

had taken the altitude of the great writer whom he so fervently loved and admired, could address him in the fondness of youthful enthusiasm as "my Shakspeare;" and he, the sympathetic critic, who first dared to determine that "of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, Shakspeare had the largest and most comprehensive soul." Messrs. Wiggins and Tims, too, would have added *their* names; and all right. They might not exactly see for themselves what it was that rendered Shakspeare so famous; but their admiration, entertained on trust, would be at least a legitimate *echo* of his renown; and so their names would have quite a right to be there as representatives of the outer halo — the *second* rainbow, if I may so express myself — of the poet's celebrity. But I was ashamed to add mine. I remembered that I was a *writer*; that it was my *business* to write, — to cast, day after day, shavings from off my mind, — the figure is Cowper's, — that went rolling away, crisp and dry, among the vast heap already on the floor, and were never more heard of; and so I did n't add my name. The woman pointed to the album, or rather set of albums, which form a record of the visiters, and said her mother could have turned up for me a great many names that strangers liked to look at; but the old woman was confined to her bed, and she, considerably less at home in the place, could show me only a few. The first she turned up was that of Sir Walter Scott; the second, that of Charles Dickens. "You have done remarkably well," I said. "your mother could n't have done better. Now, shut the book."

It was a curious coincidence. *Shakspeare*, Scott, Dickens! The scale is a descending one; so is the scale from the lion to the leopard, and from the leopard to the tiger-cat; but cat, leopard, and lion, belong to one great family; and these three poets belong unequivocally to one great family also. They are