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 epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, 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 far like the present period that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

There were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a fair 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 it was clearer than crystal to the lords of the state preserves of loaves and fishes that things in general were settled for ever.
FOREWORD

(Scrawled in the front of an ancient volume)

Molly McKay

Thou art vile, whoe’er thou be,
Which made this stuff called poetry.
To put me through such misery
With metaphor and simile—
’Tis criminally felony.

To men of prose I say “Beware,”
When at these leaves of verse you stare,
For dreaded Iamb ’waits you there
Within her tetrametric lair
To trap you in her pedal snare.

Thou art a demon and a curse!
Although thy meter’s straight and terse
A headache have I now to nurse
From reading limericks—even worse—
That rhyming, scheming, blanking verse!

Manuscripts

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*Denotes Freshman writing.

I’ll call for pen and ink, and write my mind.

Shakespeare

I Henry VI. Act V:iii