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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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FOG IN DICKENS

Probably no other writer has done so much to make the characteristics of the climate of England familiar to dwellers in other parts of the English-speaking world as Charles Dickens. Weather enters, so to speak, into the warp and woof of his novels. Take fog, for example. Its prevalence in his stories has been commented upon by more than one writer. Thus an article published a good many years ago in "The Dial" contains the following:

"'London particular'—as the little attorney in 'Bleak House' calls it, half out of affectionate pride—drifts through the opening pages of 'A Christmas Carol', sharpening Old Scrooge's temper and serving to intensify the bitter cold, while at the same time emphasizing the snug indoor comforts of Christmas Eve. At the beginning of 'Bleak House' we enter an exceedingly thick fog, which, as claiming acquaintance with a kindred spirit, eddies round and pervades the Court of Chancery. Indeed, fog and mist and rain seem to hover perpetually over the landscape in this novel. When not visible in London, they are sure to be at Lady Dedlock's place down in Lincolnshire. The Kentish country, with its foggy marshes, is the scene of Pip's early adventures in 'Great Expectations'. When the child meets the convict in the old church yard, the rime lies like spiders' webs on the hedges and the grass, and a thick mist comes rolling up from the river. The cattle grazing on the marshes, the gates and dikes, all come rushing through the fog at the conscience-smitten little Pip, with the stolen ~~pork~~ pie in his pocket."

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