



TITLE:

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CITATION:

WATANABE, Tomoya. Mr. Pickwick Was Roused: Sleeping and Awakening in The Pickwick Papers. ALBION. New series 2022, 68: 28-41

ISSUE DATE:

2022-11-16

URL:

https://doi.org/10.14989/Albion_68_28

RIGHT:

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Mr. Pickwick Was Roused:

Sleeping and Awakening in *The Pickwick Papers**

Tomoya WATANABE

1. Introduction

Charles Dickens's first full-length novel, *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–37), is full of truly unique and fascinating characters to which the term “Dickensian” can be aptly applied. One of the most striking of these characters is Joe, the servant boy of Mr. Pickwick's friend, Mr. Wardle. Also known by the nickname “fat boy,” Joe is repeatedly portrayed in the novel as someone who would suddenly fall asleep during the day, much to the consternation of those around him. This comic character attracted particular attention about a century after the work was first published: in 1956, medical research led by Charles Sidney Burwell revealed that the portrayal of the character's sleep was an accurate depiction of a certain sleep–apnoea syndrome, or what they termed “Pickwickian Syndrome” (811–18). Since then, Joe's description has been cited as evidence not only of Dickens's strong interest in sleep, but also of his close observation thereof.

While Joe's somnolence has received a considerable amount of attention from a medical perspective, there is surprisingly little known about the relationship between *The Pickwick Papers* and sleep in general: it is not Joe, but Mr. Pickwick, the protagonist, who falls asleep most frequently in the novel. Sleep-related words such as “sleep” and “slumber” are used a total of 188 times in the novel.¹⁾ Such words are used forty times for Mr. Pickwick while only thirty-six times for Joe.²⁾ Although by a narrow margin, Mr.

* An earlier version of this paper was presented orally in Japanese at the Annual Conference of the English Literary Society of Kyoto University on 13 November, 2021.

1) The following is a list of the sleep-related words dealt with in this study. The words are listed in order of their frequency of use: “sleep,” “asleep,” “sleeping,” “dream,” “sleepy,” “slept,” “slumber,” “nap,” “doze,” “slumbers,” “dreams,” “sleeps,” “slumbered,” “slumbering,” “dormant,” “dreamed,” “sleeper,” “dozed,” “dreaming,” “dreamless,” “dreamt,” “drowsy,” and “naps.”

2) All statistical data on literary works dealt with in this paper were obtained using *The CLiC* ↗

Pickwick's sleep is thus mentioned more often than Joe's. In addition, it must be noted that the novel contains many chapters that draw the reader's attention to a character's sleep: twelve of the fifty-seven chapters—or just over a fifth of the book—open or close with a description of a certain character going to sleep or waking up. Of these, nine of the chapters begin or end with either Mr. Pickwick being asleep or awakening, suggesting not only in terms of quantity or frequency but also in terms of quality that Mr. Pickwick's sleep is depicted in such a way as to leave a strong impression on the reader.

Indeed, several critics have already paid attention to Dickens's emphasis on Mr. Pickwick's sleep. As I shall demonstrate in the following sections, however, these studies have tended to overlook the changes that occur in the portrayal of his sleep across the novel. This paper aims to examine the descriptions of Mr. Pickwick's sleeping and awakening characteristics and then to clarify what lies behind them.

2. The Sleeping and Awakening of Mr. Pickwick

As noted in the Introduction, Mr. Pickwick's sleep is depicted more frequently and memorably in the novel than for any other character; further, there is a sense of consistency in Dickens's depiction thereof. Simply put, up to a certain point in the novel, Mr. Pickwick can always be relied upon to have a good night's sleep and wake up refreshed, ready for the commencement of a new day. This pattern of sleeping and waking up is already established at the beginning of Chapter 2, as follows:

That punctual servant of all work, the sun, had just risen, and begun to strike a light on the morning of the thirteenth of May, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, when Mr. Samuel Pickwick burst like another sun from his slumbers; threw open his chamber window, and looked out upon the world beneath. (7-8)

Starting with a description of the sun and followed by the use of vigorous words such as “burst” and “threw open,” we can sense Mr. Pickwick's inner brightness and energy in his good waking experience. Furthermore, that he is compared to the sun rising with quotidian punctuality impresses upon the reader that he will always be blessed with such pleasant awakenings.

As the story progresses, it becomes clear that Mr. Pickwick almost always wakes up pleasantly from his sleep. This is emphasized by the fact that it is often depicted after a

↙ *Concordance* created by a research team at the University of Birmingham: < <https://clic.bham.ac.uk> >.

terrible tale is told. He can get a good night's sleep immediately after hearing or reading a tragic tale, thereby demonstrating that he is seemingly not affected by the negative effects thereof. The novel is interspersed with gruesome short stories that involve people's deaths, and there are many occasions in which Mr. Pickwick and his friends listen to or read them. The first time we see an instance of him waking up agreeably following such an event occurs between the end of Chapter 6 and the beginning of Chapter 7. At the conclusion of Chapter 6, the vicar of Dingley Dell reads Mr. Pickwick a short story titled "The Convict's Return"; it is a sad tale about a man called Edmunds, who, having been exiled for theft, returns to his home village in the hopes of reuniting with his father but it is in vain. The chapter ends shortly after the vicar concludes the story with Edmund's death, and we read the following at the beginning of the next chapter:

The fatiguing adventures of the day or the somniferous influence of the clergyman's tale, operated so strongly on the drowsy tendencies of Mr. Pickwick, that, in less than five minutes after he had been shown to his comfortable bed-room, he fell into a sound and *dreamless* sleep, from which he was only awakened by the morning sun darting his bright beams reproachfully into the apartment. Mr. Pickwick was no sluggard; and he sprang like an ardent warrior from his tent—bedstead. (93; italics mine)

The vicar's dark tale has such a strong "somniferous influence" upon Mr. Pickwick that within five minutes of hearing it, he falls into "a sound and dreamless sleep" and continues to sleep until the next morning. It must be noted that the word "dreamless" is used here alongside "sound" to describe the good quality of his sleep. Concerning the latter, the use of this seemingly commonplace word is actually quite rare in such a context; as far as I have been able to ascertain, no other major writers of the period, including the Brontë sisters, W. M. Thackeray, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy, use it in their works.³⁾ The use of such an unusual adjective to describe the "dreamless" state of a

3) According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "dreamless" was first used by William Camden in 1605 and later used in the nineteenth century. However, *Nineteenth Century Reference Corpus* (created by the CLiC team) shows that only four nineteenth-century novels exist that use the word, excluding the works of Dickens. They are *Antonia, or the Fall of Rome* (1850) by Wilkie Collins, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) by Oscar Wilde, *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker, and *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) by Mary Elizabeth Braddon. This suggests that the major novelists of the time seldom used the word.

character emphasises the fact that Mr. Pickwick does not have nightmares and wakes up refreshed from a good sleep, despite having been in a situation that would naturally cause him to have a torrid night of bad dreams.⁴⁾ He thus starts a new day as if nothing terrible had happened.

A similar pattern can be seen when we come to the following tragic tale. In Chapter 11, Mr. Pickwick, who has been unable to sleep for a short while, decides to read a memoir titled “A Madman’s Manuscript” because he thinks that “it might send him to sleep” (159). It is a frightful tale about a madman who tries to kill his wife and her family. Since the title of the manuscript is ominous, he first feels a sense of uneasiness, but upon finishing it, he “soon fell fast asleep” (167). Furthermore, the following morning, we are told as follows:

The sun was shining brilliantly into his chamber when he awoke, and the morning was far advanced. The gloom which had oppressed him on the previous night, had disappeared with the dark shadows which shrouded the landscape, and his thoughts and feelings were as light and gay as the morning itself. (167)

He is thus depicted in the rays of the bright sun once again, emphasising that his sleep had erased all the anxious feelings of the night before and that he wakes up quite refreshed.

We can also find descriptions of Mr. Pickwick having a pleasant morning after other terrible short stories are told, although it is not explicitly stated whether he has a good night’s sleep. After he hears the dark story titled “The Story of the Strange Client” in Chapter 21, we see Mr. Pickwick commending the beautiful morning without any sign of fatigue or restlessness. After “The Story of the Goblins who Stole a Sexton,” he enjoys a fine morning in his bed-chamber on Christmas Day in Chapter 30. Coupled with the examples addressed earlier, we naturally presume that he has had a good sleep after hearing the terrible tales. Although *The Pickwick Papers* also contains short stories that provoke laughter (e. g. “The Bagman’s Story”), Mr. Pickwick’s sleep and awakening are never described after hearing them. This difference suggests that Dickens deliberately describes Mr. Pickwick’s sleep and awakening only after tragic tales are

4) Dickens uses the word three times in all his novels, while other novelists of his time almost never use it. He even uses the exact same phrase “a sound and dreamless sleep” (418) in his fifth novel, *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), which indicates that he likes to use the word when underscoring the depth of a character’s sleep.

told.

What is the significance of this? The most plausible answer to this question is that by constantly describing his refreshing sleep after terrible incidents, Dickens is impressing on the reader Mr. Pickwick's wholesome and unchanging cheerfulness. In the first sentence of the novel, he is described as "the immortal Pickwick" (1). Of course, this is merely a figurative expression; by repeatedly showing Mr. Pickwick falling asleep and recovering himself after a painful tale is told, however, Dickens makes the reader feel as if the jolly protagonist is an immortal being who can never be hurt. J. Hillis Miller pays particular attention to this never-changing aspect of Mr. Pickwick in relation to the depiction of sleep in the novel. Miller argues that *The Pickwick Papers* consists of "unrelated adventures separated from one another by a vacancy of sleep and forgetting," and that Mr. Pickwick's recurring sleep after each adventure enables him to return to his original self and continue in the same state as he was at the beginning (21). Philip Rogers also states that through good sleep, Dickens ensures that Mr. Pickwick's adventure on the previous day does not affect his next one, and that this preserves the character's innocence (26). Further, Garrett Stewart points out that sleep acts as what he terms a kind of "quarantine" and plays a vital role in pulling Mr. Pickwick away from his depressing experiences (30-54). Their arguments are plausible, particularly since the descriptions of Mr. Pickwick's sleeping and awakening are somewhat contrived. However, they overlook an important fact: the descriptions of Mr. Pickwick's sleep are not invariable throughout the course of *The Pickwick Papers*; indeed, there is an important break in this pattern in the middle of the novel, as discussed in the following section.

3. The Transformations of Mr. Pickwick's Sleep Patterns

Mr. Pickwick's comfortable sleeping habits, which are seemingly not disturbed by the terrible tales he reads or hears, emphasize a particularly comedic aspect of the novel. Deeper into the novel, however, the description of his sleep undergoes an interesting change. After being defeated in court by the despicable lawyers Dodson and Fogg, he refuses to pay compensation and court costs and decides of his own volition to go to Fleet Prison. In Chapter 41, although he is completely depressed by the terrible sights he saw in the prison, he immediately falls asleep when darkness falls. In earlier chapters, he had been able to dispel any fear or discomfort through sleep and it seems at first as though he might be able to follow the same pattern here. However, sleep cannot help him this time. He is awakened shortly after falling asleep by a terrible noise, as follows:

[H]e began to be conscious that he was getting sleepy; whereupon he took his nightcap out of the pocket in which he had had the precaution to stow it in the morning, and, leisurely undressing himself, got into bed, and fell asleep.

“Bravo! Heel over toe—cut and shuffle—pay away at it, Zephyr! I’m smothered if the Opera House isn’t your proper hemisphere. Keep it up. Hooray!” These expressions, delivered in a most boisterous tone, and accompanied with loud peals of laughter, *roused* Mr. Pickwick from one of those sound slumbers which, lasting in reality some half hour, seem to the sleeper to have been protracted for about three weeks or a month.

The voice had no sooner ceased than the room was shaken with such violence that the windows rattled in their frames, and the bedsteads trembled again. Mr. Pickwick started up, and remained for some minutes fixed in mute astonishment at the scene before him. (639; italics mine)

The brevity of his sleep is emphasised by the fact that the men’s noisy voices are described just after he “fell asleep.” Dickens also writes that Mr. Pickwick is startled when he feels the whole room shake, suggesting that this awakening is by no means as peaceful as the ones he had previously experienced.

It should also be noted that the word “rouse” is used here to describe his awakening. In this novel, four words are variously used to describe a character’s awakening: “wake,” “awake,” “awaken,” and “rouse.” Of these, Dickens usually uses “awaken” and “awake” in the scenes where Mr. Pickwick wakes up, as seen in the quoted passages discussed in the previous section. In this scene, however, “rouse” is preferred. Although they have a similar meaning, these words are fundamentally different: according to the *OED*, “wake,” “awake,” and “awaken” originally meant “to come out of the state of sleep; to cease to sleep,” whereas “rouse” finds its origin in hunting with the meaning of “to cause [game] to rise or issue from cover or lair.” Therefore, etymologically, “rouse” has a violent connotation. Its use here emphasises the fact that Mr. Pickwick is forcibly awakened or deprived of his sleep.

Another point to note is that Mr. Pickwick, having been roused in this manner, reacts violently. One of the prisoners snatches away the nightcap he is wearing and puts it on another’s head. In a fit of indignation, he punches the man as follows:

Taking a man’s nightcap from his brow by violent means, and adjusting it on the head of an unknown gentleman of dirty exterior, however ingenious a witticism in itself, is unquestionably one of those which come under the denomination of

practical jokes. Viewing the matter precisely in this light, Mr. Pickwick, without the slightest intimation of his purpose, sprang vigorously out of bed; struck the Zephyr so smart a *blow* in the chest, as to deprive him of a considerable portion of the commodity which sometimes bears his name; and then, recapturing his nightcap, boldly placed himself in an attitude of defence. (641; italics mine)

Mr. Pickwick is often depicted wearing a nightcap, a piece of attire that people commonly wore when they went to bed during this period.⁵⁾ We may safely assume that his nightcap represents a good night's sleep; as such, being deprived of the item symbolically means the loss thereof. His rude awakening and subsequent attack on the person who woke him is in stark contrast to his previous healthy and peaceful morning scenes. Indeed, from this point onwards, he is no longer depicted as getting a good night's sleep or waking up feeling refreshed. Miller and Rogers, however, do not consider this change at all. Garrett Stewart, for his part, does pay attention to this scene but fails to give due acknowledgement to the fact that Mr. Pickwick is here deprived of sleep for the first time in the novel. An important point overlooked by these critics is that, as will be demonstrated in the next section, Mr. Pickwick shows another important change after the above prison scene.

4. The Sudden Emphasis on Mr. Pickwick's Wealth

Upon being disagreeably roused by the prisoners, Mr. Pickwick's characterisation undergoes another major transformation, namely that he begins to be described more emphatically as an affluent man. Mr. Pickwick is described as wealthy enough to hire Sam Weller as a personal attendant early on in the novel and in Chapter 34, we are specifically told that "Mr. Pickwick has retired from business, and is a gentleman of considerable independent property" (533). However, the point that I wish to impress on the reader is that once he is violently awakened by the prisoners, the fact that he has money begins to be communicated to the reader in a more emphatic and concrete manner. For instance, in Chapter 42, learning that "money was, in the Fleet, just what money was out of it" (651), he immediately decides to rent a large room for a pound a week. When he learns that the original occupant of the room is now to live in some noisy and crowded place, he generously states, "Now, pray, consider this room your own when

5) In the novel, the word "nightcap" is used twenty-two times, with seventeen references to Mr. Pickwick's own possession of the nightly attire. Interestingly, however, his nightcap does not appear again after the present scene.

you want quiet, or when any of your friends come to see you" (653). His magnanimous words convey to the reader both his kindness and affluence. In addition, when he meets Mr. Jingle, his rival, and Job Trotter, his servant, in prison, he gives them some money, despite them having caused him many troubles before. He even gives Mr. Jingle the chance to begin a new life in Demerara, the British colony in South America, and in Chapter 53, we learn from the agent at Liverpool that "he had been obliged to [Mr. Pickwick] many times when [he was] in business, and he would be glad to take [Mr. Jingle] on [his] recommendation" (816). Further, after he is entrusted with some money by Tony Weller, Sam's father, we learn in Chapter 57 that "the contents of the pocket-book had been so well invested for him, however, by Mr. Pickwick, that he had a handsome independence to retire on" (876). Therefore, beginning from the moment when he is roused in prison, we are repeatedly impressed upon with the fact that Mr. Pickwick is an influential rich gentleman who has the power to enrich others.

Some might cast doubt on the notion that these seemingly disparate transformations are related. However, it must be noted that Dickens suggests the connection between the deprivation of Mr. Pickwick's sleep and the fact of his being a rich man in two ways. The first key to understanding this is his nightcap. He punches the rude prisoner not entirely due to the loss of his precious sleep but because he is robbed of his nightcap. As mentioned earlier, the loss of the nightcap symbolically pertains to good sleep; nevertheless, we must remember the obvious fact that the nightcap is his personal property. As mentioned above, he is often depicted with a nightcap on his head, and the fact that he has even taken it to prison shows that the nightcap is an indispensable possession for him. Such an important item is not only removed from his person, but is given to another prisoner. His anger is stirred because the prisoner "[adjusts the nightcap] on the head of an unknown gentleman of dirty exterior" (641). Therefore, the deprivation of his nightcap also represents that of his personal property. His counterattack against the person who took it can be seen as an attempt to protect his property rights, which necessarily underscores the fact that he has property.⁶⁾

Another key passage to understanding the link appears in Chapter 42, wherein he tries to help Mr. Jingle and Job Trotter. Mr. Pickwick has been repeatedly duped by these two villains, and when he is confounded by them in Chapter 16, he loudly declares, "Whenever I meet that Jingle again, wherever it is, [. . .] I'll inflict personal chastisement

6) Ayako Nakawa also regards Mr. Pickwick's act of violence as an attempt to protect his property rights, and argues that, from this point on, he comes to be represented as a member of the bourgeois class (30).

on him" (250). Therefore, it seems quite natural for Mr. Pickwick to punch them in this prison scene, and the narrator suggests that possibility as follows:

"Come here, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, trying to look stern, with four large tears running down his waistcoat. "Take that, Sir."

Take what? In the ordinary acceptation of such language, it should have been a *blow*. As the world runs, it ought to have been a sound, hearty cuff; for Mr. Pickwick had been duped, deceived, and wronged by the destitute outcast who was now wholly in his power. Must we tell the truth? It was something from Mr. Pickwick's waistcoat-pocket, which chinked as it was given into Job's hand: and the giving which, somehow or other imparted a sparkle to the eye, and a swelling to the heart of our excellent old friend, as he hurried away. (659; italics mine)

Mr. Pickwick holds out his fist as if to knock Job away. Then, after repeatedly suggesting the possibility of his punching them, the narrator reluctantly reveals the fact that what he has unleashed on them is not an iron fist of anger, but the alms money clenched in his fist. It should be noted that Dickens uses the same word "blow" here that he has used in the violent scene immediately after Mr. Pickwick is roused from his sleep in the previous chapter. This suggests a connection between the description of Mr. Pickwick being deprived of sleep and the description of him as a rich man.

5. The Consequences of Mary Hogarth's Death

An important clue to understanding the strange link between his loss of sleep and the sudden emphasis on his being a rich man lies in the description of his sleep seen at the turning point of the story. Let us return to the moment in the scene wherein Mr. Pickwick is roused by the noisy men in prison:

These expressions, delivered in a most boisterous tone, and accompanied with loud peals of laughter, roused Mr. Pickwick from one of those sound slumbers which, lasting in reality some half hour, seem to the sleeper to have been protracted for about three weeks or a month. (639)

Prior to the moment, Dickens's method of describing his characters' sleep is relatively simple: when a character falls into a noteworthy slumber, he describes it by adding certain adjectives or adverbs before either the words "sleep" or "slumber." For instance, we are told that Mr. Pickwick "[falls] into a sound sleep" (130) on the chaise

while chasing Jingle and Miss Rachel with Mr. Wardle; when the wife of the mad man suffers from her fate, we are told that she is “in her troubled sleep” (161); and we learn that the fat boy is roused “from his heavy slumbers” (417). Here, however, he tries to convey to the reader a unique phenomenon of sleep by using the relative pronoun “which” after the word “slumbers.” This more complex way of portraying a character’s sleep has hitherto not been used before in the novel. In this light, one may assume that some change in Dickens’s personal conception of sleep came around about this time.

When we consider the influence of external factors in Dickens’s writing, it is interesting to note that a commentary on the phenomenon of sleep—similar to Mr. Pickwick’s sleep in this scene—can be found in Robert Macnish’s *Philosophy of Sleep*, first published in 1830, as follows:

When we are suddenly awakened from a profound slumber by a loud knock at, or by the rapid opening of, the door, a train of actions which it would take hours, or days, or even weeks to accomplish, sometimes passes through the mind. Time, in fact, seems to be in a great measure annihilated. An extensive period is reduced, as it were, to a single point, or rather a single point is made to embrace an extensive period. In one instant, we pass through many adventures, see many strange sights, and hear many strange sounds. If we are awaked by a loud knock, we have perhaps the idea of a tumult passing before us. (58-59)

Macnish states that when we are suddenly awakened by a loud noise, we tend to feel that we have been dreaming for a lengthy amount of time though only a short time may have passed in actuality. He then cites his own experience of having a dream that “appeared to occupy many months” but was actually “the work of a single night, probably of a single hour, or even a few minutes” (60). I do not mean to posit that these experiences are exactly the same, but we can at least assume that the main thrust of the ideas suggested by Macnish and Dickens are similar. Dickens possibly wrote the scene of Mr. Pickwick’s sleep in the prison influenced by the writings of Macnish.

Considering the fame of Macnish and Dickens’s strong interest in sleep, this is not an altogether preposterous idea. Macnish was an authority on sleeping and dreaming in the nineteenth century, and Dickens later showed some insight into Macnish’s theories in his letter to Dr. Thomas Stone in 1851.⁷⁾ In addition, he had Macnish’s book in his library and

7) In the letter, Dickens opposes Dr. Stone’s idea that one’s quotidian occurrences greatly affect one’s dreams, citing Macnish (6: 276-77). Unfortunately, as the editors of the Dickens’s letters ↗

probably read it at some point, though it is not exactly clear when. However, based on his analysis of the strange descriptions of Oliver's sleep in *Oliver Twist* (1837-39), David McAllister argues that Dickens must have read Macnish's *Philosophy of Sleep* around May and June 1837 to better understand the nightly dreams of Mary Hogarth, his beloved sister-in-law who died suddenly in May 1837.⁸⁾

Because it is closely related to my argument, let me briefly recapitulate Mary's importance to Dickens, though it is a well-known story among Dickens scholars. Mary was the younger sister of Catherine Hogarth, Dickens's wife, with whom she lived. She worshipped her brother-in-law's great talent, and he, for his part, was not averse to her fraternal affections. On 7 May 1837, however, she suddenly became ill and died in his arms. Her death gave him so great a shock that he could not help but skip the serial publications of both *The Pickwick Papers* and *Oliver Twist* for a month. Importantly, after her sudden death, Mary began to appear in Dickens's dreams every day, and this amused him very much.⁹⁾ The prison scene in *The Pickwick Papers* appeared in the July number, so it is natural to assume that Dickens wrote the prison scene in June 1837 while suffering from the loss of Mary and greatly intrigued by her strange appearances in his dreams. Considering this alongside the argument that the description of Mr. Pickwick's sleep in the prison scene seems to be based on Macnish, it is very probable that Dickens read *Philosophy of Sleep* around this time and thus deepened his insight into people's sleep and dreams.¹⁰⁾

It seems that he was interested in this field partly because he wanted to better understand the dreams he was having of Mary. Put differently, her death is the key to understanding the sudden changes in the descriptions of Mr. Pickwick after the rude awakening in the prison. When he resumed the serialization of *Oliver Twist*, Dickens explained that the hiatus was due to the loss of "the chief solace of his labours" (Johnson

note, Macnish's examples that Dickens refers to were added in the third 1838 edition of the book, so this cannot help us determine when he read the book for the first time (6: 277n).

8) According to Joanne Eysell, the *Philosophy of Sleep* in Dickens's library was the 1840 edition (241), which necessarily means that he could not have read the book in 1837. However, as David Paroissien surmises, he may have read an earlier edition of the book in the middle of 1837 (101).

9) In his letter to Mrs. Hogarth, Mary's mother, dated 8 May 1843, he admits how he was pleased with her appearances in his dreams, as follows: "After she died, I dreamed of her every night for many months [...], which became so pleasant to me that I never lay down at night without a hope of the vision coming back in one shape or other" (3: 483-84).

10) McAllister also argues that the descriptions of sleep in *The Pickwick Papers* changed after Mr. Pickwick's awakening scene in prison, though he does not notice the similarity between Dickens's passage and that of Macnish (9-10).

197). From this, we might intuit that it seemed to Dickens as though he had lost a collaborator and now felt quite alone. This sense of abandonment strongly reminded Dickens of the traumatic experience of having been forced to work with working-class children at Warren's Blacking, as Peter Ackroyd notes (243). Michael Slater further argues that there is a link between this traumatic experience and Mary's death, stating that after her demise, Dickens felt the same pain in his side as the one he had suffered from while working at Warren's (82). Considering that he wrote the prison scene just after her death, it is not too much to posit that the image of prison haunted Dickens and that he was suffering from the fear of social downfall again.

It is in this context that the sudden emphasis on Mr. Pickwick's wealth should be understood. Dickens felt the fear of abandonment following the death of his beloved Mary. He felt that his primal fear was once again coming back to haunt him. His terrible experience of having been forced to work in the blacking factory while his parents were living in debtors' prison—triggered by his father's extravagant spending habits—and the fear of prison for him could be summarized as that of poverty and social dislocation. Despite the fact that he was fast becoming a successful writer, that fear had returned to haunt him and he had to confront it. Mr. Pickwick's changes reflect these inner struggles of Dickens at the time. The first "blow" that Mr. Pickwick, deprived of both sleep and his nightcap, lands on the prisoner represents Dickens's resistance to such fears. The second "blow," portrayed in connection with the first and the subsequent emphasis on him being a rich man, could be seen as an indication of Dickens's own desperate attempts to convince himself that he was finally financially independent.

6. Conclusion

This paper has discussed the profound change that occurs in the depiction of Mr. Pickwick's sleep and awakening in *The Pickwick Papers* and the implications thereof. Mr. Pickwick's good sleep is consistently depicted after the terrible interpolated tales are told in the first half of the work and the repetition thereof serves to express "the immortal Pickwick" and enhance the comedic tone of the work. However, from the scene where he is first roused in Fleet Prison, Mr. Pickwick loses a good night's sleep and so comes a turning point whereafter the fact that he is rich begins to be emphasised. It is argued that this is primarily due to the passing of Dickens's sister-in-law, Mary Hogarth. Her death revived his traumatic fears of returning to poverty and so Dickens began to emphasise the wealth of Mr. Pickwick in order to combat his own fear of social downfall.

By way of concluding this paper, I would like to point out one more interesting fact

about the novel. When publishers Chapman & Hall approached Dickens to write what would later become *The Pickwick Papers*, he sent the following letter to Catherine, whom he was to marry two months afterwards:

They (Chapman & Hall) have made me an offer of £14 a month to write and edit a new publication they contemplate, entirely by myself; to be published monthly and each number to contain four wood cuts. I am to make my estimate and calculation, and give them a decisive answer on Friday Morning. The work will be no joke, but the emolument is too tempting to resist. (1: 128-29)

For Dickens, money was thus at the heart of the writing of *The Pickwick Papers* from the very beginning. Therefore, the death of Mary Hogarth and the fear of downfall that followed weighed on him all the more heavily. Just as Mr. Pickwick was roused by noisy men and lost his comfortable sleep in the prison, so too was Dickens awakened by Mary's death to the realization that he must remain a successful writer at all costs.

**This work was supported (in part) by funding from Fukuoka University (Grant No. 223006).

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