs he uses to subdue Darnay. While Manette and Madam Defarge regard written documents as a means to record or a guide to certain eventuality, both examples of Carton's writing reveal their tendency to evade and misdirect. The first example confuses the witness at the Old Bailey, and the second procures the means to disorient Darnay and facilitates the substitution, an operation which effectively deceives the revolutionaries into believing that they had apprehended the real suspect. Carton consistently refuses to be deeply implicated in writing. At the end, he decides to send a message to Lucie for the last time in his life, but he carefully leaves it unaddressed and undated, a feat he accomplishes by dictating it to Darnay.

Because of his undocumentary nature, Sydney Carton offers Darnay a chance to subterfuge the Revolutionary system that is heavily dependent on evidential records. Paradoxically enough, however, a means of escape for Darnay from the blood-thirsty rabble materializes in Carton the barrister. As expected, he is not an orthodox barrister. Besides the fact that he begins offering Darnay his legal services right at the moment when the trial has run its course, he receives no request to defend Darnay (in fact the "client" physically resists the maneuver intended to save him), and asks for no fee, unless the departing kiss he gives the unconscious Lucie is considered his remuneration. Nevertheless, his legal skills mark him as a well-trained legal counselor. According to Alexander Welsh's study of the uses of evidence, English law of the late eighteenth century relied on forensic methods identical in conception to the tactics that save Darnay from the Revolution's death sentence.¹² Sydney Carton constructs what Welsh calls a "strong representation," a convincing rendition of a story prepared from circumstantial evidence. (It is true that his representation employs an unconventional approach to gaining his client's release. Rather than stressing Darnay's innocence, he concentrates on creating Darnay's death by persuading his audience to believe his fabricated narrative as authentic. But, his method essentially conforms to Welsh's account.) Just as Carton's representation strives to gain an authentic status through the use of persuasive tactics, for Welsh,

a representation is literally *made*; arguments need to be set forth, evidence marshaled, and words carefully put together. The substance may stir emotions both crude and delicate, but the representation should appear to be dispassionately devoted to the facts. Its colorings must all be concealed, or else of a kind...conventionally associated with revealing the truth.¹³

The successful execution of the plot Carton devises requires the construction and management of evidence that will meet the prescriptive rules set forth by Welsh. In order to generate the conditions for the optimal utilization of evidence, Carton blackmails Barsad, subdues Darnay, and even manipulates Lorry. Consequently, as the execration uttered by Barsad's neighbor indicates, Carton is almost completely successful in making his "representation...appear to be dispassionately devoted to the facts."

Sydney Carton deceives his audience, but Welsh's account of evidence relativizes truth in the context of convincing representation. The pretension to truth, however, remains paramount. Because of the complex operations involved, Welsh presents the production of the illusion of truth as professional undertaking: "To make a representation usually means representing the facts on someone else's behalf...the stories should be managed with a careful view to the consequences. This management obviously takes ability and experience and, above all, hard work and therefore can best be left to professionals."¹⁴ Carton, who represents Darnay, is a capable man, as far as his legal tactics are

concerned. Although he does not prosper in his profession, especially as he is positioned in relation to Stryver, Dickens stresses his professional expertise (as well as indolence) throughout the novel. Carton's comment during Darnay's trial, for example, results in a sound defeat for the opponent, as Carton "smash[es] this witness like a crockery vessel, and shiver[s] his part of the case to useless lumber" (69). Some keen observers manage to perceive his talent:

It had once been noted at the Bar, that while Mr. Stryver was a glib man, and an unscrupulous, and a ready, and a bold, he had not that faculty of extracting the essence from a heap of statements, which is among the most striking and necessary of the advocate's accomplishments. But a remarkable improvement came upon him as to this. The more business he got, the greater his power seemed to grow of getting at its pith and marrow... At last, it began to get about, among such as were interested in the matter, that although Sydney Carton would never be a lion, he was an amazingly good jackal, and that he rendered suit and service to Stryver in that humble capacity (80-81).

Carton's slovenly appearance only brings his competence to the fore, as Dickens emphasizes his ability to manipulate evidence and make sense out of "the wreck of papers" (81). As if indicating his mental capacity, Dickens depicts Carton as a man of intense concentration, who sits "with knitted brows and intent face, so deep in task, that his eyes did not even follow the hand he stretched out for his glass" (82).

Since the great concern of the legal institutions is with the manipulation of evidence and production of truth, Carton indeed becomes a formidable adversary. In *A Tale of Two Cities*, the relation of Carton to evidential truth is expressed by a sartorial metaphor. Clothes have multi-faceted significations, and relative to the wearer they change their meanings. When the defense rests, "Mr. Attorney-General turned the whole suit of clothes Mr. Stryver had fitted on the jury, inside out," and the presiding magistrate comes, "turning the suit of clothes, now inside out, now outside in, but on the whole decidedly trimming and shaping them into grave-clothes for the prisoner" (70). However, Carton emerges as a winner by taking advantage of this relative character of clothes when he and Darnay slip into each other's clothes. It is a legal game Carton is engaged in. His maneuvers on Darnay's behalf both in France and England have nothing to do with truth, but with how truth is made out of evidence, i.e., with the process of persuasion. Carton's strategy to smash the crockery-vessel witness would still work if Darnay were a traitor, just as eloquence in the Conciergerie would save a vicious Marquis St. Evremonde as effectively as a righteous one. Exactly because neither the French nor the English court has any interest in the evidential truth regarding Darnay's case, Carton's deception can do the fugitive nobleman more good than any appeal to the accuracy or validity of his statement can.

In Dickens, documents acquire value only if they are transformed into an object that can be manipulated to the subject's advantage. Their absolute, historical value is subordinated to their use value. Thus, their independent existence that is free from their relation to the subject not only neutralizes them but also threatens to exclude them from history. Documents' autonomy is ever in jeopardy, for the only way they can be empowered is when they are inserted into the process of forensic persuasion, as demonstrated in Carton's defense of Darnay. On the other hand, documents have far weightier significance for Carlyle. They can become an entity to overwhelm the editorial capacity, for their autonomy always tries to disrupt the restrictive boundaries the editor imposes on them as he incorporates them into a unified text. Because of documents' assertiveness, they compel the editor to make a compromise. Their intractability does not allow the editor to preserve his autonomy intact. Therefore, the status of documentary evidence emerges as a differentiating feature between Carlyle and Dickens.

Notes

- ¹ Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), xiii. Further references are made parenthetically in the main text.
- ² See Michael Goldberg, *Carlyle and Dickens* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1972), 101-128.
- ³ Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1902), 10.
- ⁴ Carlyle, *Past and Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 57.
- ⁵ Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 60.
- ⁶ G.B. Tennyson, *Sartor Called Resartus: The Genesis, Structure, and Style of Thomas Carlyle's First Major Work* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 227.
- ⁷ John D. Rosenberg, *Carlyle and the Burden of History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 137.
- ⁸ Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1845), 24.
- ⁹ Robert Alter, "The Demons of History in Dickens' *Tale*," *Novel*, 2, No. 2 (1969), 138.
- ¹⁰ David D. Marcus, "The Carlylean Vision of *A Tale of Two Cities*," *Studies in the Novel*, 8, No. 1 (1976), 60, 57.
- ¹¹ Gordon Spence, "Dickens as Historical Novelist," *Dickensian*, 72, No. 1 (1976), 27.
- ¹² Alexander Welsh, *Strong Representations: Narrative and Circumstantial Evidence in England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 13-31.
- ¹³ Welsh, 8-9.
- ¹⁴ Welsh, 9.

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