

STRUCTURAL PATTERNS
IN SOME OF
DICKENS'S NOVELS,
WITH A SPECIAL STUDY OF
OLIVER TWIST, NICHOLAS NICKLEBY,
MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, DAVID COPPERFIELD,
AND
GREAT EXPECTATIONS

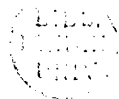
by

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ABSTRACT

Examination of Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, Martin Chuzzlewit, David Copperfield, and Great Expectations, all organized around central heroes, allows the critic to look for operative structural principles in works that appear similar. The similarity is on the surface only. Detailed analysis leads to the conclusion that the structure of each is determined by the underlying mode in which it is written. Oliver Twist is a kind of allegory, Nicholas Nickleby, a melodrama, Martin Chuzzlewit, a satire, David Copperfield, a Bildungsroman, and Great Expectations, a Bildungsroman told through a fairy tale. When the novels are read with the underlying mode in mind, many critical anomalies are seen to stem from requirements of ~~that~~ particular mode.

Choice of mode appears to be determined by the author's narrative stance toward his material; this can be determined, as a rule, from prefaces, letters, and biographical events at the time of writing. The method of analysis is of central importance, as is the discovery of an adequate typology to identify salient characteristics of each mode.

In addition to offering fresh insights into the novels themselves, the results of the approach through mode suggest that many novels might profitably be examined in this way. Recognition, for instance, that certain roles, such as those of the knave and the fool in satire or of the magic donor in the fairy tale, are essential to their respective modes has interesting implications for the study of characterization. This approach has not been used before, though certain of the underlying modes have occasionally been mentioned by critics. There have also been casual attributions of mode which do not stand up under systematic examination and are misleading. The underlying mode affects so many aspects of a novel's form that this approach would seem to provide a useful tool for novel criticism.

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NOTE ON EDITIONS AND REFERENCES

QUOTATIONS FROM THE NOVELS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF Oliver Twist, are taken from the Charles Dickens Edition of 1867-68, the last edition corrected by the author in his lifetime. This has the further advantage of running titles which are sometimes indicative of Dickens's intentions. References to the text, by page, follow quotations and are indicated as: (CD, --). For Oliver Twist the Clarendon Edition of 1966, based on the 1846 text, has been used. References to this text also follow quotations and are given as: (Cl OT, --). At the time of writing Volumes I, II, III, and IV only of the Pilgrim Edition of the Letters are in print. References to this edition are given in the footnotes thus: Letters I Pilgrim, p.--. References to the Nonesuch Edition are given thus: Letters III Nonesuch, p.--. References to Forster's Life are to the annotated edition by J.W.T. Ley, 1928. Editions of primary texts published after August 1, 1980, have not been included.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an attempt to find the operative structural principle in each of five works that appear, on the surface, to have structural similarities. It originates in questions about the structure of the novel and follows an M.A. thesis, "The Structure of Middlemarch", written for the University of Toronto in 1954. While that thesis did clarify Middlemarch, it gave rise to questions about both method and terms that might be applied to a wide range of novels. Can novels of different types and complexity, by the same author, be analyzed with the same tools? How much of the difference between novels from different literary epochs comes from the period and how much from the individualities of their respective authors? Is there an underlying principle that informs all novels of similar type?

With questions such as these in mind one begins to survey significant works and to place them tentatively in groups. But when one comes to Dickens he does not assimilate well. Methods and theories that work for most other novelists do not work for him. It would seem, then, that Dickens must either be set aside or he must be investigated first. This intractability is challenging, forcing criticism out of its accustomed grooves. If one comes to terms with Dickens first that exercise may provide useful tools of criticism, just as the study of the abnormal often provides a key to the norm. Certain Dickens novels are here examined, therefore, as much for their use as vehicles for the discovery of critical methods as for objects of study in themselves.

The study of the single-hero novels, Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, Martin Chuzzlewit, David Copperfield, and Great Expectations provides the thesis with a principle of organization and with a unity of subject to compensate for its chronological spread. It might be expected that the defining principle of form in each of these would be the single hero, but a comic single-hero novel might

have certain types of characters and certain configurations of scenes, a whole design that would be different from, for instance, the patterns in an autobiographical novel. This idea of considering single-hero novels as if they had been dipped in a series of solutions to see how chemical changes affected the surface quickly disappeared under analysis. It was soon evident that the central structural fact was not that the single hero provided a single line of development; this was replaced in importance by underlying modes that, instead, were far more influential in determining structure. Thus the recognition that Oliver Twist is some kind of allegory almost at once throws light on the repeated criticism of the "good" parts of the story and on Oliver's saintly character. The Brownlow-Maylie parts may be inferior to the Fagin sections in interest, but once one has recognized that Oliver Twist is not only an allegory, but a special type of allegory, a psychomachia, whose essence lies in the struggle between good and evil for the hero's soul, then the alternating good and evil casts of characters can be seen as essential to the form Dickens has chosen.

The key question, then, had shifted to the identification of the underlying mode for each novel. Some of the modes were clear at a glance, or seemed so. David Copperfield is obviously some kind of autobiographical novel in the first person, but so is Great Expectations, and they are very different. Critics refer both to Martin Chuzzlewit and to Nicholas Nickleby as picaresque novels, yet even a quick consideration of the first fifty pages of each suggests that something very different is going on in *each*.

Each novel presents a new problem, and some method of analysis is needed that will reveal the underlying mode and assist in its explication. What, for example, is the mode of Our Mutual Friend? It is probably Menippean satire, but, unless the reader has an encyclopedic knowledge of literature and much experience both in close critical reading of novels and in the characteristics of various modes, his selection of mode must be a more or less inspired guess. Guesses of

this type by responsible critics are shown several times in the thesis not to bear rigorous scrutiny. In part this uncertainty reflects the state of novel criticism. Even the kinds of possible underlying modes are not clear, and the critic is groping towards the apprehension of a form that he must sometimes elucidate for himself before being sure that his apprehension is correct. As each mode is clarified, its symptoms are easier to discern in other works. It is the similarity between Our Mutual Friend and Martin Chuzzlewit, which is a satire, that leads one to suspect the later work to be some kind of anatomy, the general class to which most satires in prose belong, and gives one an idea of where to start. The Old Curiosity Shop, on the contrary, has similarities to Great Expectations. Yet whatever The Old Curiosity Shop is, it is clearly not a Bildungsroman, as Great Expectations is. Perhaps the fairy-tale elements in both account for their similarity. How important are these elements in each work, and what purpose do they serve? Does the fairy tale determine the form in any way or is it decoration? Such questions as these must be faced in formal criticism of the novel, but they have received little attention. Once the mode has been discovered, however, and its characteristics sorted out, the critic can examine the novel as an example of a work in that particular mode. This may result in refreshing insights; at least it helps the critic to explain why a work is as it is.

It may be objected that, however inspired one's apprehension of underlying mode and however careful one's scrutiny of the text both for the mode and in relation to it, there is a necessary step between induction and practice, that of testing the insight against a large number of works in the suspected mode to see whether the guess is the correct one. The objection may be valid, but to meet it is impractical. Ideally one should read thirty, or seventy, satirical novels, including several from the same period as Martin Chuzzlewit, analyze them thoroughly, and formulate a typology of the satirical novel.

It is obvious that this would be a sizeable thesis in itself. Now that some preliminary work has been done on these five novels in this thesis such a corrective survey would be the next step to take to corroborate its findings. But one must start somewhere; in the interests of completing the examination of the single-hero novels, I have looked instead, with each work, for a typology of the mode and have worked from it. Propp's Morphology of the Folktale, for example, provided the perfect tool for identification of the fairy-tale elements in Great Expectations, Bettelheim's The Uses of Enchantment the bridge needed to connect fairy tale to Bildungsroman. It is not always possible to find the required typology. Martin Chuzzlewit is clearly satirical, but, while there is a whole shelf of books on the idea of satire, none satisfactorily details a typical satiric form, though Ronald Paulson, building on Mary Claire Randolph's article, "The Structural Design of the Formal Verse Satire", outlines the roles and the necessary elements of the plot of satire, and Alvin P. Kernan details the scene. In the absence of an existing typology I have quoted from several writers who have suggested the elements such a typology would include. The resultant awkwardness of the first part of the chapter on Martin Chuzzlewit is perhaps useful to show something of the process that lies behind the formation of a typology. It is an example of work in progress where "work" is not that of an individual but of criticism in general.

The critical difficulty is that there is need for movement in two directions at once, theory forming from practice and practice checking and categorizing theory. Thus when a critic such as Frye postulates the existence of a system of modes, that inductive step itself comes out of Frye's wide reading in the literature of several cultures. His broad categories then need to be tested and elucidated by means of the analysis of individual texts. When Frye writes, for instance, that Dickens's works are "fairy tales in the low mimetic displacement",¹ he has taken the immensely helpful first step of

placing Dickens's novels in the category of romances. Within that broad category, however, we may expect to find several different modes: fairy tale, allegory, adventure story, and so on. Work must be done on many forms to clarify them, and this clarification both proceeds from, and contributes to, the analysis of individual authors and of their diverse texts. We still need to know, however, the precise lineaments of the fairy tale, whether all of Dickens's novels do indeed follow that pattern, and what the modes are for those that do not seem to do so.

Much that is mainly descriptive and historical has been written about novels and, in the last twenty years, much about the theory of the novel. Yet even so late in the critical day it is still true that:

There is still a strong tendency to avoid problems of technique and design and structure in fiction, and to talk about what the book talks about rather than what it actually presents. It is still not generally understood either that "reality" in literature cannot be presented at all except within the conventions of literary structure, and those conventions must be understood first. 2

Of all the genres, the conventions in the novel are least evident. They can be understood, I suggest, only by some analysis such as this thesis presents, applied to many texts and to many authors in different periods. A sound aesthetic of the novel needs the broad and firm base of textual analysis.

One is still faced, however, with the prior problem of discovering the literary structure whose conventions one is seeking to understand. The process of discovery that lies behind this thesis has been accompanied by two kinds of readings, linear and cross-sectional. First, a long comment, chapter by chapter, a kind of diary response, was prepared; this produced a linear analysis which recorded the perceptions of a careful reader going through the work slowly, alert to symptoms of mode. The linear commentary might be compared to the careful mapping of territory one had previously visited as a tourist. Close scrutiny of the terrain makes topographical details clear

enough to provide a relief map, but it does not account for the hills and valleys and bodies of water. Only a series of cross-sections can indicate the substances of which the terrain is actually composed.

The next step was to provide some kind of cross-sectional view of each novel. This was a summary, on cards of different colours for each character, of scenes, with their participants, and of the linking narrative. The proportion of prose to dialogue differs in different novelists and in different novels by the same author. One of the questions at this early stage was whether such variations in proportion were related more to theme, to form, or to writer. For each scene, that is for each conversation that was consistent in place and number of characters, a card was made, of the appropriate colour, listing the speakers and the location, and noting the substance of the scene and its place in the novel. When a new character enters and joins a dialogue in progress this changes the scene. As well, blocks of narrative were examined for their content and their point of view. Many of these blocks of narrative in Great Expectations, for example, are descriptive, and all are seen through Pip's eyes. In Martin Chuzzlewit, by contrast, the author as satirist is behind many of the narrative passages. Dickens is like quicksilver in his shifts from narrative links to scenes and in and out of scenes within scenes, so that this particular division highlights the fluidity of his novelist's world, though it is taxing for the analyst.

This second layer of analysis is instructive when it is used for the examination of individual novels, and when the patterns of different novels by the same author are compared. In Martin Chuzzlewit, for instance, the proportion of narrative prose to dialogue is noticeably larger than in the novels that precede it. Many of these passages have to be described as generalized author comment, in comparison with David Copperfield, say, where most of the

narrative passages serve the function of soliloquies. The mock-heroic family history in Chuzzlewit, deplored by so many critics, is not only appropriate to the satiric mode of that novel but is also in keeping with other satiric essays in it. Once specific narrative passages have been isolated and examined in connection with one another, and in relation to the scenes that follow them, their particular tone and function may be clarified, and their contribution to the novel appreciated.

Comparison in the use of scene and narrative prose between Dickens and other novelists, though beyond the scope of this thesis, tells us useful things about their respective methods. George Eliot can be sliced into narrative and scenic sections much more neatly than Dickens; her narrative sections are, much more than his, preparations for scenes, and there is careful variety in the types of scenes that she uses. Where each of George Eliot's scenes is carefully crafted, a series of small, well-made plays, with Dickens the scenes seem both more casual, or less carefully controlled, and often more widely suggestive. The light touch, often almost of farce, makes points glancingly. This would account for Chesterton's impression of the novels as lengths cut off from "the flowing and mixed substance called Dickens", without structure.³ Rather they are made to appear like lengths cut from some particular bolt of experience; their principle of structure is a concealed one that this method of analysis helps to bring to our attention.

On a mechanical level the cross-section analysis makes certain structural patterns clear. In Oliver Twist, for instance, the battle between good and evil forces struggling for Oliver's soul appears as a series of alternating card colours, Oliver versus the evil ones, again and again. In Great Expectations the hero is seen to appear in almost every scene, while in Martin Chuzzlewit he is absent from many parts of the novel. The file cards show Herbert Pocket's influence on the hero of Great Expectations to be much more

pervasive than one would have recollected from a linear reading, and Wopsle's tendency to lurk around decisive events in Pip's life with a significant dramatic text to hand becomes clear. The cross-section also provides a salutary check to wishful impressionism. When the statement is made, in the chapter on Nicholas Nickleby, that Newman Noggs is a linking figure, it is made on the basis of a series of cards that show where he appears. By looking at the incidents in which Newman is involved one can easily see that Dickens uses him repeatedly to give the action a twist in direction or complexity. Whenever statements such as the one about Newman Noggs are made in the thesis, they are made on the basis of this double analysis. Further, the card analysis makes clear such elementary spatial metaphors as "central". In Nickleby, for example, one can see at a glance that the important Crummles section is at the centre. At this centre, too, is the play Nicholas and Smike star in, Romeo and Juliet, a play about bourgeois families nervously establishing their houses and young lovers learning about the reality behind poses and conventions. Both of these observations take us a good way further into the novel than does the conventional view that Nicholas's and Smike's journey from Yorkshire makes it an example of the picaresque. The cross-section analysis not only corroborates details and draws attention to the placing of significant events in the novel, but it also suggests new patterns and becomes a tool in the examination of them.

The main value of this second layer of analysis, however, lies less in results than in process. It is obvious that different readings of novels, either by different persons, or at different times by the same person, produce different emphases. Simply slowing down the reading enough to make notes and to write analytic commentaries produces readings in which very different things come into focus from those that appear with a first, second, or even third reading at a normal pace. After the first three chapters of the thesis had been

completed, based on the double analysis described above, a seminar on "The Hermeneutics of Reading", conducted for a term by Professor Wolfgang Iser of the University of Constance for the Graduate Department of Comparative Literature at Toronto, dealt at length with this phenomenon and provided a theoretical justification for the method. In brief, Professor Iser's work⁴ centres around his theory of gaps. Gaps break the flow of narrative by introducing some element that contradicts the picture the reader has been forming. Interpolated tales are gaps of the most obvious kind; such an apparently alien element as the American sections of Martin Chuzzlewit is a gap, and the interstices of periodical publication are gaps par excellence.

Gaps force readers to break down and re-examine the Gestalts they have been forming from the information the author has given them. It has been noted, for instance, that interpolated tales run counter to the main story;⁵ Dismal Jemmy's tale, thrust into the rollicking early chapters of *Pickwick*, is a typical Dickensian example. The contrast between the two moods jolts the reader into questioning his first impressions, makes him allow for other possibilities, and thus prepares the way for the serious chapters that appear much later in the novel. The skilful writer plants many clues; readers pick these up in accordance with their own interests and purposes. The occurrence of a gap forces the reader to pause in his pattern-building and either re-examine the clues more carefully, or rebuild the pattern to accommodate the alien element. In Martin Chuzzlewit, the American chapters alternate with English scenes on which they provide, by implication, a kind of gloss. Our awareness of English society is deepened by the superficial contrast, and we are led to speculate on the relative primitivism and civilization of the civilized. This process of breaking down and re-forming patterns is what creates the moving viewpoint, the effect of the landscape seen from a stage coach, that Fielding and Scott describe.⁵ Gaps, and the work they

make the reader do, also engage the reader in the activity of relating to the life described by the text, as such twentieth-century writers as Joyce, Faulkner, and Beckett have demonstrated. The gaps of periodical publication had no small part in keeping alive what Kathleen Tillotson has so perceptively described as Dickens's "long love affair with his reading public".

Time, then, is a gap and to slow the pace of reading to something closer to the pace of periodical publication is to read the novel in a new way. (It is interesting that Dickens would have liked a single reading for the last section of Great Expectations where he wanted to control the direction of response and dictate the picture that was formed because the ending would be "away from all such things as they conventionally go".)⁶ Professor Iser's explanation for the difference between first, and second or subsequent readings, is that the difference is in the reader. The novelist, writing slowly, plants many clues in his text. On a first reading the reader makes a set of choices from the text - perhaps dictated by his curiosity about the plot - and thus makes his own figure in the carpet. But when he slows down, reads again, less interested in the plot now, with a different set of preoccupations, different patterns form and take up the foreground, while others recede into the background. The figure in the carpet, to use Henry James's phrase,⁷ changes. Both the slower pace and the reader's highly motivated search for clues as to mode produce the éclaircissement that occurs towards the end of such a reading. For several of the novels discussed in this thesis the linear reading was little more than twice as fast as Dickens's writing. The apprehension of the underlying mode thus came at the end of a conscious attempt to respond at a pace much closer to that both of the planting of clues and of the original reader's apprehension of them than is usual.

The second analysis provides not only a further search for clues and a new slowing down, but also a different kind of examination,

of scenes and narrative blocks, to corroborate and extend the linear reading. In the same way a linguistic examination, such as that of Norman O. Page,⁸ draws on the learning of especially-trained readers to produce further readings based on their selection from the choices Dickens's texts are so full of. Historians of ideas provide us, repeatedly, with this kind of enriched reading.

The structural patterns that are clarified by an identification of the underlying modes throw light on a number of persistent critical problems: in Oliver Twist the necessity for the complex plot and for Oliver's too-perfect character and speech, the function of the Vincent Crummies section of Nicholas Nickleby, and the relevance of the American sections of Martin Chuzzlewit, are all related to the modes of their respective novels. The quality of Dickens's heroes is often a target for critics, as if he ought to be re-writing The Iliad, but Lukács's typology of the Bildungsroman shows the unexceptional middle-brow niceness of the heroes in that mode to be essential. Finally, the precise categorization of the fairy-tale elements in Great Expectations usefully grounds that novel and preserves it from the visionary troop who see in its greatness even more of the world than its grain of sand contains.

In spite of its emphasis on the text, this thesis is not an exercise in New Criticism. Awareness of contemporary literature and of Dickens's reading and habits is clearly important to a right understanding of the novels, and the attempt has been made throughout to see them in their own period. Detailed introductions making this clear would, of course, constitute another thesis. I have read, for instance, all the contemporary reviews that I could find, many more than Ford lists or than Collins prints. These are scarcely referred to within the thesis, but the awareness of them, and of such aspects of popular culture as contemporary melodrama, contribute to a sound view of the novels and are a necessary, if unobtrusive, part of this study.

The pages of introduction that do appear, as in the chapters on David Copperfield and on Great Expectations, are there to describe what I have called "narrative stance". The question of what makes an author choose one mode rather than another is naive, but it has profound implications. Authors do not choose their themes; the themes choose them, and often the mode is inherent in the theme, as in David Copperfield. Or, the author's attitude to the work he is taking up may determine the work's appropriate form. Sometimes this is very clear. When Dickens wrote, in the defensive 1841 Preface to Oliver Twist, "...I wished to show, in little Oliver, the principle of Good surviving through every adverse circumstance, and triumphing at last..." he was already committed to something other than a realistic novel, to some kind of allegory where qualities are personified. The word "principle" is the key; novels are written about Aunt Emma and the butcher down the street, but principles are represented in allegories.

Narrative stance sometimes goes beyond a specific attitude, often expressed in a preface or a letter, to include a constellation of circumstances, states of mind, and relationships to people. In Great Expectations, for example, the need to produce a serial to replace A Day's Ride, the wounded sense of injury following the separation from his wife, and the subsequent strain on certain relationships, such as that with Miss Coutts, all seem to have their part in forming "the autobiographical matrix"⁹ of a novel that deals with current and painful autobiography and which must, therefore, use the oblique method of the fairy tale, in contrast with the pseudo-memoir which is appropriate to the nostalgic verisimilitude of David Copperfield. Often the immediate cause is merely the jumping-off place, as are the Yorkshire schools in Nicholas Nickleby, but they have their effect on the shape of the novel they initiate and on the types of characters it will contain. In each chapter I have attempted to locate this narrative stance for the novel under

discussion, and to relate the underlying form to it. Sometimes, as in Nicholas Nickleby, the evidence for the narrative stance is tenuous. But it is at least safe to say that the novel yields more if it is read as a melodrama, as I suggest, than either as a fairy tale or as an example of the picaresque, the only two formal suggestions found elsewhere.

Finally, to change perspective, the narrative stance that informs this thesis is the conviction that the critic's job is to try to explain why things are as they are. There are few judgements or evaluations in these chapters. I have commented, instead, on parts of the novels that are often criticized or misunderstood and that my approach seems to clarify. Each chapter begins with the identification of the underlying mode. Sometimes, as for the mode of Oliver Twist, an elaborate typology exists; sometimes, as with satire in Martin Chuzzlewit, critical commentary has left an inconvenient gap and the reader is taken through the process of formulating a definition or a description of the mode from several sources. In the chapter on Great Expectations there are two modes, and one, the fairy tale, has to be matched in detail against its typology, because the type has been used so often as a general catch-all that it has become meaningless as a critical term. After identifying the mode, sometimes defining it at some length, where possible by referring to an established authority, I have attempted to establish the narrative stance. In the chapter on David Copperfield it seemed necessary, or at least interesting, to account for the use of the pseudo-memoir by seeing this in its setting, as one of the by-products of the examinations of conscience in the great age of autobiography; one might go so far as to call this an aspect of narrative stance.

In each chapter, after mode has been identified and described and narrative stance discussed, the reliable old categories of character, plot, and setting are discussed, since all nineteenth-century novels indisputably have all three, and the terms are at

least generally understood. These three aspects of the novel are used as foci so that the effect of the underlying mode on them in each novel can be observed. An effort has been made to work in the critical questions being dealt with under these three headings. Wemmick and Wopsle, for instance, function in different modes in their novel, but they are both discussed under the general heading of characters. Occasionally, as with these two, the length of the interpolated discussion may make the text so discursive as to obscure the organization, but it is there and it is similar in each chapter, except that certain modes seem to lend themselves to discussion of plot before character and others of character before plot.

The brief conclusion to this thesis summarizes its general findings. These are suggestive and interestingly related to other critical work now being done on the novel. There are areas and kinds of investigation to which these chapters might form a preliminary, and the conclusion points towards them.

The observations made as a result of this painstaking analysis may seem to resemble those of the charity boy on the alphabet: 'vether it's worth while goin' through so much to learn so little, as the charity-boy said ven he got to the end of the alphabet, is a matter o' taste'.¹⁰ But the approach and many of these observations are new, and until some such process of detailed analysis is gone through the wrong demands will continue to be made of certain novels and the conventions of literary structure for prose fiction not begin to be understood. It is too soon to say whether a theory of the novel will eventually emerge from work of this sort with the clarity of the alphabet, but the method used in the preparation of this thesis has enabled me at least to discern a few of the letters so that I can say, with Joe, "Lord! when you do come to a J and a O, and says you, 'Here, at last, is a J-O, Joe', how interesting reading is!"

FOOTNOTES (INTRODUCTION)

1. Northrop Frye, "Dickens and the Comedy of Humors", in Experience in the Novel, ed. Roy Harvey Pearce (London, 1968), p. 49.
2. Northrop Frye, The Secular Scripture (Cambridge and London, 1976), p. 43.
3. G.K. Chesterton, Charles Dickens (London, 1914), p. 66.
4. The Implied Reader (Baltimore and London, 1974).
5. See Tom Jones XI, 9: 531f. (Modern Library) (New York, no date), and Waverley, p. 43f. (Nelson's Classics) (Edinburgh, no date).
6. John Forster, The Life of Charles Dickens, ed. J.W.T. Ley (London, 1928), p. 737.
7. Henry James, "The Figure in the Carpet", The Complete Tales of Henry James, Vol. 9, ed. Leon Edel (London, 1963). In this tale James uses a technique of constant re-orientation of the reader by means of which he can keep distinguishing the foreground figure from its shifting background.
8. See "'A Language Fit for Heroes': Speech in Oliver Twist and Our Mutual Friend", Dickensian 65 (May, 1969): 100-7.
9. Ada Nisbet, "The Autobiographical Matrix of Great Expectations", Victorian Newsletter 15 (1959).
10. The Pickwick Papers, Ch. 27, p. 231 (CD).

The Adventures of OLIVER TWIST; or,
The Parish Boy's Progress

The history of psychological allegory after Prudentius's day is largely that of the development of extended narrative. A battle, or more frequently a series of individual encounters, remains almost invariably at the heart of the action. For narrative effectiveness, the battle came to form the climax of a plot, or interwoven plots, which involved something more than mere fighting. The action came to turn not so much on the battle as on the objective for which the battle was fought. That objective inevitably was salvation, and, almost equally inevitably, the dominant narrative device came to be the pilgrimage or quest -- the Pilgrim's Progress from this world to that which is to come, as John Bunyan still put it in the latter part of the seventeenth century. 1

Oliver Twist is a moral tale in this tradition. Both the original sub-title, "The Parish Boy's Progress", and the running title, "the Young Pilgrim's Progress", opposite the chapter introducing Oliver's walk to London in the 1867 edition, point clearly to Dickens's intention. So, too, does the "interesting Preface", written with a new edition in mind in March, 1841,² and published in May:³

I saw no reason, when I wrote this book, why the very dregs of life, so long as their speech did not offend the ear, should not serve the purpose of a moral, at least as well as its froth and cream. Nor did I doubt that there lay festering in Saint Giles's as good materials towards the truth as any flaunting in Saint James's.

In this spirit, when I wished to shew, in little Oliver, the principle of Good surviving through every adverse circumstance, and triumphing at last; and when I considered among what companions I could try him best, having regard to that kind of men into whose hands he would most naturally fall; I bethought myself of those who figure in these volumes. When I came to discuss the subject more maturely with myself, I saw many strong reasons for pursuing the course to which I was inclined. I had read of thieves

by scores -- seductive fellows (amiable for the most part), faultless in dress, plump in pocket, choice in horseflesh, bold in bearing, fortunate in gallantry, great at a song, a bottle, pack of cards or dice-box, and fit companions for the bravest. But I had never met (except in HOGARTH) with the miserable reality. It appeared to me that to draw a knot of such associates in crime as really do exist; to paint them in all their deformity, in all their wretchedness, in all the squalid poverty of their lives; to shew them as they really are, for ever skulking uneasily through the dirtiest paths of life, with the great, black, ghastly gallows closing up their prospect, turn them where they may; it appeared to me that to do this, would be to attempt a something which was greatly needed, and which would be a service to society. And therefore I did it as I best could. 4 (Cl OT, lxi-lxii)

Here is the characteristic orientation of allegory, its moral origins showing clearly through the author's story of his particularized hero. The narrative tells of the twists of fortune and fate that bring young Oliver Leeford from his workhouse birthplace in the town of Mudfog, through the wilderness of the wicked city of this world, unscathed, to take up his gentlemanly position at the gates of the town of Mansoul. As a "progress" Oliver Twist fits into traditions both in literature and in graphic art: Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Holbein's Dance of Death and Hogarth's A Rake's Progress were all well-known to Dickens from childhood and throughout his works he refers repeatedly to these great examples in the allegorical mode.

Placing Oliver Twist in the tradition of allegory helps to explain certain anomalies of form that have not received their critical due. An observation representative of many, particularly of early modern critics, is that of Edmund Wilson, who speaks of Dickens's early works as being "more or less picaresque, and, correspondingly, more or less an improvisation (though there is a certain amount of organization discernible in that sombre book, Oliver Twist...."⁵ This was published in 1941. Ten years later, in an essay otherwise full of fine perceptions about the novel, Arnold Kettle writes, "The plot of Oliver Twist is very complicated and very unsatisfactory".⁶ Kettle suggests that the plot of Oliver is at odds with its pattern.

Yet, as I shall show, the "pattern" that Kettle sees and the "plot" he deplores are the two basic patterns of allegory, the progress and the psychomachia, which merge in many allegorical works as they do in Oliver Twist. Sixteen years after Kettle's essay Angus Wilson writes, in the "Introduction" to the Penguin edition of Oliver Twist, of "the extreme ineptitude with which Dickens handles or botches his plot".⁷

Another critical commonplace is the recognition that there are two contrasting worlds in Oliver Twist and that the bad world is the more entertaining. Again, Angus Wilson points to the disparity:

Fagin, Sikes, and the gang are brought sternly and horribly to justice, yet there are few readers who would deny that they and not the genteel ghosts who represent respectable society in Oliver Twist are the true kings of the novel; and that in some curious way Fagin's court for all its squalor and meanness has a sort of ghastly gaiety and life that makes Mr. Brownlow's hot punch by the fire and Rose Maylie's country flower-picking expeditions seem like the feeble stirrings of the moribund. With this ambiguity we are brought face to face with the puzzle of the force and power that still exert their influence upon most readers of this strange, great, yet often cheaply sentimental novel. 8

However, recognition of these "good" and "bad" worlds as the two contestants in an allegorical battle, rather than as blemishes in a realistic novel, is the beginning of the understanding of the puzzle of this novel's power.

Finally, "little Oliver" himself has been an object of critical scorn. In the same Introduction Angus Wilson says, "He seems almost a complete cypher, quite unbelievable in his genteel speech and adamant innocence".⁹ If Oliver is seen as belonging to the fraternity of Galahad and the Red Cross Knight, an allegorical personage, the whole question of verisimilitude becomes irrelevant.

While a few critics have treated the book in such a way that their awareness of its allegorical quality is an implicit part of their reading,¹⁰ none, except Steven Marcus¹¹ and Robert A. Colby,¹²

have developed this approach at any length. Marcus compares Oliver's journey with Christian's and makes the allegorical mode the basis for his penetrating discussion; he does make general reference to allegorical settings and characters but he does not fully explore the formal implications of this perception. His handling of coincidence, for instance, is rather lame:

In effect there is also no reality, no existence in Oliver Twist other than the parabolic one the characters inhabit and serve; and where the world is thus circumscribed, the ordinary tests of fortuitousness do not apply. 13

There are better reasons for the prevalence of coincidence in allegory and one need look no further than the author's statement of his aims to find them.

These representative comments show such unity in their criticism of the complex plot, the idealized characters, and the ambiguous impact of the novel, as well as in their response to its power, that they must be taken seriously. In this chapter, therefore, I will work out the implications of the form Dickens committed himself to when he decided to write a story showing "in little Oliver the principle of Good surviving through every adverse circumstance". I am indebted to John MacQueen's excellent brief treatment of Allegory in the Critical Idiom Series and to Angus Fletcher's Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode. Both confirm my view that Dickens's narrative stance in the writing of Oliver Twist determined the form, and therefore affected the treatment of the content, of his novel. Perhaps "novel" should be written in quotation marks because, while Oliver Twist certainly is a novel and Dickens had thought of it as a novel for several years,¹⁴ we need to distinguish his general meaning of a long prose story from the more limited critical sense in which the novel is distinguished from the romance.

This distinction, familiar to nineteenth-century readers through Clara Reeve's Progress of Romance¹⁵ and through Scott's

essays¹⁶ and Hawthorne's prefaces,¹⁷ and now familiar to a critical public through Frye's work on the forms of prose fiction, is summarized by Frye as follows:

The essential difference between novel and romance lies in the conception of characterization. The romancer does not attempt to create "real people" so much as stylized figures which expand into psychological archetypes. It is in the romance that we find Jung's libido, anima, and shadow reflected in the hero, heroine, and villain respectively. That is why the romance so often radiates a glow of subjective intensity that the novel lacks, and why a suggestion of allegory is constantly creeping in around its fringes. 18

The novel, in contrast, is concerned with everyday social reality. Carl Grabo puts his finger on the essence of the novel when he describes the "characteristic theme of fiction" as "the alteration of human personality under the pressure of circumstance".¹⁹

According to Frye, pure examples of either form are never found:

The forms of prose fiction are mixed, like racial strains in human beings, not separable like the sexes. In fact the popular demand in fiction is always for a mixed form, a romantic novel just romantic enough for the reader to project his libido on the hero and his anima on the heroine, and just novel enough to keep these projections in a familiar world. 20

Oliver Twist certainly satisfied "the popular demand" in its day and it is, of course, a mixed form. There are "stylized figures which expand into psychological archetypes": Oliver, Rose, Monks. There are also "real people" who respond to "the pressure of circumstance": Fagin, the Dodger, Nancy, Bumble. There are remote settings and commonplace ones. Fagin's den and Jacob's Island are not remote physically, but they are strange as another world to Dickens's readers, and Dickens's treatment of these settings emphasizes, as we shall see, their hellishness rather than the sociological detail we should expect to find in a non-romance. There are also familiar

settings: Mr. Brownlow's house, the workhouse, Mrs. Corney's parlour, The Three Cripples. Thus Oliver Twist has elements both of novel and of romance.

It is important to establish this because one of the typical modes of romance is allegory. In Oliver Twist it is the dominant mode so that simply to say, here, in Frye's phrase, that "a suggestion of allegory is constantly creeping in around the fringes", is not enough. We have actual allegory, again according to Frye, "when a poet explicitly indicates the relationship of his images to examples and precepts, and so tries to indicate how a commentary on him should proceed".²¹ This Dickens does in the preface quoted above. We note not only his indication that little Oliver represents the principle of Good, but also the author's statement of his moral purpose: "It appeared to me that to draw a knot of such associates in crime as really do exist...would be to attempt a something which was greatly needed, and which would be a service to society". The formal implications of this ethical stance affect every constituent part of the novel. Elder Olson, for example, points out that it is not causality but doctrine that influences the course of the action in an allegorical work:

...the allegorical incident happens, not because it is necessary or probable in the light of other events, but because a certain doctrinal subject must have a certain doctrinal predicate; its order in the action is determined not by the action as action, but by the action as doctrine. 22

If we apply this insight to Oliver Twist we can see that the much-deplored ending is a necessary outcome of the form rather than a blemish on some other form that Oliver Twist is thought to be; the necessary doctrinal predicate is imposed by the pattern of the allegory.

Having established the general identification of Oliver Twist with the allegorical mode and the romance tradition, we must ask what the characteristics of allegory are, since these are not widely

known. In Allegory Angus Fletcher draws on the long tradition of allegory in an attempt to discover the special characteristics of the mode, and it is interesting to see how many of the typical elements he finds relate to familiar critical problems in Oliver Twist. Following a brief summary of these general points I shall turn, for the rest of the chapter, to a more detailed discussion of plot, character, setting and style as these are influenced by Dickens's use of the allegorical mode in this, the first of the single-hero novels.

Fletcher's discussion of allegory begins with the general comment that an allegory is a story that does not have to be read exegetically: the surface makes good sense, but it is enriched by the allegorical level. What counts is a structure that lends itself to a secondary reading, or rather, one that becomes stronger when given a secondary reading as well as a primary meaning. Thus the story of Oliver's adventures is enriched by our awareness of it as a study in the effects of evil on good. "Agents", to use Fletcher's term for characters, who are intended to represent abstract ideas are essential to the mode. Oliver is an "agent", a representative of "the principle of Good", as Monks is of evil. Both are appropriately marked physically, Oliver by his holy pallor and Monks by his devilish blemish, and Oliver Twist is an elaboration of the ideas of good and evil. Evil, for example, is self-destructive. The suspicion and double-dealing in Fagin's gang is enough to account for its defeat, but good wins friends to itself.

According to Fletcher not only are people "agents", but objects in an allegory become emblems of the qualities or roles the people are attached to. Oliver Twist is noticeably rich in these emblems. Fagin's toasting-fork is the devil's trident; Sikes's identifying neckcloth can be jerked up with a knot behind the ear to represent a noose; Bumble's cocked hat is the essence of his beadledom. The

locket that is a central concern of the plot not only leads to Oliver's inheritance, but is a talismanic image of his birth and status.

In classical rhetoric, irony was a figure of allegory. The heavy sarcasm of the opening pages, sometimes criticized as out of keeping with the rest of the work, may thus be seen as appropriate to the mode. Dickens's satire is pervasive, covering not only such obvious abuses as baby farms and the mistreatment of chimney sweeps, but also less virulent evils such as novels of the silver-fork school.²³ That theme is suggested in the barbed chapter heads such as that of Chapter three, introducing Mr. Gamfield: "Relates how Oliver Twist was very near getting a place which would not have been a sinecure". Oliver, that is, just misses being the hero of a silver-fork novel by being born in the workhouse, as his creator just missed being the Artful Dodger. Dickens's own survival must have seemed to him no less providential, the survival of genius against all odds. The pervasive irony here, often cited as inappropriate, is a function of the allegorical mode, a mode to which reflections on providential survival seem most appropriate.

Again, allegory is characterized by an hierarchical order. This order is dramatized in Oliver's changes of clothes. At Mr. Brownlow's his old rags are thrown out and he is dressed in suitable new clothing. Captured by Fagin, he is stripped of his emblems of status:

'Look at his togs, Fagin!' said Charley, putting the light so close to his new jacket as nearly to set him on fire. 'Look at his togs! Superfine cloth, and the heavy-swell cut! Oh, my eye, what a game! And his books, too; nothing but a gentleman, Fagin!' (Cl OT, 100)

Just before the robbery that is to set Oliver on his way up the social ladder again, he is given a new pair of shoes, "with strong, thick soles", useful for the completion of a pilgrimage. There are other series of hierarchies as well. Breakfast at Brownlow's is contrasted with breakfast at Fagin's; Alexander Welsh notes that,

"the dens and lairs of human beings in Oliver Twist are matched by the pens of the animals in Smithfield".²⁴ Sikes's rough gear and neckcloth are contrasted with Mr. Brownlow's black velvet. There are many more examples.

In this hierarchical order "there is always a governing authority at the top of the symbolic ladder, and the critic attempting to account for the dynamics of a documentary literature will look, as he would with The Divine Comedy or The Pilgrim's Progress, for that authoritarian power".²⁵ It is not easy to define this governing authority in Oliver Twist, but it is interesting to try. Perhaps it is not a character, but an idea: something like "good works performed by people of good breeding", and perhaps Henry Maylie's prescription for the good life in the concluding synthesis gives this idea a figurative representation or location:

"...there are smiling fields and waving trees in England's richest county; and by one village church - mine, Rose, my own, - there stands a rustic dwelling which you can make me prouder of, than all the hopes I have renounced, increased a thousandfold. This is my rank and station now, and here I lay it down!" (Cl OT,357)

Or, thinking of the other novels in this study, Nicholas Nickleby, Martin Chuzzlewit, David Copperfield, and Great Expectations, one may see Henry Maylie as the first of those heroes - and here Henry Maylie is a stand-in for Oliver, the noble, pure, self-sacrificing hero of romance - to enjoy the "educated heart" that marks his personal adjustment to a fallen world. It is surely appropriate that the proxy-hero of this novel in the allegorical mode should find his sphere in an Eden-like country parish, as close a representation of the "principle of Good" as might be found in Dickens's England.

The need to proceed towards the "doctrinal predicate", to use Olson's term again, of a doctrinal subject affects the plot. The basic forms of allegory are "less diverse and more simple in

contour"²⁶ than in mimetic or realistic plots, and probability is therefore less important. In allegory there are two fundamental patterns of action, the battle, or psychomachia, and the progress. The psychomachia is often the battle between good and evil for a soul, and much of the complexity of Oliver Twist is justified when we recognize that the complicated machinations of Monks and Fagin are intended to corrupt Oliver and stain his honour. The progress, the narrative device of the psychomachia, is a questing journey. The usual goal of a quest is self-knowledge, here expressed in its most basic form: not, what sort of person am I, but who am I. In Oliver Twist the quest takes the form of the search for a home. Thus Oliver leaves the workhouse and Sowerberry to escape the false home that cheats him of his identity, in order to find his inheritance. That is, even the identity Oliver finds is emblematic, rather than personal. The ramifications of these two patterns, the battle and the progress, for the much-criticized plot will be discussed in detail.

With discussion of plot comes the question of the ordering of events in the novel, and the role of fate. Fletcher considers fate to be expressed through magic in allegory and suggests that the writer controls the reader's response in ways that resemble the primitive magician's attempt to control fate.²⁷ He sees two kinds of magic, imitative and contagious, as being related to the two patterns of action, the progress and the psychomachia. This seems to me the least satisfactory part of Fletcher's argument since he draws his conclusions from anthropology as well as from an examination of literary texts and, though it is tempting to trace certain elements in Oliver Twist to magical causation, I shall confine comments on the ordering of events to a discussion of the role of fate in the allegorical novel. Its role here is not the same as its role in the picaresque novel, the form with which Oliver Twist has so often been classed.

Residual forms of the progress and the psychomachia affect not only plot but character and setting too. The lack of verisimilitude in the character of Oliver has been criticized from the first. But, "the apparent surface realism of an allegorical agent will recede in importance, as soon as he is felt to take part in a magical plot, as soon as his casual relations to others in that plot are seen to be magically based".²⁸ The characters in an allegory, that is, like people in a dream, come to represent qualities that provide a key to the meaning: the old man in the dream may not look like the dreamer's father, but his age is enough to identify him, and the bag of gold he carries tells the dreamer of his father's secret greed. Similarly, Oliver's pallor and gentility, which are consistent throughout his changing circumstances, signify a meaning beyond the accidental effects of his altered fortunes; he does not, like Pip, change his manners and feelings with his clothes. Thus, once involved in the see-saw battle between good and evil, Oliver becomes less "real". His personality does not "alter under the pressure of circumstance". And once the duality between good and evil is expressed the characters are seen in patterns; Mr. Brownlow and Fagin are paired as "the kind old gentleman" and "the merry old gentleman". There is also a "'decomposition' of both villain and hero",²⁹ with the hero fighting evil in many guises. This leads to characters who exemplify evil in various forms, and to different types of goodness, all of which we will find when we examine the characters in Oliver Twist.

As one would expect, these characters inhabit their characteristic landscapes: a city landscape that is an instrument of hell, and a country landscape that is paradisaal. It has been pointed out that the city of Oliver Twist is not peopled with a host of lively characters who barely affect the action, as are others of Dickens's early novels, but rather with a select small company precisely captured against the nightmare backdrop of the city.³⁰ The author tells us what to make of this nightmare world as he controls

the action and our response to it, in accordance with his moral purpose.

One form of allegory in earlier times was the riddle or aenigma. This survives, Fletcher suggests, in the patterned surface characteristic of modern allegory. This pattern alerts the reader to the existence of ritual: "their enigmatic surfaces are known not to be random and accidental, by virtue of their periodic repetitions. For example, each of the four voyages in Gulliver's Travels begins with a permutation on the idea of shipwreck".³¹ In Oliver Twist there are several patterned episodes where repetition performs the same function. Oliver is nursed through his fever by Mrs. Bedwin, Rose is nursed by Mrs. Maylie (her adoptive mother), and Sikes is nursed through his fever by Nancy. Presumably no-one nursed poor Dick, the parish being insufficiently maternal. Nancy's relation to Sikes is a maternal one and this is important since it is her maternal feelings for Oliver that cause her to commit the one important act that brings about the great reversal of fortune for him. There are also two escapes, two robberies, and two salvations.

Finally, the powerful effect of the novel, to which Angus Wilson pays tribute, would be diminished without an appropriate style. The impression certain passages of Oliver Twist give is almost that of incantation:

Of all bad deeds that, under cover of the darkness, had been committed within wide London's bounds since night hung over it, that was the worst. Of all the horrors that rose with an ill scent upon the morning air, that was the foulest and most cruel. (Cl OT, 323)

The court was paved, from floor to roof, with human faces. Inquisitive and eager eyes peered from every inch of space. From the rail before the dock, away into the sharpest angle of the smallest corner in the galleries, all looks were fixed upon one man - the Jew. Before him and behind: above, below, on the right and on the left: he seemed to stand surrounded by a firmament, all bright with gleaming eyes. (Cl OT, 358)

Fletcher finds this incantatory effect, so often noted by critics, to be typical of allegory and locates its source in syntax appropriate to the patterns of the mode.³²

Turning to a more detailed examination of the plot, we must first examine the implications of the two fundamental patterns of action in allegory, the progress and the psychomachia. The progress is a journey and, like the familiar other-world journey of romance, it is often a journey in quest of identity or in search of a new home. The trials the hero passes through are often temptations and adventures that are morally hazardous.

Whereas the progress is peculiar to allegory and satire, the journey is common to many kinds of romance. Thus Edmund Wilson's grouping of Oliver Twist with the picaresque, mentioned above, is understandable since both are linear in development and both have little outcasts for heroes. It is worth specifying the distinction between the picaresque and an allegorical progress, since a corresponding difference in the attitude to fortune affects characterization and plot in each. Sherman Eoff has made a useful summary of the picaresque and has checked Oliver Twist against it.³³ He suggests that though Oliver Twist begins in a manner that is typical of picaresque romances it develops, in fact, as the opposite of the picaresque. Eoff divides Oliver's story into four principle narrative steps: the hero's unfavourable beginning in life, the unaccepted invitation to roguery, the appearance of friends, the triumph of friends over enemies. After the unfavourable beginning, which Oliver shares with the typical little picaro, Oliver is invited by Dodger to join Fagin's gang. When he learns what kind of trade Fagin's is, he actively resists it by rejecting the stories of thieves and criminals that Fagin gives him to read. Dickens continues to emphasize Oliver's incompatibility with evil associates. Also in contrast with the picaresque is Oliver's need for love and kindness, ("It is so lonely, sir! So very lonely!" (C1 OT,23)) and his longing

for a home, whereas one of the distinguishing marks of the picaro is the lack of emotional life or need of any kind, which enables him to adjust to his harsh conditions. Finally, the events in a picaresque novel are merely wayward. In a realistic novel probability, or the semblance of probability, imposes a pattern of apparent order on the chaos of events. In the romance plot, in contrast, there seems to be a mysterious force at work ordering the outcome. Fate or Providence triumphs over the apparent disorder. Stuart Miller distinguishes the picaresque from both of these:

The picaresque hero is continually assaulted by events, but unlike other fictional heroes, he can ultimately do little to control these events. His fortune goes up or down as it pleases. His fate is in the lap of the gods, but the gods are continually dropping it. 34

Oliver, on the contrary, is beloved of the gods. As Robert A. Colby has shown, and as the subtitle of his essay, "The Fortunate Foundling", indicates, the whole point of Oliver Twist is that he is a child of good fortune.

Where the pattern of the picaresque is linear and without a goal, its hero buffeted by event after event and compelled to keep moving on, the allegorical progress resembles a questing journey. "There is usually a paradoxical suggestion that by leaving home the hero can return to another, better "home": Christian leaves the City of Destruction, where his family home is, to reach the true home of all believers, The Celestial City."³⁵ For Dickens the seventeenth century City of Destruction has become the nineteenth-century city of the poor. The Celestial City in the early novels is a country village where that recurrent Dickens figure, The Good Rich Man, replaces the king and queen as "the romance's perpetual embodiment of beneficent Providence".³⁶ "Sometimes," to continue Fletcher's comments about the hero's coming home, "having made the journey, the hero comes back to his original home so much changed that he cannot any longer hold his former position."³⁷ Oliver combines the two

kinds of homecoming. His final visit with Fagin in the condemned cell shows him to be a true hero, noble, forgiving - and supported by rich friends. His request to see little Dick again is a return home. But little Dick is dead and the home Dick represents is finished for this Fortunate Foundling, who is then translated into the happy little society outlined by Harry Maylie.

In the progress, according to Fletcher, there is always a material description of travel from a home to some distant place, and the progress need not be plausible. "The norm of allegorical action in this type remains a straight-line movement that is obsessive in its single-mindedness".³⁸ Much has been made of Oliver's search for his identity.³⁹ But Oliver's initial motivation in leaving Sowerberry's is simply to escape Noah Claypole's bullying and the threat of return to the workhouse that lies behind it. He seeks a home, food, shelter and love; the anxiety about his birth is all on the part of his benefactors. The obsessive quality in Oliver's progress lies in his need for safety. His predilection for the good, and what appears to be a natural affinity for middle-class comforts are, after he leaves Sowerberry's, subordinate to this need. Both the serial publication in Bentley's and the publication in three volumes which came out before the serial was finished left the outcome of the survival of the principle of Good in doubt until the end. But, as Robert A. Colby points out, in the edition in numbers which came out five years after the three-volume edition,

Dickens' intention was finally fixed indelibly in the readers' minds....Here the front wrapper designed by Cruikshank sets out in a series of panels Dickens' conception of Oliver's 'progress' as a modern morality - at the top Oliver embracing a benign lady inside a cottage, at the bottom Fagin shivering in his cell, while flanked on the right and left between 'heaven and hell' are Oliver's tormentors and tempters. 40

We note, however, that these vignettes are not precisely illustrations of the steps in Oliver's progress. The plates on the left hand side show Oliver leaving the workhouse with Bumble, Oliver eating the dog's scraps and watching Noah Claypole and Charlotte,

Oliver meeting the Dodger, Dodger introducing Oliver to Fagin, and Oliver begging to be left out of the robbery. On the right is the robbers' chaotic flight, followed by Sikes trying to get rid of Bull's Eye, Sikes grappling with Charley in the last crib, after Fagin's capture, and finally, Sikes's backward plunge from the roof. Thus the cover illustrations follow the story line that is most gripping. The polarity between good and evil is there in the contrasting top and bottom scenes of Oliver about to embrace Rose and of Fagin alone in his cell, but Oliver all but disappears from the right-hand side. Only if we see the final stages in the defeat of the evil side as equivalent to Oliver's triumph can we regard the cover as an accurate representation of Oliver's progress.

I have suggested, following both Fletcher and McQueen, that the progress is a questing journey. McQueen suggests that the difference between progress and quest lies in the different audiences for which each was intended.⁴¹ The quest appeared in romances for a courtly audience, whereas the progress was addressed to the masses. It seems to me that the quest is self-conscious and places a greater emphasis on the goal: Gaw^u had knows that he is seeking the Holy Grail. While the action of the quest is more fluid, less clearly marked in stages,⁴² in the progress there is more emphasis on the stages of the journey. A familiar prototype of the progress might be the twelve stations of the cross, representing twelve events in Christ's progression from jail to the crucifixion. Each event, such as falling down or having someone offer to carry the cross for Him, was a temptation or a test whose conquest represented a stage of spiritual growth. In the graphic representations of the progresses of Hogarth and in Holbein's Dance of Death, too, the separate pictures naturally accentuate the rhythm of distinct and successive steps. Thus of "A Harlot's Progress" Lichtenberg says, "It is not her whole life which Hogarth gives us, but only scenes from various periods of it, each of which is distinguished by a striking decline

from the preceding one. He begins with the pure, even tender innocence of his heroine, and ends with the deepest corruption".⁴³ Holbein's Dance of Death presents a tour of the whole scope of life. Beginning with four plates summarizing the Creation and the Fall, Holbein then works through the hierarchy of the church from Pope to Priest and then the secular hierarchy from Emperor to Fool. Between sacred and secular society he places the physician and the astrologer. Holbein thus dramatizes the possibilities of human achievement as if marking out stages in a great chain of being. Each is like a scene from a morality play.

We might expect, then, that The Parish Boy's Progress would be marked by steps or stages, and that observing these would be a necessary step in commenting on the much-maligned plot of Oliver Twist. The following stages might be considered: Oliver is born, in a situation both typical of the Birth of the Hero and rich with plot possibilities of the wronged-heir convention; Oliver asks for more; Oliver defies Bumble and begs and prays, before the magistrate, not to be apprenticed to Mr. Gamfield ("It was the critical moment of Oliver's fate" Cl OT, 18); Oliver fights Noah Claypole in defence of his mother's honour; Oliver runs away from Sowerberry's; Oliver meets the Dodger and agrees to go to London with him to be introduced to the "spectable old gentelman" (Cl OT, 48). Even though he succumbs to the Dodger's tempting invitation "he secretly resolved to cultivate the good opinion of the old gentleman as quickly as possible; and, if he found the Dodger incorrigible, as he more than half suspected he should, to decline the honour of his farther acquaintance" (Cl OT, 48). Next Oliver goes out to "work" with the Dodger and Charley Bates and runs in terror when he realizes that they are stealing (Cl OT, 58); Oliver faints at the trial and is taken home by Mr. Brownlow; Oliver eagerly accepts the chance to prove his integrity when Mr. Grimwig challenges it - trial by Grimwig; Oliver is kidnapped and he defies Nancy and Sikes, but the "mob" this time goes against him. Even

during this incarceration Oliver shows his commitment to honesty when he begs to have the books and money returned to "the good kind old gentleman who took me into his house, and nursed me when I was near dying of the fever" (Cl OT,101). And he retains his spirit. He is not intimidated by Charley's and the Dodger's jibes at his dependence on their stealing, "'You can leave your friends, though,' said Oliver with half a smile; 'and let them be punished for what you did'" (Cl OT,117). Oliver rejects "the history of the lives and trials of great criminals" and prays for help "alone in the midst of wickedness and guilt" (Cl OT,130). Oliver is taken to the scene of the robbery by Sikes and when he realizes what his role is to be,

"Oh! for God's sake let me go!" cried Oliver; "let me run away and die in the fields. I will never come near London; never, never! Oh pray have mercy on me, and do not make me steal. For love of all the bright Angels that rest in Heaven, have mercy upon me!" (Cl OT,143)

As there is some slight delay before the powers of good answer his prayer Oliver has time to resolve "that, whether he died in the attempt or not, he would make one effort to dart upstairs from the hall, and alarm the family. Filled with this idea, he advanced at once, but stealthily" (Cl OT,145). Sikes leaves Oliver shot in a ditch. Oliver regains consciousness and determines to stagger to the house. "He summoned up all his strength for one last trial; and bent his faltering steps towards it" (Cl OT,183). This is, indeed, Oliver's last trial. After recovering at the Maylie's Oliver rushes off to the inn with a letter, a repetition of the earlier fateful errand for Mr. Brownlow. Here he meets Monks. But Oliver's physical trials are over; Monks falls down in a fit and Oliver plays the good samaritan and sees him carried safely into the hotel. Oliver's final moral test is his visit to Fagin in the condemned cell:

"Oliver," cried the Jew, beckoning to him. "Here, here! Let me whisper to you."

"I am not afraid," said Oliver in a low voice, as he relinquished Mr. Brownlow's hand. (Cl OT,364)

The hero's progress is complete and reunion with his "sister" in

the heavenly small society described by Harry Maylie is his reward.

Seen thus, as a progress, Oliver's adventures emphasize the linear, ritualistic quality that is one part of the plot. Oliver moves through a variety of social settings asserting his commitment to the good. Nor does he seem quite the "cypher" Angus Wilson finds him. He is a sturdy young rebel defying his captors whenever the occasion calls for it. His famous passivity is reduced to two instances, fainting at the trial and collapsing when shot, and on both of these occasions he had expressed his defiance before losing consciousness.

We note that most of the steps in the Parish Boy's Progress have been completed by page 145 of a text of 368 pages. By the middle chapter of the novel Oliver has reached the Maylies and the chapter ends with Rose's plea to the servants to be kind to him. After the failed robbery (p. 145) the focus shifts from the progress to the psychomachia or battle.

The psychomachia takes its name from a poem of that name by the fifth century A.D. poet Prudentius, who established the battle as an allegorical action. Prudentius describes an actual battle, but the war may be less physical, a debate, a dialogue, a conflict of ideals. In Oliver Twist the battle is between good and evil, and the objective for which the battle is fought is Oliver's soul. We have seen, through the steps of Oliver's progress, his commitment to the good, his repeated prayers for deliverance from evil. There are several kinds of evil in the novel, but moral evil is cunningly located in Oliver's half-brother, Monks. Its precise presence is made clear by Monks's epilepsy, the connection between the two underlined by Mr. Brownlow's accusation:

"...you - you, who from your cradle were gall and bitterness to your own father's heart, and in whom all evil passions, vice, and profligacy, festered, till they found a vent in a hideous disease which has made your face an index even to your mind..." (C1 OT,336)

Monks is obsessed with the need to bring about Oliver's moral downfall. His motivation is to be found in the peculiar terms of his father's will:

The bulk of his property he divided into two equal portions - one for Agnes Fleming, and the other for their child, if it should be born alive and ever come of age. If it were a girl, it was to inherit the money unconditionally; but if a boy, only on the stipulation that in his minority he should never have stained his name with any public act of dishonour, meanness, cowardice, or wrong. (Cl OT,351)

But that is merely the surface the novelist has devised. This surface appropriately expresses the novel's underlying concern with the struggle between good and evil and with the operations of sin. The demands of the psychomachia are thus partly responsible for the elaborate complications of this complex plot. To play out the battle between good and evil with the soul of an outcast workhouse boy for the battle prize, and restoration to gentility the metaphor for that prize, is a tall order, but once this necessity is clear criticism of the author's plotting must be reconsidered.

There are many ways in which the conflict between good and evil is dramatized in the novel, but the one that most clearly affects the plot is the alternation of good and bad casts of characters. Evil is introduced very early in Oliver's life as he is rescued from the threat of Gamfield's, to be given to the less vicious Sowerberry, leaves Noah's bullying to be picked up by the amiable Dodger, learns that Fagin and the boys are thieves and rejects everything about them when he is rescued by Mr. Brownlow, and so on. After the entrance of Mr. Brownlow the novel proceeds by means of a series of blows and counter-blows, as one side scores and the other reacts.

During the court scene, where Oliver is tried for stealing Mr. Brownlow's handkerchief, the whole conflict between good and evil is dramatized in the interchange between Brownlow and Fang, the magistrate so brutal that one would take the portrait for caricature were its basis in observation not so well-known. At this point in

the story Mr. Brownlow is musing on something in Oliver's face that reminds him of someone. After the illness, by the time Oliver begs to run out on the errand, Mr. Brownlow has made the connection with Oliver's mother. He is wagering all on Oliver's character. Mr. Grimwig, who may or may not have been let in on the story, is opting for bad blood. As the two old men sit waiting for Oliver, the ticking clock between them, they are waiting out the same struggle between good and evil. The triumph of evil starts the next phase of the plot, the long and complicated battle between Mr. Brownlow and Monks-Fagin for the survival of the principle of Good. One should notice here that the necessary insurrection from within that will overturn the wicked kingdom is foreshadowed in Sikes's and Nancy's fight over the books and the five-pound note.

The battle of the evil ones to capture Oliver and corrupt his soul by making him one of them is countered by the efforts of the good people to save Oliver for his inheritance. The terms of his father's will make their struggle an attempt to ensure that Oliver's soul is kept pure. The complex machinations of the two sides are made fruitful by Mr. Bumble, who re-enters the story in Chapter 17, after Nancy and Sikes kidnap Oliver. Thus the early workhouse chapters come into play again and continue to be essential to the plot from this point as the character who helped to initiate Oliver's progress becomes an active agent in the battle for his soul.

The petty criminality of the Bumbles and of Noah Claypole and Charlotte are necessary to the working-out of the plot since these two interesting couples, variations on the Sikes-Nancy theme of bully and victim, are prepared to act as goads, informers and go-betweens at the slightest hint of personal gain or public approbation. This section of the novel's plot is ushered in with Dickens's introductory remarks, reminiscent of Fielding's, on the interlarding of tragedy and comedy in melodrama (C1 OT, 105). Dickens justifies this as being more realistic than one thinks, and then returns to Mr. Bumble. From

here until Oliver is rescued by Mrs. Maylie, the comic relief and suspense are supplied by the Bumble-Corney scenes and then by the crucial scene between Noah and Charlotte, when Mr. Bumble overhears them enjoying their oysters.

Almost exactly half way through the novel Oliver's rescue by the Maylie household takes place, a replay in certain ways of the earlier rescue by Mr. Brownlow. Now the possibility of Oliver's physical escape from Fagin's gang becomes real. The only break in this patently idyllic picture of country-house life in the spring is Oliver's meeting with Monks, and his dream of Monks and Fagin at the window. This, as well as being psychologically convincing, is a preparation for the meeting between Monks and Bumble, crucial to the plot, that immediately precedes the re-assertion of the Sikes-Nancy theme. These scenes are, in turn, a preparation for Nancy's all-important visit to Rose Maylie.

This meeting, which takes place roughly seven-tenths of the way through the novel is the single scene of action vital to the working out of the plot. Dickens gives it the running-title "two sister-women" in the Charles Dickens edition. Nancy's role in the plot also confirms the classification of Oliver Twist as an allegory, where one important act causes a great reversal. The structure of material reality is based on cause and effect: there is a sober piling-up of causes that produce an inescapable and irreversible result. But the pattern of spiritual reality, with which allegory deals, is the opposite. In allegory one good impulse can negate a lifetime of prodigality, as in the parable of the prodigal son. In the novelists who fell heir to the views of Wordsworth and Coleridge this good impulse was frequently an impulse of love. Silas Marner reaches out in love to Eppie and his whole life is changed as well as hers. Similarly, Nancy allows what Dickens considers to be her natural maternal feelings for Oliver to well up and push her to an act requiring great personal courage, keeping her midnight assignation

with Mr. Brownlow and Rose. This one action is crucial to Oliver's salvation.

One cannot help noticing, nevertheless, that Oliver's goodness, his moral salvation, is never in question, nor, after his adoption by the Maylie family, is his physical survival in doubt. Nor does Oliver suffer quite as much in his degradation as the purist might have hoped. Fagin's den has its charms. Yet Oliver's two rescues, his life-crisis illnesses,⁴⁴ and his passionate desire to remain with his new friends on both occasions, are strong enough evidence that his pilgrimage to London has carried him through a spiritual dark wood. Oliver's final meeting with Fagin, unafraid, shows that he has emerged from the dark voyage, purged of its terrors, a stronger and better hero than he began.

Thus progress and battle merge. Oliver progresses from the workhouse to the ideal society at the end by means of the war between the good and evil agents. Hillis Miller points out that "Oliver Twist is in one sense Oliver's procession through a sequence of opaque and meaningless present moments, it is in another sense the slow discovery, in the midst of that confusion, of a secret which will make all seem orderly and significant".⁴⁵ This secret from the past provides the motivation for the battle, and the events of the battle provide, from Oliver's introduction to Fagin onward, the stages in the progress.

It may be true to say, therefore, as Kettle does, that the pattern and the plot do not fit, but this is not a valid criticism. According to Kettle:

It is generally agreed that the plots of Dickens's novels are their weakest feature but it is not always understood why this should be so. The plot of Oliver Twist is very complicated and very unsatisfactory. It is a conventional plot about a wronged woman, an illegitimate baby, a destroyed will, a death-bed secret, a locket thrown into the river, a wicked elder brother and the restoration to the hero of name and property. That it should depend on

a number of extraordinary coincidences (the only two robberies in which Oliver is called upon to participate are perpetrated, fortuitously, on his father's best friend and his mother's sister's guardian!) is the least of its shortcomings. Literal probability is not an essential quality of an adequate plot. Nor is it a damning criticism that Dickens should have used his plot for the purposes of serial publication, i.e., to provide a climax at the end of each instalment and the necessary twists and manoeuvres which popular serialization invited...What we may legitimately object to in the plot of Oliver Twist is the very substance of that plot in its relation to the essential pattern of the novel. 46

In fact the strange power of the underworld sections of the novel, which Kettle so much admires, may well derive from the mode of allegory and from the duality, complexity, and satire that attend it; all these have their place in the part of the plot that he deplores.

Kettle is not the only critic to be troubled by the number of co-incidences in Oliver Twist. But, as Kathleen Tillotson points out:

The far-fetched coincidences by which Oliver's first adventure in crime leads him unwittingly to his father's old friend Mr. Brownlow, and his second to his mother's sister Rose Maylie, are designed by Dickens precisely to illustrate the power of the principle of Good; Mr. Brownlow says it was 'a stronger hand than chance' that brought Oliver to his door, and the sophisticated reader is not meant to add that the stronger hand was the author's. 47

The twentieth-century sophisticated reader, nurtured on recent criticism, might make the same observation and be led, instead, to reflect on the nature of romance plots. In romance plots in general, of which allegory is a type:

there is an ordering of events, but it is not a probable ordering. The wonderful romance plot unravels a complicated pattern of chance and coincidence that works mysteriously toward some end. In reading such novels, one is surprised by a mysterious order which seems to exist in events. The reader's response to such a plot is awe. Rather than apprehending a world ordered by probable laws resembling those of modern science and psychology, he finds a world ordered by forces beyond his comprehension. The world order of romance is that of inscrutable Fate and religion. 48

Link this with Fletcher's observation that:

In allegorical actions generally events do not even have to be plausibly connected. Reversals and discoveries arbitrarily imposed on the action, the deus ex machina introduced to rid the action of an impasse - these do not imitate Nature, though they may invite ideas and theories. Even so, however, allegorical actions do hold together on their own principles of unity. 49

In Oliver Twist we have two allegorical patterns, the psychomachia and the progress, which are not joined by probability and reasonable causation but whose rhythms go far to explain causality in this novel. In the psychomachia there is a see-saw rhythm as the battle sways from virtue to vice. Virtue defeats vice by imitating it in battle. Thus in Oliver Twist the secret plottings of Fagin, Monks, and Noah are imitated by Mr. Brownlow. Further, the defection of Nancy, and Bumble's willingness to play a double game, reinforce the allegory: good strengthens good (the effect of Rose on Nancy), but the suspicions of Fagin and Sikes are self-destructive.

The psychomachia leads to types of doubling. The see-saw between virtue and vice may be extended, as here, to two levels of society, each mirroring the other: breakfast at Fagin's, breakfast at Brownlow's; Fagin's boys at whist, Brownlow and Grimwig with the ticking clock between them; Oliver enjoying merry games in Fagin's den, Oliver listening to Rose Maylie playing the piano. It may be pointed out here that this mirroring suggests a third kind of society that is the object of satire. Dickens makes the connection himself in the 1841 Preface, "Nor did I doubt that there lay festering in St. Giles's as good materials towards the truth as any flaunting in St. James's" (Cl OT,lxi). And later, in the same preface:

But there are people of so refined and delicate a nature, that they cannot bear the contemplation of these horrors. Not that they turn instinctively from crime; but that criminal characters, to suit them, must be, like their meat, in delicate disguise. A Massaroni in green velvet is quite an enchanting creature; but a Sikes in fustian is insupportable. A Mrs. Massaroni, being a lady in short petticoats and a

fancy dress, is a thing to imitate in tableaux and have in lithograph on pretty songs; but a Nancy, being a creature in a cotton gown and cheap shawl, is not to be thought of. It is wonderful how Virtue turns from dirty stockings; and how Vice, married to ribbons and a little gay attire, changes her name, as wedded ladies do, and becomes Romance. (lxiii)

The whole stylish bravado of Fagin's den is a masquerade of the gaming, drinking and intriguing of a decadent and parasitical aristocracy. The parallel was remarked almost from the first, when the Athenaeum reviewer compared Oliver Twist with The Beggar's Opera and Jonathan Wild for "the boldness with which the writers have stripped society of its disguises, and exhibited the shallowness of those conventionalities which varnish the vices of fashionable life, the falsehood of its pretences, the hypocrisy of its assumptions of decency and propriety".⁵⁰

This movement back and forth between the two worlds has the quality of thesis and antithesis. Seen in this way the ideal village society described in the final chapter is less an evasion than a synthesis in which the author presents the ideal of the good man and the good society for the reader's emulation.

Having seen that the plot of Oliver Twist is the kind of plot to be expected in an allegory, we must turn to the characters. Dickens's characters in general, now emerging from their long exile in E.M. Forster's flat world, are correctly viewed not as flat, therefore bad, but as more or less flat according to the narrative mode Dickens is employing at the time. In an allegory the characters necessarily tend towards flatness because they are personalized abstractions; as Dickens said in the preface, Oliver Twist "involves the best and worst shades of our common nature; much of its ugliest hues, and something of its most beautiful; it is a contradiction, an anomaly, an apparent impossibility, but it is a truth" (Cl OT, lxxv). Because one of the basic patterns of allegory is the psychomachia or battle we are likely to find characters polarized by the good and evil

sides whose agents they are. And, because they are representatives of good and evil, these characters have the single-mindedness of obsession. Fletcher suggests that the typical "agent" in an allegory is a "daemon" (where "daemon" means inhabitant of the daemonic world between gods and men, whether good or bad) for whom freedom of active choice hardly exists.⁵¹ Further, "daemonic action is fated and simplified according to the patterns of the romantic quest".⁵²

With all this the novelist must also produce characters who are plausible representations of real people. Oliver Twist has been criticized from the first for its lack of verisimilitude,⁵³ and later critics have found Oliver himself particularly wanting in normal boyishness. Somewhere in the first three paragraphs of most essays on the novel one now expects to read a comment like this by Jonathon Bishop: "As a human being he is incredible. Though he has lived all his life in baby farms and workhouses he speaks literary English, and the purity of his character is as amazing as the refinement of his vocabulary".⁵⁴ This vocabulary is, of course, as Norman O. Page has pointed out, "A language fit for heroes".⁵⁵ Oliver first becomes a candidate for the role of hero with his humble and mysterious birth. His apprenticeship to Sowerberry in "a certain town",⁵⁶ where he learns to use his innocence and youth to arouse pity, is the counterpart of his experience with Fagin's gang. This is made explicit when Fagin points out that Oliver is worth far more to him than any of the others because of his innocent appearance. Both of these experiences prepare the reader for Oliver's eventual beatitude and gentility. (At this time the two are perhaps the same for Dickens). Like Galahad in his white armour in Tennyson's Idylls of the King, Oliver is marked out as special by his frail white fineness - his pallor is often mentioned - by his cultivated speech, and by his heroic response to the challenge of authority when he asks for more. The inherent pride and chivalry of his championship of his mother's name under Noah's taunts, and the demoniacal strength he displays

when he fells Noah and battles Charlotte, are reminders of the traditional strength of virtue.⁵⁷ In these early actions, as we have seen in the discussion of plot, Oliver is far from a "cypther". Revolutionary social tendencies and nobility of spirit are perfectly compatible with the pure and incorruptible innocence Oliver represents. ("He is so jolly green!" Cl OT,54). But once he meets the Dodger and joins Fagin's gang his strength lies in passive resistance, as he becomes a pawn in the moral battle. True he runs from the theft, with spontaneous and unaccounted-for revulsion, but then he faints in court. Insisting on proving his moral worth by delivering the books and money for Mr. Brownlow, he is kidnapped. His whole concern after the kidnapping is that his friends should know of his innocence:

"Oh, pray send them back; send him back the books and money. Keep me here all my life long; but pray, pray send them back. He'll think I stole them; the old lady: all of them who were so kind to me: will think I stole them. Oh, do have mercy upon me, and send them back!" (Cl OT,101)

It is at this point that Nancy declares herself on Oliver's side as she holds back the dog when Oliver runs from the room shrieking for help. Fagin understands the daemonic all-or-nothing quality of Oliver's innocence: "Once let him feel that he is one of us; once let him fill his mind with the idea that he has been a thief; and he's ours! Ours for his life!" (Cl OT,126) Oliver is thus sent on the robbery for reasons that serve both allegory and plot. There he is again captured by the forces of good who exert themselves powerfully on his behalf. The Maylie house becomes his sanctuary, with reminders of the evil world just beyond its walls. At the end of the novel Good and Evil have their final confrontation in Fagin's cell. Oliver regains a measure of independence. He is not afraid and he is not stirred by Fagin's blandishments, though it is interesting that, since Fagin is now clearly quite mad, he has lost his power, reason. Oliver's final request, to see little Dick again, returns him to his "home", now no longer relevant, and proves him a true-hearted hero,

however unsatisfactorily that loyalty may be expressed in the novel. Thus the necessary patterns of allegory account for aspects of both plotting and characterization that have been much criticized.

It is when the characters move into the area of human affection that we become dissatisfied with the novelist's presentation. While this is not true of all allegories - Silas Marner and Lord of the Flies are cases in point - it is often true of the early Dickens, who seemed to need much of his long apprenticeship to master the handling of pathos. Cruikshank's famous Fireside Plate is intolerable, and its replacement not a great deal better, but the fault lies less perhaps in Cruikshank's lack of sympathy with the subject than in the difficulty of representing the Elysian Fields in images of gracious domesticity.

The simple statement of polarity with which we began this discussion of the effect of allegory on characterization is suggestively expanded by Fletcher:

It is found in all allegories that the thematic opposition of absolutes (Good and Evil, Ignorance and Enlightenment, Doubt and Certainty, or the like) is expressed by an ordering of imagery and agents which is equally dualistic.

He continues:

The same sharpening of opposition, the same denial of a natural moral continuum, the same withdrawal of moral and ethical and spiritual problems into two polar opposites, affects agency. On the highest level of power God is set off eternally against Satan, Christ against Antichrist, the Virgin against the Whore of Babylon....The poet cannot often create direct images of deity, but he can mirror duality on the plane of the Gods, by showing us the deeds of knights and ladies. Here also dualism is the natural order of things. Redcrosse is warring to the death against Archimago, Una against Duessa, Calidore against the Blatant Beast. True, the powers of darkness are often pluralized, and then there is a "decomposition" of both villain and hero, and it is found that Redcrosse, for example, generates several sub-characters who are archetypically evil. He fights an Archimago of several guises, while he himself has several helpers, all of whom are equally generated by the hero. 58

The other good characters are thus, in a metaphorical sense, related to Oliver. If Oliver is the hero of romance his "sister", Rose Maylie, is meant to be the heroine, and that this representation of the Virgin Mary is so cloying may owe more to an ideal of pure and innocent girlhood especially rampant in the nineteenth century than to the memory of Mary Hogarth. That she is a blighted and therefore a passive heroine is as useful to the plot as is Nancy's aggressive goodness. That the two are tainted, Nancy with the "soul of goodness" as in the running title, "The Soul of Goodness in Things Evil", of 1867 (CD, 73), and Rose with the stain upon her name, allows them to be the "Two Sister-Women" of Dickens's designation in Chapter XL (CD, 187). Rose is, of course, a cardboard character, an expression in a period costume, who can play the piano, receive Oliver's token flowers, and fall desperately ill to satisfy the needs both of the plot and of the pattern of rhythmic counterparts in the novel (Oliver, fever crisis, Rose his half-sister, fever crisis) and, perhaps, of authorial self-indulgence. As each of these orphaned children lies in danger his protectors are roused to acts of positive virtue requiring a degree of effort or moral courage that helps to defeat the machinations of the devil who has wronged them both. Their weakness and powerlessness are important; they are made by an act of creation to illustrate a principle, and they fall into certain hands whose temptations will try them.

Mr. Brownlow and Mrs. Maylie are the representatives of the gods in the novel, bestowing their bounty on whom they love, though, as Lauriat Lane Jr. points out,⁵⁹ they are carefully differentiated. Mr. Brownlow's benevolence is conditional, while Mrs. Maylie's is all-embracing. This suggests both a hierarchy and a progress from partial to total redemption. The associates of these two are similarly distinguished: Dr. Losberne is a kindlier Grimwig, impulsive and actively generous.

Between the good and the evil characters is Nancy, "The Soul of

Goodness in Things Evil" and thus, in relation to the plot, an appropriate mediator between the two worlds of the novel. As a character, however, Dickens developed Nancy in deliberate contrast to Rose Maylie. The Nancy seen by the readers of Bentley's Miscellany was coarser and more violent than she became in editions after 1838.⁶⁰ The softening occurred as Dickens developed his idea of Nancy, and of the contrast between Nancy and Rose. In reply to Forster's approval of Chapter XVI, Dickens wrote that he hoped "to do great things with Nancy. If I can only work out the idea I have formed of her, and of the female who is to contrast with her..."⁶¹ The cruder elements, the "red gown, green boots, and yellow curl-papers" (Cl OT,79), are transferred to Bet in 1837. But where Bet is almost as stereotyped an abstraction as Rose Maylie, Nancy is both a real person and a personified abstraction who plays Whore of Babylon to Rose's Virgin Mary. Perhaps in order that the meeting between these two might be less incongruous Dickens also cut out "her fit of loud laughter" and slightly refined her language in the 1837 edition.⁶²

Nancy's involvement with Sikes is a violent sexual passion and this is not only made clear but underlined. Nancy cannot leave her way of life because she cannot leave Bill. Nancy tells Rose,

"I cannot leave him now! I could not be his death."

"Why should you be?" asked Rose.

"Nothing could save him," cried the girl. "If I told others what I have told you, and led to their being taken, he would be sure to die. He is the boldest, and has been so cruel!" (Cl OT,273-4)

In the face of this sado-masochism Nancy's attachment to Oliver is the more impressive, and interesting. Fagin sees it, "the man against the child, for a bag of gold!" (Cl OT,127). And when he tries to find out where Nancy is going when she tries to escape on Sunday night for her meeting with Mr. Brownlow and Rose, he seems uncomprehending, trying to get her to confess that she has an assignation with another man. She has, but the other man is the ideal

of the Good, which Oliver represents. Nancy and Sikes thus exemplify in their relationship the struggle between good and evil; the force of the primitive and irresistible sexual passion that accompanies Sikes's brutality is a fitting representation of the satanic world he stands for. It is also good romance-novel material as Wuthering Heights shows, and helps to account for the superior readability of the "bad" parts. Nancy is much more successful than Oliver in her dual allegorical role; a believable girl of the streets when she first appears, Nancy becomes, not "realistic", but at least a satisfactory representation of a real bit of masculine folk-lore, the prostitute with a heart of gold. Nancy's own struggles, both with herself and with Fagin and Bill over her maternal feelings for Oliver, are both convincing and endearing. Her final defiance of Sikes must be a battle to the death, both to arouse our horror and to call forth the full extent of Sikes's passion and viciousness. These, and Nancy's goodness are underlined in Dickens's description of daybreak on the morning after the murder. The metaphoric equation between darkness and evil and sunlight and goodness, reinforced by references to rotten slums and cathedral domes, forms an allegorical backdrop to the climactic contest.

Sikes, Fagin, and Monks present three different types of evil, of body, mind, and spirit, respectively. Sikes is a sadistic, brutal bully, almost incoherent with stupidity and surliness; to get his full flavour the reader really needs to see his victim. For most of the novel the spotted white dog with the torn ear is the visible recipient of Sikes's aggressiveness. As the novel progresses one realizes that the dog is a stand-in for Nancy. What Sikes is capable of doing to the dog he is also capable of doing to Nancy. After Nancy has been killed, the dog becomes the agent of the master's downfall by running away from him and being seen, as Nancy had been. With final ambivalent loyalty the dog leaps for Sikes's shoulders as he hangs, thirty-five feet below the parapet, misses, and kills itself.

Fagin is Sikes's opposite, the completely intellectual villain who fears physical violence and uses his wits to manipulate his servants. The similarity between Fagin and the devil is now a commonplace. The costume he wears, the long cloak with folds where he may conceal his treasures and his twitching hands, the toasting fork, the glowing red hair, and the red beard worn by the devil in mediaeval drama⁶³ before it was transferred to the Jew, are visually satisfying for this role as is, intellectually, the wheedling manner of the knowing tempter. As Fagin most easily represents evil in the novel, so he is the most easily visualized, and thus represented graphically. The first time we see him in the illustration entitled "Oliver introduced to the respectable old gentleman", a common euphemism for the devil, Fagin is facing front with a toasting fork, three-pronged like a trident, grasped in his right hand. Unless the standard toasting-fork was very large, larger than most pieces of bread, the fork was meant to carry the associations it has acquired. Dickens would have interfered with the plate if it had not furthered, or if it had contradicted, his intention; the suggestions of the scene were almost certainly intentional. Later, in Little Dorrit, Dickens describes Affery as standing "with the kitchen toasting fork still in her hand...like a sort of allegorical personage".⁶⁴

Fagin is a superb example of an "allegorical personage" who also functions as a novel character undergoing "the alteration of human personality under the pressure of circumstance".⁶⁵ When the reader first sees him, Fagin is a terrifying "other", a stage personage with the firelight playing over him like a glow from the nether world. Gradually he becomes personalized. His "Oliver, my dear" seduces the reader as well as the boy. In the early scenes, with the other members of the gang, he retains something of this stage quality as we watch him manipulate and discipline and threaten and cajole. We are, somehow, on his side, perhaps because we share Oliver's innocent

fascination.⁶⁶ But in Chapter 19, curiously enough the one that begins with the most unpleasant description of Fagin as

he glided stealthily along, creeping beneath the shelter of the walls and doorways, the hideous old man seemed like some loathsome reptile, engendered in the slime and darkness through which he moved crawling forth, by night, in search of some rich offal for a meal. (Cl OT,120-1)

where we begin to see Fagin on equal terms with Sikes and to observe the suspicion between them, we begin to empathize with Fagin. Perhaps it is his intelligence and his fear, in contrast with Sikes's sodden brutality, or simply the entrée that Dickens gives us to his thoughts, but from this chapter on Fagin becomes a character whose reactions and motives we watch with the keenest interest. Thus the chapter that had begun with an external view of the Jew, "buttoning his great-coat tight round his shrivelled body, and pulling the collar up over his ears so as to completely obscure the lower part of his face" (Cl OT,120), emerging from his den and gliding stealthily along, ends with his shrewd observation of Nancy:

The worst of these women is, that a very little thing serves to call up some long-forgotten feeling; and the best of them is, that it never lasts. Ha! Ha! The man against the child, for a bag of gold! (Cl OT,127)

Finally, we are shown even the "loathsome reptile" touched by the power of innocence as it emanates from the sleeping child:

The boy was lying, fast asleep, on a rude bed upon the floor; so pale with anxiety, and sadness, and the closeness of his prison, that he looked like death; not death as it shows in shroud and coffin, but in the guise it wears when life has just departed; when a young and gentle spirit has, but an instant, fled to Heaven: and the gross air of the world has not had time to breathe upon the changing dust it hallowed.

'Not now,' said the Jew, turning softly away.
'Tomorrow. To-morrow.' (Cl OT,128)

In the next chapter Fagin carries on the insidious temptation, begun by the Dodger and Charley in Chapter 17, with "The history of

the lives and trials of great criminals" and Oliver thrusts the book from him and falls down in prayer. This is the climax of Fagin's plans for Oliver and, in the scene between Oliver and Nancy that follows immediately, we are given an inkling that Fagin may lose. Nancy declares herself Oliver's ally; there is both an alliance on the side of good, and real companionship between them. When Nancy warns Oliver that he'll be shot through the head if he crosses Sikes in the job after they have arrived at Sikes's place, the boy is fully aware of his danger so that his decision, at the robbery, to warn the family, is an appropriately heroic one; the forces of evil have now initiated the struggle with the forces of good. Oliver has now almost completed the stages of his progress. The psychomachia now becomes the prominent pattern in the novel, though it had begun earlier, with Mr. Brownlow's rescue, and is being carried on behind the scenes with Mr. Brownlow's research trip to the West Indies.

When next we see Fagin he rushes from the room and the house yelling and twining his hands in his hair as flash Toby Crackit brings the news that "the crack failed". Fagin's growing suspicion of Nancy and the antagonism between Fagin and Sikes are faithfully recorded, against the background of Monks's mysterious appearances, the lurking shadows, and the plots and counterplots of Noah Claypole, alias Bolter. Noah's snivelling cowardliness is a nice foil to Nancy's heroism, and the gradual disintegration of the thieves' den is carefully and convincingly portrayed. Fagin's power rests, now, in this plotting. Once Oliver has gone, the devil aspect of Fagin recedes, until he becomes the terrified, mad, old man he is at the trial, all but winning our sympathy:

'Fagin,' said the jailer. 'That's me!' cried the Jew, falling, instantly, into the attitude of listening he had assumed upon his trial. 'An old man, my Lord; a very old, old man!'

'Here,' said the turnkey, laying his hand upon his breast to keep him down. 'Here's somebody wants to see you, to

ask you some questions, I suppose. Fagin, Fagin!
Are you a man?'

'I shan't be one long,' replied the Jew, looking up with a face retaining no human expression but rage and terror. 'Strike them all dead! What right have they to butcher me?' (Cl OT,363)

The turnkey's question: "Are you a man?" carries within it the implication that Fagin is the wild beast and the devil too. But his strength, for the allegory, is that Fagin is a man and now, within "those dreadful walls of Newgate", a representative one.

Monks, in contrast, is a flat piece of stage machinery. His gentlemanly birth is stressed not only for the plot, but perhaps to counteract the overriding impression of the novel (and part of its strength) that righteousness is inevitably connected with birth and income. The seal is set on Monks's satanic appearance by the "broad red mark, like a burn or a scald" that gives him the variegated colouring of the evil one in dramatic convention. He is, literally, accursed. His determination to bring about Oliver's moral downfall, motivated by the peculiar terms of his father's will, gives shape to the novel's basic concern with the operations of sin as part of the struggle between good and evil. When Monks is finally confined in "a distant part of the New World" it is "for some fresh act of fraud and knavery" (Cl OT,365), crimes appropriate to his gentle birth.

We find varying degrees of success in the characterization of this novel if we think, in conventional terms, of verisimilitude and plausible motivation. Indeed motivation, except for Nancy and for Monks, is scarcely provided. Instead the characters are a set of givens, with the barest hint of their pasts, who act out the parts assigned to them according to the author's doctrine. Some, like Fagin and Nancy and Sikes, are credible because the parts assigned to them jibe with the conventions of realism. Others, such as Oliver and Rose Maylie, conflict with our experience of everyday reality. Still others, such as Monks, perform their doctrinal function well

for the very reason that they are closer to stylized conventions than to the people around us. Allegory in novels has been so little studied that we really cannot say whether it is possible to have all of the characters as successful as Fagin and Nancy. It may well be that the allegorical stance entails not merely the use of stylized characters in general, but a hierarchy of degrees of stylization; that the power of the novel actually depends on a framework of stylization that is necessary to, that reveals, the secondary meaning behind the more realistic novel characters who are studied both from within and without.

Like the characters, the three settings of the novel are appropriately metaphorical. In the beginning there is the town of Mudfog, with its workhouse. The town of Mudfog, drawing its name from the other Mudfog Papers in Bentley's Miscellany, becomes "a certain town" in the edition of 1846. Both designations are allegorical but the later one is both more generalized, and therefore more appropriate to allegory than to satire,⁶⁷ and more appropriate to the novel. At any rate Mudfog and the workhouse and its derelict wharf building where Monks and the Bumbles meet, are the small-town or country version of the evil that is figured in London by Newgate and Fagin's den. Here cruelty, viciousness, petty crime, and small-time bullying are enshrined, and here they are particularized enough to serve the purpose of satire.

The city of London itself is purposely drawn, as Dickens points out in the 1841 Preface, to show the kind of companions who could best provide the adverse circumstances to try Oliver. The "deformity", the "wretchedness" and "all the squalid poverty" (Cl OT, lxii) are the setting for Oliver's dark night of the soul. His journey to London is an other-world journey, but he has been prepared for it to some extent by its small-town counterpart. "Those dreadful walls of Newgate" and "the great, black ghostly gallows" closing up the prospect of the wretched, squalid lives, are the

counterparts of the workhouse, hardly less awful as Dickens paints it, that closes up the lives of the small-town poor. In the early part of the novel Oliver walks, with Sowerberry, to a slum house where they are to arrange a young woman's funeral:

They walked on, for some time, through the most crowded and densely inhabited part of the town; and then, striking down a narrow street more dirty and miserable than any they had yet passed through, paused to look for the house which was the object of their search. The houses on either side were high and large, but very old; and tenanted by people of the poorest class: as their neglected appearance would have sufficiently denoted, without the concurrent testimony afforded by the squalid looks of the few men and women who, with folded arms and bodies half doubled, occasionally skulked along. A great many of the tenements had shop-fronts; but these were fast closed, and mouldering away: only the upper rooms being inhabited. Some houses which had become insecure from age and decay, were prevented from falling into the street, by huge beams of wood reared against the walls, and firmly planted in the road; but even these crazy dens seemed to have been selected as the nightly haunts of some houseless wretches; for many of the rough boards, which supplied the place of door and window, were wrenched from their positions, to afford an aperture wide enough for the passage of a human body. The kennel was stagnant and filthy. The very rats, which here and there lay putrefying in its rottenness, were hideous with famine. (Cl OT,30-31)

This town, the object of satire, is appropriately without geography; it is a "certain town" about seventy miles from London. In the wicked city, on the contrary, where it is always appropriately dark and cold and wet and gloomy, the haunts of vice are described with close geographical exactness. It is possible to follow Fagin on a contemporary map as he slinks through the streets to Sikes's house. Yet in the background the city is an abstract labyrinthine jumble, a "labyrinth of dark narrow courts" (Cl OT,97), "a most intricate maze of narrow streets and courts" (Cl OT,74), a labyrinth of streets (Cl OT,308). Fagin's successive dens are all single rooms reached by endless flights of stairs and dark passages.⁶⁸ From one of these rooms Oliver looks out on a view that resembles, but is

significantly different from, the famous view from Todgers's in Martin Chuzzlewit. In the view from Todgers's, where there is a will involved, we find the organization of satire; everything is joined. Here:

In all the rooms, the mouldering shutters were fast closed: and the bars which held them were screwed tight into the wood; the only light which was admitted, stealing its way through round holes at the top: which made the rooms more gloomy, and filled them with strange shadows. There was a back-garret window, with rusty bars outside, which had no shutter; and out of this, Oliver often gazed with a melancholy face for hours together; but nothing was to be descried from it but a confused and crowded mass of house-tops, blackened chimneys, and gable-ends. Sometimes, indeed, a ragged grizzly head might be seen, peering over the parapet-wall of a distant house: but it was quickly withdrawn again; and as the window of Oliver's observatory was nailed down, and dimmed with the rain and smoke of years, it was as much as he could do to make out the forms of the different objects beyond, without making any attempt to be seen or heard, -- which he had as much chance of being, as if he had lived inside the ball of St. Paul's Cathedral. (Cl OT, 115)

The confused and crowded mass of house tops is representative of much that Oliver sees in the city. It is the dream-like background against which the precise foreground of Fagin's den and its inhabitants is seen in sharpest outline, down to the saveloy loaf Fagin holds in one hand and the trivet beside him.

This is a nightmare world, and, as one would expect in the duality imposed by the allegorical mode, its counterpart, an almost paradisaical dream, appears in the good settings, particularly those in the country. Contrast the desperate, town-dwelling poor of Fagin's gang with the country poor who "are idealized so that they seem like Arcadian rustics":⁶⁹

There was the little church, in the morning, with the green leaves fluttering at the windows: the birds singing without: and the sweet-smelling air stealing in at the low porch, and filling the homely building with its fragrance. The poor people were so neat and clean, and knelt so reverently in prayer, that it seemed a pleasure, not a

tedious duty, their assembling there together; and though the singing might be rude, it was real, and sounded more musical (to Oliver's ears at least) than any he had ever heard in church before. Then, there were the walks as usual, and many calls at the clean houses of the labouring men... (Cl OT,211)

Again, the claustrophobic maze of the city is contrasted with the country settings of the Rose and Harry Maylie sections. Here it is spring and Dickens opens the chapter with a conventional apostrophe that is remarkable for its abstraction:

The earth had donned her mantle of brightest green; and shed her richest perfume abroad. It was the prime and vigour of the year; all things were glad and flourishing. (Cl OT,213)

This is the introduction to a generalized account of Oliver's idyllic life with the Maylies and of the idyllic life at the cottage before Rose Maylie is stricken. In this paradisaical world all is sweetness and light; even the low comedy of the servants is sunny and kind. Oliver, "afoot by six o'clock, roaming the fields, and plundering the hedges far and wide, for nosegays of wild flowers", knows a freedom he has never known, but it is, as Hillis Miller points out, a "domestic refuge rather than the empty sky and expansive landscapes of complete freedom".⁷⁰ And, as Robert A. Colby notes, "the pastoral scene is sentimentalized and sacramentalized".

The intrusion of Fagin and Monks into this paradisaical world appears in a kind of dream to Oliver alone, one of those half-waking fantasies that alert the intuitive and the wary to unresolved problems that intrude upon the temporary illusion of security. In literary terms, the dream is the traditional bearer of messages, the way for bad to challenge good in the allegorical world of personalized abstractions. Oliver's dream and the ugly dwarf's recognition of him are warnings that he has come close to the grip of the evil power; the evil one is his half-brother. But Oliver is to be kept free from taint, and, as he screams in fear at the sight of the faces of Monks and Fagin at the window, the priests of his sanctuary rush to

his aid.

The idea of sanctuary reminds us of allegories in which there are sacred places. The House of Holiness and the House of Temperance, in Spenser's Faerie Queen, are examples of sacred places that are free of contagion. According to Fletcher, "uncontaminated places can be of several kinds, their main claim to sacred value residing in their supposed centrality to a given universe".⁷² In Oliver Twist Brownlow's house in the city and the Maylie's in the country are clearly places of this sort. They function as focussing symbols of the good and it is important, as Eliade says, that:

The road leading to the center is a "difficult road" (durohana), and this is verified at every level of reality. 73

The attainment of this centre leads Oliver to his new life in the "little society whose condition approached as nearly to one of perfect happiness as can ever be known in this changing world" (Cl OT,365). Further, in the sacred centre intimations of immortality are experienced, suggesting an archetypal memory of Heaven of which this country place is the image.

The negative symbol of the centre, or hell, is often a prison or a den, for the contagion of evil can be walled in, as well as walled out. Here Jacob's Island is the Castle of Pestilence:

In Jacob's Island, the warehouses are roofless and empty; the walls are crumbling down; the windows are windows no more; the doors are falling into the streets; the chimneys are blackened, but they yield no smoke. Thirty or forty years ago, before losses and chancery suits came upon it, it was a thriving place; but now it is a desolate island indeed. The houses have no owners; they are broken open, and entered upon by those who have the courage; and there they live, and there they die. They must have powerful motives for a secret residence, or be reduced to a destitute condition indeed, who seek a refuge in Jacob's Island. (Cl OT,339)

This castle is penetrated through a maze of close, narrow streets, the popular reality underlying the inner truth, and the external

geography being the correlative of inner experience.

We have already noted the cover illustrations of the monthly parts where these two contrasting symbols of the sacred home and the cave-like prison are the top and the bottom pictures respectively. In the picture representing "heaven" Oliver stretches his arms out to a young woman who is bending towards him. They are in a comfortable sitting-room with graceful curtains at the window and a vase of flowers on the desk. This is an ideal domestic world and Oliver and Rose are its gods. Stuart Miller points out that the function of the gods of the ideal world is transferred to the lords and ladies in romance.⁷⁴ The hero and heroine, ideally good, are clearly made for each other and we experience joy when they are united in the end. The innocent and wronged hero and heroine here are Oliver and Rose, nephew and aunt. Oliver makes Rose his sister, and the ideal hero and heroine establish a fraternal Dickensian version of the romance pattern.

In the condemned cell, by contrast, Fagin is cut off not only from the comic world of love and music and merriment but also from the merry games of cards in the thieves' den that are their counterpart in the evil world of the city. Not that things go really well in either place until the author's final synthesis, which unites the good families in bonds of love rather than of law.⁷⁵ "This ain't the shop for justice" (Cl OT, 300).

The Dodger's comment makes a suitable introduction to a brief discussion of the satirical element in Oliver Twist. Institutions (the workhouse), literary conventions (silver fork and Gothic novels), individuals (Magistrate Laing), and classes (the idle rich), are all mocked in various modulations of the heavy satire of the opening pages. It is necessary here to distinguish between allegory and satire which are, as I have suggested above, intimately connected. MacQueen's distinction between the two is valuable:

Psychological allegory of the kind we have been discussing deals with Everyman or Holiness or Mr. Valiant-for-Truth: satire deals with Thomas Shadwell or Colley Cibber or William Fisher, elder in Mauchline parish, Ayrshire, Scotland. Allegory, in other words, is general, satire is particular -- or so it might appear to the casual literary theorist. More often than not the actuality is different. Spenser's Holiness, for instance, is inextricably entangled with the Protestant Reformation and Mary Queen of Scots: Pope's Colley Cibber with cosmic dullness and anarchy; the name of Burns's Holy Willie has become a common, almost an abstract, noun. Nor is it difficult to resolve this apparent paradox. The generalities of allegory acquire power over the moral sense and the imagination by way of their relevance to the particular; the particularities of satire equally acquire more than passing relevance when they are seen in terms of a system of moral ideas which is generally acceptable. 76

Both allegory and satire set up systems of parallels to reality. Whereas, in the allegory of the parish boy's progress, Dickens particularized the evil of the everyday existence of a thief, not generally known to his readers, in his picture of the workhouse and the town of Mudfog he painted a general picture of civic stupidity. Fagin and Sikes and Monks are individual people who embody evil; they are characters in an allegory. (Monks, as his name shows, is also part of the satire on the Gothic novel). The thieves' den is both a representation of evil in the allegory and, at the same time, an implied satire on the gaming tables of St. James's. Satire, that is, works with representative characters who sum up, in a stylized way, the abuses of society that people are generally familiar with. Bumble, the prime target of Dickens's institutional satire in Oliver Twist, is a caricature of civic muddle, and in the savage attacks on the workhouse and the Poor Law Dickens was, as Humphry House has carefully shown,⁷⁷ making use of abuses that had already been exposed, and to some extent corrected, for laughter at cosmic meanness, self-importance, and inefficiency. The satirical treatment of Bumble is, of course, related to the theme of the allegory. When Monks confronts Oliver after the robbery and falls down in a fit, Oliver plays the

good samaritan and has him taken care of. Here Oliver is both aligning himself in character with Mr. Brownlow, whose home has a picture of the good samaritan over the mantle in the bedroom where Oliver recovers from the fever, and pointing up the satire on Bumble, who wears a good samaritan button as part of his uniform.

The Bumble-Noah Claypole sections also provide the story with a range of satiric, low-comedy scenes that anchor it in domestic farce and picaresque episode, reassuring legacies of the great eighteenth-century novelists. Indeed, without these sections Oliver Twist might have some difficulty in fitting into the definition of "novel" given in the Oxford Dictionary, "a fictitious prose narrative of sufficient length to fill one or more volumes portraying characters and actions representative of real life in continuous plot". For, while Fagin and the boys may portray characters and actions representative of real life, Dickens's whole point in writing about them is that they are not known by the average reader even to exist, so that he might be, for all his readers knew, creating a wholly imaginary world of evil as seductive and non-representational as Spenser's House of Pride. Bumble and Mrs. Corney intervene to prevent any such misapprehension.

Another characteristic of satire that may be at work in Oliver Twist is the use of names as referents, for it is curious to note that in no other novel of Dickens is the use of names so closely related to people or objects from Dickens's past as in Oliver Twist. Fagin is Bob Fagin, the big boy who befriended Charles when he fell ill at work in the blacking factory and whose insistence on accompanying young Charles home pushed the smaller boy's shame and pride to the limit. Walking the streets for hours to avoid showing his mean lodgings, Dickens finally formed the desperate resolve of walking up and pulling the knocker at a handsome door. When it was answered he asked if Bob Fagin lived there.⁷⁸ The mixture of horror and insidious affection readers have felt towards Fagin nicely recreates the

ambivalence felt by a hypersensitive child towards one whose good-hearted gesture had to be punished for the shame it carried. Mr. Brownlow is named after John Brownlow, the benevolent director of the Foundling Hospital in Great Coram Field, and author of a tale called Hans Sloane: A Tale Illustrating the History of the Foundling Hospital (1831)⁷⁹; Magistrate Fang is the name for the notorious Laing; Monks may be Monk Lewis, whose Gothic horrors Dickens discarded for the real horrors of Jacob's Island. Sikes and Dawkins, it has been suggested, may be named for characters in The Newgate Calendar. With Harry and his English Rose it may be that we move toward naming more typical of allegory, Harry standing for an idealized, latter-day Harry of England. Thus many of the names in this novel are not chosen for sound or as indicators of class, as so often in Dickens's novels ("Peggotty" vs "Copperfield", "Gargery" vs. "Havisham"), or as symbols, as in Great Expectations ("Pip", "Magwitch") but for their connection with characters who had played roles in Dickens's life or in his reading.

The presence of both allegory and satire suggests that Dickens belongs in a tradition outlined by John MacQueen and worth quoting for its relation of works of this type to the morality play, with which Oliver Twist has sometimes been compared. Speaking of the presence of both allegory and satire in The Pilgrim's Progress, in Gulliver's Travels, and in Blake, MacQueen says:

If one combines the narrative form and thematic content of allegory with the detailed richness and stylized point of view found in good satire, one discovers literary forms of great potential. The Pilgrim's Progress, the Life and Death of Mr. Badman, and Gulliver's Travels, for instance, mark important stages in the development of the English novel; the methods used by Bunyan and Swift are taken up by Fielding in the mock-heroic Tom Jones, and later by Jane Austen in the novels whose titles -- Pride and Prejudice, Sense and Sensibility, Persuasion -- almost recall the allegorical interludes of the sixteenth century. Very noticeably, the American novel, as exemplified by the work of Hawthorne and Melville, retained and developed this allegorical structure.

MacQueen then refers to A.A. Parker's work, in Literature and the Delinquent, on the Spanish picaresque novel, which relates satire and allegory to the morality play:

The morality belongs ultimately to the stock of the Psychomachia, and even in its earliest form it was necessarily something more than pure allegory. Realism of a kind helps to make the conflict of vice and virtue dramatically compelling, and in terms of the literary theories of the day such realism found appropriate expression in low style and a fairly wide range of comic incident.

MacQueen concludes:

The morality play, ...had a power not shared by the miracle cycles to survive the Reformation. Moralities in fact, were the staple dramatic fare of Marlowe, Shakespeare and Jonson in their youth. In addition, much of their general reading must have fostered a natural tendency towards allegory of many different kinds. The morality structure, with its frequent satiric and realistic overtones, and the general allegorical ambience of so many among their plays -- The Jew of Malta, Doctor Faustus, As You Like It, Henry IV, Measure for Measure, Volpone, to name no others -- is perhaps the greatest single contribution of allegory to the literature of England. 80

And to this one must add that Dickens's early reading and lifelong admiration for these plays speaks both of the natural tendency of Dickens's mind to the allegorical, and of the continuing contribution of allegory to English literature through his novels. Further, "the creative richness of the two modes in conjunction" may have something to do with the immense vitality of Dickens's work as a whole, for the interplay of satire and allegory is pervasive.

Finally, it would be reasonable to expect that such a distinctive mode as allegory would have a characteristic rhetoric which would, in turn, help to solve "the puzzle of the force and power that still exert their influence upon most readers of this strange, great, yet often cheaply sentimental novel".⁸¹ The cheap sentiment is partly explained, if not justified, by the duality inherent in the allegorical mode. Also inherent are its two basic patterns or shapes, the progress and the battle and the secret of the book's power may be in them.

Fletcher suggests that each of these shapes has its characteristic sentence structure. The progress "involves a sequence of steps in one main direction, and, as with the steps we take when we walk in procession, ...an overall regularity is...the norm".⁸² This produces the effect of ritual and "ritual tends to exaggerate equality of step". In the larger pattern of the novel we observe a sequence of journeys, mother to workhouse, workhouse to Sowerberry's, funeral procession, (Sowerberry's played against idealized country burial), Oliver to London, to Pentonville, to Fagin's, to Chertsey, and, patterned against these, the Dodger to London (he picks up the picaro role where Oliver refuses the life of crime), Sikes's with Oliver to Chertsey, and, finally, Sikes's flight, after the murder, through Highgate, Hampstead, and Hendon, and then back to London with the implacable and incriminating dog to Fagin's den, a repetition of all the earlier dens. At last, Oliver and his new family and friends journey to the village that represents the new society, where the village church has a tablet to the memory of Agnes. The linear procession has described a kind of circle. Other ritualistic repetitions arise from the comparison of the two worlds: Oliver being nursed and indoctrinated at Fagin's and then at Borwnlow's, at Fagin's again, and then, in contrast, at Mrs. Maylie's; games and singing at Fagin's, contrasted with flower-picking and piano-playing at Mrs. Maylie's. In each new place Oliver follows a pattern of adjustment, initiated by deep sleep and half-waking states.

The battle, on the other hand, gives the effect of symmetry and balance. "Symmetry suggests stasis and conflict caught at a given moment in time".⁸³ Here the conflicts are duplicated symmetrically and repeated; the good side takes a swipe, so the other side takes one. Because Oliver escapes, he must be recaptured; because he has been re-captured, he must be helped to escape. Both of these rhythms exist in Oliver Twist because, as in many allegories, the progress and the battle merge. Here, too, the novel resembles The Pilgrim's

Progress which, as Fletcher observes, has debates inset into the narrated progress.⁸⁴ In Oliver Twist the blows from each side in the battle define the later stages in the progress. These two shapes will be reflected in the syntax; it will be progressive and repetitive. According to Fletcher, "we need a syntactic description of the effects we have already seen, steady propulsiveness and exact symmetry".⁸⁵ "Steady propulsiveness" is achieved in parataxis, where each predication stands alone without relative clauses: he ran, he wept. When subordinating devices are used, as in Henry James, to take an extreme example, we have hypotaxis. When style is employed to create balanced periods, as in Johnson, we have a symmetry, a battle between balanced elements. Symmetry of balanced elements is strongly served by the device of anaphora, "the marcher", "the figure of report", suggesting the catalogue, the inventory, the list.⁸⁶ The book of Ecclesiastes provides an example of anaphora: "a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal...". The satiric catalogue, such as the catalogue of the animals and men in Smithfield market, is an instance of anaphora: "Countrymen, butchers, drovers, hawkers, boy thieves, idlers, and vagabonds of every low grade, were mingled together in a mass; the whistling of drovers, the barking of dogs, the bellowing and plunging of oxen...". The effect of this type of symmetrical rhythmic progression is like that of an incantation, and more than one critic has noted the incantatory effect of the prose of Oliver Twist.

We might expect to find, in an allegory, examples of these three, parataxis, anaphora, and hypotaxis. Look, for instance, at the famous "Stop thief!" passage:

'Stop thief! Stop thief!' There is a magic in the sound. The tradesman leaves his counter, and the carman his waggon; the butcher throws down his tray; the baker his basket; the milkman his pail; the errand-boy his parcels; the school-boy his marbles; the paviour his pickaxe; the child his battledore. Away they run, pell-mell, helter-skelter,

slap-dash: tearing, yelling, screaming, knocking down the passengers as they turn the corners: rousing up the dogs, and astonishing the fowls, and streets, squares, and courts, re-echo with the sound.

'Stop thief! Stop thief!' The cry is taken up by a hundred voices; and the crowd accumulate at every turning. Away they fly: splashing through the mud, and rattling along the pavements; up go the windows; out run the people; onward bear the mob; a whole audience desert Punch in the very thickest of the plot; and, joining the rushing throng, swell the shout: and lend fresh vigour to the cry, 'Stop thief! Stop thief!'

'Stop thief! Stop thief!' There is a passion for hunting something deeply implanted in the human breast. One wretched breathless child, panting with exhaustion; terror in his looks; agony in his eyes; large drops of perspiration streaming down his face; strains every nerve to make head upon his pursuers; and as they follow on his track, and gain upon him every instant, they hail his decreasing strength with still louder shouts: and whoop and scream with joy. 'Stop thief!' Aye, stop him for God's sake, were it only in mercy!

Stopped at last. A clever blow. He is down upon the pavement; and the crowd eagerly gather round him: each new comer, jostling and struggling with the others to catch a glimpse. 'Stand aside!' 'Give him a little air!' 'Nonsense! he don't deserve it.' 'Where's the gentleman?' 'Here he is coming down the street.' 'Make room there for the gentleman!' 'Is this the boy, sir?' 'Yes.' (Cl OT, 59)

Here we find the combination of paratactic sentences with the anaphoric lists and the effect is, and is meant to be, a duplication or recreation of the progressive effect of a chant. This incantatory rhetoric occurs at the emotional peak of the novel, the murder of Nancy:

Of all bad deeds that, under cover of the darkness, had been committed within wide London's bounds since night hung over it, that was the worst. Of all the horrors that rose with an ill scent upon the morning air, that was the foulest and most cruel. (Cl OT, 323)

Here the effect is relentless in its combination of symmetry and repetition, the suggestion of an infinite extension in "wide London's bounds" and infinite variety "of all...that rose with an ill

scent..." acting as a nightmarish backdrop to one claustrophobic act. The passage continues:

The sun, - the bright sun, that brings back, not light alone, but new life, and hope, and freshness to man - burst upon the crowded city in clear and radiant glory. Through costly-coloured glass and paper-mended window, through cathedral dome and rotten crevice, it shed its equal ray. It lighted up the room where the murdered woman lay. It did. He tried to shut it out, but it would stream in. If the sight had been a ghastly one in the dull morning, what was it, now, in all that brilliant light!

The first two hypotactic sentences, "The sun - the bright sun...ray", decrease in length. In the third sentence there is the symmetry of "It lighted...lay", followed by the paratactic "It did", followed by the balance, the warfare of sentence five, "He tried..." We note in this passage the opposition of light and dark, matched by the duality of "costly-coloured glass and paper-mended window", repeated and specified in "cathedral dome and rotten crevice"; they are joined and equalized by the sun. A few pages further, the description of Sikes at the fire is another list or catalogue of adverbs:

Hither and thither he dived that night: now working at the pumps, and now hurrying through the smoke and flame, but never ceasing to engage himself wherever noise and men were thickest. Up and down the ladders, upon the roofs of buildings, over floors that quaked and trembled with his weight, under the lee of falling bricks and stones, in every part of that great fire was he; but he bore a charmed life, and had neither scratch nor bruise, nor weariness nor thought, till morning dawned again, and only smoke and blackened ruins remained. (Cl OT, 238-39)

"Steady propulsiveness" is a mark of much of the style of Oliver Twist. So is a quality in the prose that Marcus describes as "violently static, exemplary", that makes memorable the wonderful court appearance of Fagin, and that Marcus sees to be the prevailing mode of the novel.⁸⁷

THE court was paved, from floor to roof, with human faces. Inquisitive and eager eyes peered from every inch of space. From the rail before the dock, away into the sharpest angle

of the smallest corner in the galleries, all looks were fixed upon one man -- the Jew. Before him and behind: above, below, on the right and on the left: he seemed to stand surrounded by a firmament, all bright with gleaming eyes. (Cl OT, 359) 88

"Violently static" catches the double effect of propulsiveness and stasis. Note the progression and the symmetry as the "stones" of human faces at the beginning are gathered into a circle and then, as it were, turned on like lights, "a firmament, all bright with gleaming eyes". Again there is the effect of an indistinct phantasmagoric background serving as a focus for a microcosmic act, as Fagin undergoes the great trial prefigured in Oliver's and the Dodger's court appearances and draws together all the references to the "great black ugly gallows" under whose shadow the whole novel broods.

Dickens's style is, of course, a whole separate study and revealing essays have been written on the style of individual novels. One thinks of Gervais's description of "The Poetry of Little Dorrit"⁸⁹ and of Taylor Stoehr's rhetorical analysis of the cask of wine passage in A Tale of Two Cities.⁹⁰ My point in these paragraphs has been to suggest that style, like other technical aspects of the novel, may be related to mode. Embarrassment before rhetorical conventions of another day may be, therefore, an inappropriate critical response. The power of Oliver Twist lies both in its theme and in its presentation; since style is the main, if unobtrusive, vehicle of the theme, analyses of imagery and of rhetoric would benefit from a prior consideration of mode.

Speaking of the effect of the novel as a whole Arnold Kettle observes, quite appropriately, that "we do not become involved in the world of Oliver Twist in the way we become involved in the world of Emma. We do not really know very much about any of these characters, even Oliver himself, or participate very closely in their motives and reactions".⁹¹ Here Kettle is exemplifying a distinction between the reader's relation to characters in a novel, where characters are studied from within and without, and characters in a romance who are

stylized, not studied from within, inscrutable because heroic. Kettle goes on to observe that we do not feel with Oliver when he asks for more as we share Miss Bates's feelings on Box Hill. Yet "when he walks up to the master of the workhouse and asks for more gruel, issues are at stake which make the whole world of Jane Austen tremble".⁹² It would be a falsification of Kettle's excellent essay to say, as this suggests, that the strength of Oliver Twist lies in its broader social base, in its concern with such "real" social problems as the plight of the nineteenth-century poor, and of all poor. Kettle is fully aware of "the pattern behind that power" and the "art behind the vitality". In this chapter I have tried to locate and make explicit some of the formal sources of that power. These lie in Dickens's moral purpose "to shew them (thieves) as they really are", and "to shew, in little Oliver, the principle of Good surviving through every adverse circumstance, and triumphing at last", and in the necessary artistic expression of that purpose in the mode of allegory.

When Dickens wrote, in Bentley's, of "my long-considered intentions and plans regarding this prose epic" he was, according to Kathleen Tillotson, probably not ironical.⁹³ Nor need he have been. Oliver Twist is the first and most abstract of a series of portraits whose life-and-adventures explore the society of nineteenth-century England; Gothic fantasies and Newgate realities gravitate toward the boy who has lost his birthright and must travel a harsh road to regain it and take his proper place in the society of Victorian England. Dickens studied the boy again and again as he probed the society with increasing realism. In Great Expectations he brought the boy and the society together and chronicled their interactions, but in a setting where Gothic fantasies and Newgate realities and ordinary goodness and decency are given their due in such a way that it is not the novel that splits open, but the society the novel describes.

Oliver Twist is thus the opening movement of a "theme and variations" that spanned twenty-five years of Dickens's writing career. At the end of that time he was at last able to name that central theme, "great expectations", a modern and novelistic equivalent of the "hubris" of drama and of the "expectation" of the pilgrim.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I

1. John MacQueen, Allegory (London, 1970), p. 62.
2. Letters II Pilgrim, p. 84.
3. Letters II Pilgrim, p. 226fn.
4. Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist, ed. Kathleen Tillotson (Oxford, 1966), pp. lxi-lxii, hereafter cited as Cl OT.
5. Edmund Wilson, "Dickens: The Two Scrooges", The Wound and the Bow (New York, 1965), p. 16.
6. Arnold Kettle, "Dickens: Oliver Twist", in An Introduction to the English Novel (1951), rpt. in The Dickens Critics, ed. George H. Ford and Lauriat Lane, Jr. (Ithaca, 1961), p. 259.
7. Angus Wilson, Introd., Oliver Twist, by Charles Dickens (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 13.
8. Ibid., p. 19.
9. Ibid., p. 26.
10. Kathleen Tillotson, for example, refers to Oliver Twist as a "moral fairy tale in contemporary terms". Essays and Studies, n.s. 12 (1959): 91.
 Arnold Kettle, in the essay cited above, talks about Oliver as "a figure of symbolic significance" (p. 263) and about Dickens's "instinct for the symbolic background" (p. 268).
 H.M. Daleski, in Dickens and the Art of Analogy (London, 1970), writes: "Oliver Twist is two novels. It is an imaginative evocation of a social problem that is consistently presented in terms of two central images; it is also an affirmation of a moral belief in Virtue Triumphant that is articulated by means of a plot which is inconsistent with the imagination of the subject. This bifurcation is responsible for the thematic confusions of a novel of undoubted imaginative power." (p. 49)
11. Steven Marcus, From Pickwick to Dombey (New York, 1965), writes: "For Oliver Twist is a parable, and as such it is connected with a tradition of parabolic writing that has always commanded an important place in English literature. Primarily, Oliver Twist is a story in the tradition of Bunyan, the morality play, and the homiletic tale..." (pp. 67-68). Again, "Oliver Twist, however, issues from what we might call a generic imagination - an imagination, that is, which is primarily employed in the dramatization or symbolization of abstract ideas. The town of the workhouse, for instance, has no geography..." (p. 63), and, "A number of the characters in Oliver Twist appear as if they were figures in a morality play" (p. 75). Again, Marcus observes the emblematic

use of physical attributes: "Monks bears 'a broad red mark, like a burn or a scald' (ch. 46) to signify his exclusion from human society. But his disfigurement is also a curious counterpart of all the attributes which identify the mythical hero: the strawberry mole on the right shoulder, the light that with inexhaustible wattage shines from his mouth, his footprints, his baby clothes and wampum, his magical capacity...to be recognized by various people at various times through an unmistakable resemblance to both his parents" (p. 85).

12. Robert A. Colby, "Oliver Twist: The Fortunate Foundling" in Fiction With a Purpose (Indiana, 1967), pp. 105-137.
13. Marcus, p. 79.
14. See Letter to Kolle, Letters I Pilgrim, (10 Dec., 1833), p. 34. See also "...my long-considered intentions and plans regarding this prose epic", which appeared in Bentley's only; the whole paragraph is cut in 1838...". Kathleen Tillotson, op. cit. (above, note 10) p. 89, fn.
15. The Progress of Romance (New York, 1930), pp. 110-111.
16. Introductions to The Monastery, 1830, and to St. Ronan's Well, 1832. A number of the introductions make glancing references to the qualities of romance as Scott distinguishes them in his 1823 essay for The Encyclopedia Britannica.
17. Preface to The House of the Seven Gables, 1851, and "The Custom House", Introductory to The Scarlet Letter, 1850.
18. Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957), p. 304.
19. Carl Grabo, The Technique of the Novel (New York, 1928), pp. 217-218.
20. Frye, Anatomy, p. 305.
21. Ibid., p. 90.
22. Elder Olson, "William Empson, Contemporary Criticism, and Poetic Diction", in Critics and Criticism, ed. R.S. Crane, abr. ed. (Chicago, 1957), p. 46. Quoted in Angus Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Cornell, 1964), p. 307.
23. Colby, p. 114.
24. Alexander Welsh, The City of Dickens (Oxford, 1971), p. 8.
25. Angus Fletcher, Allegory, The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Cornell, 1964), p. 136.
26. Fletcher, p. 150.
27. Fletcher, p. 182.
28. Fletcher, p. 198.

29. Fletcher, p. 223.
30. Marcus, pp. 63-64.
31. Fletcher, pp. 172-73.
32. Fletcher, pp. 161-180.
33. Sherman Eoff, "Oliver Twist and the Spanish Picaresque Novel", Studies in Philology, 54 (1957): pp. 440-47.
34. Stuart Miller, The Picaresque Novel (Cleveland, 1967), p. 28.
35. Fletcher, pp. 151-52.
36. Stuart Miller, p. 139. Miller refers here to Orwell's mention of the Good Rich Man in his essay on Dickens in A Collection of Essays (Garden City, 1954), p. 59. Reprinted in The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol. 1. ed. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus. (Harmondsworth, 1970), p. 458.
37. Fletcher, p. 152.
38. Fletcher, p. 156.
39. See, for example, J. Hillis Miller, Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels (Harvard, 1958), p. 55.
40. Colby, p. 111. This cover design is reproduced as the frontispiece to the Clarendon Edition.
41. MacQueen, p. 63.
42. See Frye, Anatomy, p. 187, "The complete form of the romance is clearly the successful quest, and such a completed form has three main stages: the stage of the perilous journey and the preliminary minor adventures; the crucial struggle, usually some kind of battle in which either the hero or his foe, or both, must die; and the exaltation of the hero."
43. Lichtenberg's Commentaries on Hogarth's Engravings, trans. and introd., Innes and Gustav Herdan (London, 1966), p. 3.
44. See comments on the change in the state of consciousness as typical of the return from the other-world journey in the chapter on Great Expectations, below.
45. J. Hillis Miller, p. 81.
46. Arnold Kettle, pp. 259-60. Note especially: "Its pattern is the contrasted relation of two worlds - the underworld of the work-house, the funeral, the thieves' kitchen, and the comfortable world of the Brownlows and Maylies. It is this pattern that stamps the novel on our minds. We do not remember, when we think back on it, the intricacies of the plot..."
47. See Tillotson, p. 93.
48. Stuart Miller, p. 10.

49. Fletcher, p. 182.
50. Athenaeum, 26, October, 1839, p. 804.
51. Fletcher, pp. 48-59.
52. Fletcher, p. 221n.
53. See Quarterly Review, June, 1839, p. 96.
54. Jonathon Bishop, "The Hero-Villain of Oliver Twist", Victorian Newsletter, 15 (1959): 14.
55. "'A Language fit for heroes': Speech in Oliver Twist and Our Mutual Friend", Dickensian, 65 (May, 1969): 100-7.
56. In Bentley's Miscellany "a certain town" had been "the town of Mudfog".
57. See Fletcher, p. 47: "It may help, in the case of moral allegory, to think of each virtue, acquired or lacking, as a kind of moral energy not, as Aristotle's Ethics would define virtue, a state of being, but an equivalent in the moral world of a tuned-up muscle in the physical world".
58. Fletcher, pp. 222-23.
59. Lauriat Lane Jr., "The Devil in Oliver Twist", Dickensian, 52 (June, 1956): 135.
60. Clarendon Edition, Introduction, p. xxxv.
61. Letters I Pilgrim, p. 328, (3 Nov., /1837/).
62. Clarendon, Introduction, p. xxxvi. Mrs. Tillotson suggests that these changes may have been made "in the light of her literacy and eloquence in her interview with Rose".
63. Lane, p. 133, quoting Montague Frank Modder, The Jew in the Literature of England (Philadelphia, 1944) p. 15, op. cit. (above, note 51), p. 133.
64. Lane, p. 133, quotes from the Everyman edition of Little Dorrit, II, xxiii, p. 647.
65. Carl Grabo, see above, n. 19.
66. While the modern reader is not, of course, innocent in the same way as Oliver is, it is important to remember that much of the novel's impact in 1836 arose from its revelation of the criminal underworld. cf. The Quarterly Review, 64 (1839): 87-88.
 "Life in London, as revealed in the pages of Boz, opens a new world to thousands bred and born in the same city, whose palaces overshadow their cellars - for the one half of mankind lives without knowing how the other half dies: in fact, the regions about Saffron Hill are less known to our great world than the Oxford Tracts; they are as human, at least to all appearances as the

Esquimaux or the Russians, and probably (though the Zoological Society will not vouch for it) endowed with souls; but, whether souled or not souled, they are too far beneath the higher classes to endanger any loss of caste or contamination in the inquiry."

67. See MacQueen, p. 69: "The generalities of allegory require more power over the moral sense and the imagination by way of their relevance to the particular; the particularities of satire equally acquire more than passing relevance when they are seen in terms of a system of moral ideas which is generally acceptable."
68. See Marcus, p. 64.
69. Joseph M. Duffy, Jr., "Another Version of Pastoral: Oliver Twist.", ELH 35 (1968): 413.
70. J. Hillis Miller, p. 71.
71. Colby, p. 123.
72. Fletcher, p. 210.
73. Mircea Eliade, Cosmos and History (New York, 1959) p. 18. Quoted by Fletcher, p. 212.
74. Stuart Miller, p. 11.
75. Kenneth C. Frederick, "The Cold, Cold Hearth - Domestic Strife in Oliver Twist", College English 27 (1966): 470.
76. MacQueen, p. 69.
77. Humphry House, The Dickens World, 2nd ed. (London, 1942). See ch. IV, "Economy: Domestic and Political - II", pp. 77-105.
78. G.K. Chesterton, Charles Dickens, pp. 35-36.
79. Colby, p. 124.
80. MacQueen, pp . 69-72.
81. Angus Wilson, p. 19.
82. Fletcher, p. 159.
83. Ibid. ., p. 159.
84. Ibid., p. 160.
85. Ibid., p. 162.
86. George Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie (London, 1589), ed. Gladys Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge, 1936), p. 208. Quoted by Fletcher, p. 168.
87. Marcus, p. 73.

88. See Harvey Peter Sucksmith, "The Secret of Immediacy: Dickens's Debt to the Tale of Terror in Blackwood's", NCF, 26 (1971): 151-52. The verbal parallel with Hugo's text does not change the rhetorical pattern.
89. David Gervais, "The Poetry of Little Dorrit", The Cambridge Quarterly, 4(1968-69): 38-53.
90. Taylor Stoehr, Dickens: The Dreamer's Stance (Ithaca, N.Y., 1965), ch. I.
91. Kettle, p. 254.
92. Ibid., p. 255.
93. Tillotson, p. 89.

The Life and Adventures of NICHOLAS NICKLEBY

"But can't we have one last night more?"

"Not an hour—not a minute," replied Nicholas, impatiently.

"Won't you stop to say something to Mrs. Crummles?"

asked the manager, following him down to the door.

"I couldn't stop if it were to prolong my life a score of years," rejoined Nicholas. "Here, take my hand, and with it my hearty thanks. — Oh! that I should have been fooling here!"

Accompanying these words with an impatient stamp upon the ground, he tore himself from the manager's detaining grasp, and darting rapidly down the street was out of sight in an instant.

"Dear me, dear me", said Mr. Crummles, looking wistfully towards the point at which he had just disappeared; "if he only acted like that, what a deal of money he'd draw!"

(CD, 247)

Nothing, perhaps, so simply and clearly distinguishes the mode of allegory from the mode of melodrama as their respective moral polarities. Allegory deals with good and evil, the war between heaven and hell; melodrama treats of the struggle between virtue and vice. In allegory the characters represent elemental forces, ideas, or principles; these are the real actors. In melodrama, on the other hand, the characters are people who represent the best and worst of their human kind, not Angels or Devils but heroes of incredible strength, maidens of surpassing virtue, and vile villains.

Melodrama is the mode of excess, excess in relation to the real. And yet it is not for that reason unreal. In this humdrum world there are not many Cheerybles, but their prototypes did exist, and one has no sooner denied their possibility than Cheeryble types, not at all unbelievable, come to mind. Arthur Gride's domestic economy is not usual, but some have occasionally enjoyed hospitality such as his. Nicholas's speech to Madeline Bray, "It may be better for me that we should never meet more", may make the dégagé, post-

Beckett reader snicker, but it is fair to remember that the words were written little more than a year after Mary Hogarth's death, an extreme, but not impossible event that had affected the young writer profoundly enough to justify the rhetoric.

Nicholas Nickleby is a novel in the melodramatic mode. The term melodrama is not usually applied to the novel, perhaps because the catch-all phrase "popular romance" covers much the same ground. It is reassuring, therefore, to find a recent critical work on Balzac and Henry James entitled The Melodramatic Imagination. "Reading these novelists," the author writes, "...more and more appeared to me to pose problems and to demand understanding of the melodramatic mode: a theatrical substratum used and re-worked in the novelistic representations".¹ As with James and Balzac, to read Nickleby in full enjoyment and make valid critical observations about it, benefits from a consideration of its underlying melodramatic mode. When the novel is seen as a melodrama certain of its oddities reveal their function. The strangely abstract fable-like beginning, "There once lived, in a sequestered part of the county of Devonshire, one Mr. Godfrey Nickleby: a worthy gentleman..." becomes a prologue, "Two households, both alike in dignity..."² The stereotyped characters of the hero and heroine and of her double, and of the confidantes and villains who enter their lives are clearly melodramatic. Satire on contemporary issues and types: Yorkshire schools, the politician, rowdy young aristocrats, appears in some nineteenth-century melodrama. All the plot machinery of wills, deeds, and secret documents, that acts as deus ex machina and thus detracts from the importance of the participants' characters, is almost the hallmark of melodrama. Finally, melodrama is often marked by a generalized sense of place, by such remnants of ritual folk-art as the circus or the theatre, and by a strong reliance on the pathetic curtain. All of these elements of melodrama help to form the "theatrical substratum" that is re-worked in the novel.

Of all Dickens's novels Nicholas Nickleby has had least attention from critics. Not only is its centre of gravity in a dramatic mode, but its particular mode, nineteenth-century melodrama, is itself less well-documented critically than other types and periods of drama. Yet the centrality of the stage to Nicholas Nickleby has been noticed at least since Darton's Vincent Crummies in 1926.³ Too, Nickleby was easily and frequently adapted for the contemporary stage, even boasting a performance that Dickens himself praised.⁴ And several modern critics mention the importance of melodrama to Nicholas Nickleby; still others refer to its melodramatic elements, while they seem to "place" the novel in other modes. Jerome Meckier, for instance, speaks of "the core of theatricality in a novel whose entire cast seems drawn from melodrama".⁵ After commenting on the theatricality of both theme and technique Sylvère Monod says "the whole final section of the book is composed...in the manner of melodrama".⁶ Hillis Miller makes the connection between melodrama and popular romance suggested above: "no other novel of Dickens is closer, in plot, characterization, and constantly asserted moral, to the conventions of the decadent drama and the popular novel of Dickens's day".⁷ And, more specifically, "...we come to recognize... that the central action of Nicholas Nickleby is the elaborate performance of a cheap melodrama, complete with sneering villains, insulted virginity, and a courageous young hero who appears in the nick of time..."⁸

No-one, however, has explored the implications of the novel's being written in the melodramatic mode. Two of the few recent critics of Nickleby acknowledge the presence of melodrama, but suggest other modes as the prevailing ones. Bernard Bergonzi quotes the Miller passage referred to above with approval, but, after granting "this dominant note of theatricality", goes on to claim that "...it is as a fairy-tale, the embodiment of a child-like vision of the world, that Nicholas Nickleby must ultimately be read".⁹ This fairy-tale

reading is elaborated, and not unfruitfully, in Richard Hannaford's "Fairy-Tale Fantasy in Nicholas Nickleby", where he, too, pays tribute to the presence of dramatic forms. Adding Meckier's summary to his own, Hannaford produces a rich medley of potential modes:

Jerome Meckier suggests that in Nicholas Nickleby Dickens strives "for an unobtainable inclusiveness that combines romance, melodrama, tragedy, Bible, and the different moods associated with each". (Meckier, p. 145) But despite the conflicting modes of pantomime, sentimental romance, comic gothicism, melodrama, and fairy-tale fantasy, a documentation of the fairy-tale motifs central to Dickens's conception clarifies the design and thematic unity of Nicholas Nickleby. 10

One is tempted to emend Fielding's description of this book, "an entertaining morality",¹¹ to "an entertaining medley". This eclecticism is carried further still by Bergonzi, who refers to Nicholas as a picaresque hero, "not a very robust picaresque hero when compared with Tom Jones or Roderick Random; nevertheless, he is their genteel descendent, and at the beginning of the novel we see him footloose and with his way to make in the world".¹² Monod, too, refers to Nicholas as a "picaresque hero", and Edmund Wilson's blanket description of the early novels as picaresque, referred to in the previous chapter, may stand as representative of much earlier criticism.

Since "fairy tale" and "picaresque" are not interchangeable terms and since neither is the same as melodrama, clarification seems in order. The distinguishing marks of the picaresque discussed in the preceding chapter stress the picaresque hero's unfavourable beginning, his acceptance of an invitation to roguery and thus of social irresponsibility, his lack of a need for love and kindness, and his opportunism in a world where he is buffeted by fortune. If Nicholas Nickleby is to be thought of as a picaresque novel we must note that Smike is a singularly ineffectual and well-meaning rogue, and that Nicholas, though cast adrift from his social moorings, is all too much aware of his social origins and of the niceties of behaviour

appropriate to a pure and high-minded young hero. His sense of responsibility towards his mother, his sister, and his protégé are above reproach. Though Nicholas rebels against Squeers, at no time does he even consider a life of crime, either to accept or reject it. During his London days, Nicholas can scarcely bear the taint of any commercial venture at all, except that sanctified by the general benevolence of the Cheerybles. Further, the picaresque hero has a special relationship with fortune; his fortune is in the hands of the gods, "but the gods are continually dropping it".¹³ Nicholas's relationship to fortune, on the contrary, is more like that of the hero of romance, where there seems to be a mysterious force at work ordering the outcome of events. This is clear from the cover of the monthly parts:

On the green cover of the monthly parts of N.N. the central figure in the design of the upper border is a drawing of the blindfolded goddess of Fortune. On either side beneath her recline Nicholas and Smike. She is turned in the direction of Nicholas and points toward him with a sword. At her right hand is her wheel; at her left a cornucopia giving forth fruits and out of which have fallen several bags of gold which lie on the ground between the two figures. 14

Thus the typical promise of melodrama, to mete out perfect justice and at the same time reward virtue richly, was emblazoned on the cover. The final triumph of the melodramatic hero, in contrast with that of the picaresque hero, is never in doubt; his repeated survival against overwhelming odds is proof of his virtue. In Ralph Nickleby's words, "There is some spell about that boy, ...Circumstances conspire to help him. Talk of fortune's favours! What is even money to such Devil's luck as this!" (CD, 353)

The distinction between melodrama and fairy tale is more subtle, but it is an important one in Dickens. The difference between these governing modes is much of the difference between Nicholas Nickleby and Great Expectations. The modes are hard to distinguish because both deal with fantasy or dream material. Melodrama, however,

deals with day-dreams, with the worst or the best situations that one may imagine oneself in. Fairy tales, on the other hand, deal with inner reality. Melodrama specializes in wish-fulfillment; fairy tales involve painful trials that lead to self-knowledge and growth, akin to the anagnorisis of tragedy. Both also deal with extremes. In melodrama the hero is the strongest and most virtuous man imaginable; in fairy tales he may be the richest king or the humblest wood-cutter. But the extremes of fairy tales represent emotional equations related to power whereas those of melodrama represent a side-stepping of the inconvenient limitations of reality. In the fairy tale, "the richest king" represents adult strength; the humble wood-cutter, whose son is so often in quest of the king's daughter, represents one who has not achieved strength and power. Often he has the possibility of success within him but has not yet been tried, and the tale is the story of his successful encounter with the trials set for him by the powerful king. These trials may represent stages of emotional growth, such as the successful resolution of the Oedipal dilemma, as in La Comtesse de Segur's "Le Bon Petit Henri", or they may represent the mastering of skills necessary for social survival. Even a man born to a largely symbolic kingship proves himself by mastering history and undertaking the most testing feats of physical endurance to which his future subjects may be exposed. Until he has done so his power is not real. This is the truth the fairy tale recounts. Melodrama, in contrast, would take a prince, who had been disguised as a woodcutter's son, and make him king, after miraculously rescuing him just when the odds seemed impossible. Where the fairy-tale hero may frankly rely on magic that is really a by-product of his kindness or shrewdness, the melodramatic hero has no talisman provided by a magic donor. All he need have is a highly-enough developed sense of time and place to put him on the spot where good fortune sits waiting to rescue him. Everyone can participate in the melodramatic hero's good fortune, just as everyone can fantasize

about winning a lottery. The fairy tale realization that only the brave deserve the fair tends to limit the readership of fairy tales to the young who have not been tested, and to that small portion of humankind that can bear some reality.

Those who read Nicholas Nickleby as a fairy tale, that is Hannaford and Bergonzi, see the Cheerybles playing good fairy, and Ralph Nickleby as the wicked ogre who craves power over the victims he is to crush. The parallel story of the lecherous old man about to marry the young princess in disguise, rescued in the nick of time by the noble young dispossessed prince, is also read as a fairy tale. This is not a misreading of the novel so much as an inadequate interpretation of the nature of fairy tales. Both of these stories, as I shall show, have elements that are common to melodrama but not to fairy tales, and both lack, among other things, the moment of perception or recognition that fairy tales have. Further, to consider the story as predominantly a fairy tale would be to exclude important sections of it. Dickens's jumping-off place, his exposure of the Yorkshire schools, as well as the central Crummles section and the Lillyvick-Kenwigs sequence which provide parodies of the main plot, would all be difficult to relate to the typical fairy-tale structure. Nicholas Nickleby is rather a play, or a whole collection of plays, suspended in a narrative frame, enriched by a variety of modes, but depending finally on action and conflict, burlesque and sentiment, rather than on "the creation of a secondary world" which Hannaford sees as the distinctive mark of the fairy tale.¹⁵

Hannaford further argues that in this "secondary world" to which the characters return at the end of the novel, human values are respected. He suggests that this secondary world is not the dream world posited by Michael Booth:

Essentially, melodrama is a dream world inhabited by dream people and dream justice, offering audiences the fulfillment and satisfaction found only in dreams. 16

Rather, he claims, it is Tolkien's world of Faerie where the secondary world "'obeys its own laws and decorum'" and "truth is never to be mistaken for the wish-fulfillment of dream".¹⁷ The secondary world Hannaford sees is the good rural world from which Nicholas and Kate come, and to which they return at the end of the novel. I would argue to the contrary, first, that the creation of a secondary world is not the prime distinction between fairy tale and other forms and, second, that the good society at the beginning and end of Nickleby and in the whole Cheeryble-cottage, Kate-Frank romance section of the novel is not, in any case, the secondary world of Faerie as Tolkien describes it. The coaches do not turn into pumpkins at midnight; there are no hobbits. The good society in Nickleby is merely a sentimental version of the everyday world, the happy home of domestic melodrama before the villain threatens to destroy it by foreclosing the mortgage. This sentimentalized world is familiar to us from romance, a larger category of narrative that includes both melodrama and fairy tale within it.

Since the final chapter of this thesis, on Great Expectations, deals at length with the typology of the fairy tale that will not be fully developed until then. But, since two of the four full-length articles to appear on Nicholas Nickleby in the last twenty years read the novel as a fairy tale, it is worth briefly distinguishing the fairy tale from melodrama at this point, since the two modes are superficially so similar.

Even Bernard Bergonzi, one of the two fairy-tale proponents, casts an uneasy glance in this direction for, he says, "We are in need of a critical theory of melodrama; if we had one, it might shed light in a number of obscure places in Dickens."¹⁸ While the term melodrama may not be widely understood, there is certainly enough written on the subject to guide the reader through Nicholas Nickleby, though admittedly most of it has been published since Bergonzi's 1962 essay. Michael Booth's English Melodrama (1965) and his

introduction to Hiss the Villain! (1964) provide a general description of the genre and comments on the typical characters and their functions. James L. Smith's Melodrama (1973), in the Critical Idiom Series, stands farther back from the subject and supplies a discussion, complementary to Booth's, of what he sees to be the three basic types of melodrama. Smith also makes valuable distinctions between melodrama and other genres. I am indebted to both of these authors for what follows.

The OED defines melodrama as "A dramatic piece characterized by sensational incident and violent appeals to the emotions, but with a happy ending". Frank Rahill, in The World of Melodrama expands this:

Melodrama is a form of dramatic composition in prose partaking of the nature of tragedy, comedy, pantomime, and spectacle, and intended for a popular audience. Primarily concerned with situation and plot, it calls upon mimed action extensively and employs a more or less fixed complement of stock characters, the most important of which are a suffering heroine or hero, a persecuting villain, and a benevolent comic. It is conventionally moral and humanitarian in point of view and sentimental and optimistic in temper, concluding its fable happily with virtue rewarded after many trials and vice punished. Characteristically it offers elaborate scenic accessories and miscellaneous divertissements and introduces music freely, typically to underscore dramatic effect. 19

Smith quotes Rahill's definition and goes on to make useful distinctions between melodrama and tragedy and to account for three major patterns of melodrama. Drawing on Robert Bechtold Heilman,²⁰ Smith points out that "tragic man is essentially 'divided' and melodramatic man essentially 'whole'. Antigone cannot bury her brother without offending civil law, Orestes and Hamlet cannot avenge their fathers' deaths without committing murder..." In Meredith's phrase, tragic man is "betrayed by what is false within", and hence no villain is needed. Smith continues:

In melodrama man remains undivided, free from the agony of choosing between conflicting imperatives and desires. He greets every situation with an unwavering single impulse

which absorbs his whole personality. If there is danger he is courageous, if there is political corruption he exposes it, untroubled by cowardice, weakness or doubt, self-interest or thought of self-preservation. By itself, such 'wholeness' is morally uncommitted....the evil man who is wholly evil is prevented by his wholeness from the self-understanding that might curb his villainy, and the wholly good man who looks inward has nothing to contemplate but his own virtuous perfection. It follows that the undivided protagonist of melodrama has only external pressures to fight against: an evil man, a social group, a hostile ideology, a natural force, an accident or chance, an obdurate fate or a malign deity. It is this total dependence upon external adversaries which finally separates melodrama from all other serious dramatic forms. 21

Since melodramatic man is wholly good or wholly evil, he does not grow. He is deprived of the "growth in personal awareness brought about by the anagnorisis or discovery of tragedy",²² and of the "change of heart", to take over Barbara Hardy's phrase, that comes to the fairy-tale hero as he learns who he is and what matters in the world. Compare Nicholas's attitudes at the beginning and the end of his novel with Pip's in his. Or compare Nicholas's easy assumption of strength: "I shall surface many times yet, and the harder the thrust that puts me down, the more quickly I shall rebound" (CD, 275), with, say, Bilbo Baggins's thoroughly reluctant assumption of the hero's role, an assumption that comes only after he has seen that, though he is unwilling and humble, he is the chosen one.

Smith goes on to show that melodrama "presses its extreme conflicts to extreme conclusions", and that only three conclusions are possible. When an heroic protagonist faces a hostile world the outcome must be stalemate, victory, or defeat. He sees the three conclusions as embracing all melodrama, which is, therefore, of three kinds: of protest, of triumph, or of defeat. These resolutions hold in real life too. Thus "in the real-life conflict of man against nature, Crowhurst withdraws from the struggle between his one-man catamaran and the cruel sea, Hillary plants a Union Jack on the

summit of Everest, and Captain Scott perishes in the blizzards of Antarctica."²³ And in the theatre "far-fetched coincidence brings about the unlucky deaths of Romeo and Juliet but saves from execution at the yardarm William, the sailor hero of Black-Eye'd Susan".²⁴ Smith makes the point that "resolutions of triumph or defeat indicate not different dramatic structures but simply alternative formulations of the same conflict, opposing extremes of the same melodramatic spectrum."²⁵

Nicholas Nickleby, with so much more scope than a play, manages to include examples of all three of Smith's melodramatic types. The wonderful scene of Nicholas's defiance of Squeers is melodrama of protest. Dickens's purpose in depicting the Yorkshire schools can be accommodated to most of the aims of protest theatre: "to stimulate political awareness, question established values, expose injustice, champion reform, fuel arguments on ways and means and sometimes to incite direct support for bloody revolution".²⁶ Here is the scene:

The news that Smike had been caught and brought back in triumph, ran like wild-fire through the hungry community, and expectation was on tiptoe all the morning. On tiptoe it was destined to remain, however, until afternoon; when Squeers, having refreshed himself with his dinner, and further strengthened himself by an extra libation or so, made his appearance (accompanied by his amiable partner) with a countenance of portentous import, and a fearful instrument of flagellation, strong, supple, wax-ended, and new -- in short, purchased that morning, expressly for the occasion.

"Is every boy here?" asked Squeers, in a tremendous voice.

Every boy was there, but every boy was afraid to speak; so, Squeers glared along the lines to assure himself; and every eye drooped, and every head cowered down, as he did so.

"Each boy keep his place," said Squeers, administering his favourite blow to the desk, and regarding with gloomy satisfaction the universal start which it never failed to occasion. "Nickleby! to your desk, sir."

It was remarked by more than one small observer, that there was a very curious and unusual expression in the usher's face; but he took his seat, without opening his lips in reply. Squeers, casting a triumphant glance at his assistant and a look of most comprehensive despotism on the boys,

left the room, and shortly afterwards returned, dragging Smike by the collar -- or rather by that fragment of his jacket which was nearest the place where his collar would have been, had he boasted such a decoration.

In any other place, the appearance of the wretched, jaded, spiritless object would have occasioned a murmur of compassion and remonstrance. It had some effect, even there; for the lookers-on moved uneasily in their seats; and a few of the boldest ventured to steal looks at each other, expressive of indignation and pity.

They were lost on Squeers, however, whose gaze was fastened on the luckless Smike, as he inquired, according to custom in such cases, whether he had anything to say for himself.

"Nothing, I suppose?" said Squeers, with a diabolical grin.

Smike glanced round, and his eye rested, for an instant, on Nicholas, as if he had expected him to intercede; but his look was riveted on his desk.

"Have you anything to say?" demanded Squeers again: giving his right arm two or three flourishes to try its power and suppleness. "Stand a little out of the way, Mrs. Squeers, my dear; I've hardly got room enough."

"Spare me, sir!" cried Smike.

"Oh! that's all, is it?" said Squeers. "Yes, I'll flog you within an inch of your life, and spare you that."

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed Mrs. Squeers, "that's a good'un!"

"I was driven to do it," said Smike faintly; and casting another imploring look about him.

"Driven to do it, were you?" said Squeers. "Oh! it wasn't your fault; it was mine, I suppose -- eh?"

"A nasty, ungrateful, pig-headed, brutish, obstinate, sneaking dog," exclaimed Mrs. Squeers, taking Smike's head under her arm, and administering a cuff at every epithet; "what does he mean by that?"

"Stand aside, my dear," replied Squeers. "We'll try and find out."

Mrs. Squeers being out of breath with her exertions, complied. Squeers caught the boy firmly in his grip; one desperate cut had fallen on his body -- he was wincing from the lash and uttering a scream of pain -- it was raised again, and again about to fall -- when Nicholas Nickleby suddenly starting up, cried "Stop!" in a voice that made the rafters ring.

"Who cried stop?" said Squeers, turning savagely round.

"I," said Nicholas, stepping forward. "This must not go on."

"Must not go on!" cried Squeers, almost in a shriek.

"No!" thundered Nicholas.

Aghast and stupified by the boldness of the interference, Squeers released his hold of Smike, and falling back a pace or two, gazed upon Nicholas with looks that were positively frightful.

"I say must not," repeated Nicholas, nothing daunted; "shall not. I will prevent it."

Squeers continued to gaze upon him, with his eyes starting out of his head; but astonishment had actually, for the moment, bereft him of speech.

"You have disregarded all my quiet interference in the miserable lad's behalf," said Nicholas; "you have returned no answer to the letter in which I begged forgiveness for him, and offered to be responsible that he would remain quietly here. Don't blame me for this public interference. You have brought it upon yourself; not I."

"Sit down, beggar!" screamed Squeers, almost beside himself with rage, and seizing Smike as he spoke.

"Wretch," rejoined Nicholas, fiercely, "touch him at your peril! I will not stand by, and see it done. My blood is up, and I have the strength of ten such men as you. Look to yourself, for by Heaven I will not spare you, if you drive me on!"

"Stand back," cried Squeers, brandishing his weapon.

"I have a long series of insults to avenge," said Nicholas, flushed with passion; "and my indignation is aggravated by the dastardly cruelties practised on helpless infancy in this foul den. Have a care; for if you do raise the devil within me, the consequences shall fall heavily upon your own head!"

He had scarcely spoken, when Squeers, in a violent outbreak of wrath, and with a cry like the howl of a wild beast, spat upon him, and struck him a blow across the face with his instrument of torture, which raised up a bar of livid flesh as it was inflicted. Smarting with the agony of the blow, and concentrating into that one moment all his feelings of rage, scorn, and indignation, Nicholas sprang upon him, wrested the weapon from his hand, and pinning him by the throat, beat the ruffian till he roared for mercy.

(CD, 95-96)

Nor can one doubt that this is theatre, with hero, villain, and innocent victim acting out their time-honoured roles before the audience of silent boys as the drama ends in Nicholas's triumph, the triumph of the cause for which he so fearlessly and unhesitatingly fights!

If we compare this scene with Steerforth's attack on Mr. Mell in David Copperfield, the difference in mode can scarcely be missed. The savage brutality that constitutes villainy in Nicholas Nickleby has been modified to arrogance and snobbery in Copperfield. In the later novel heroism, in contrast with Nicholas's flamboyance, is portrayed in Tommy Traddles in his too-tight clothes crying "Shame, J. Steerforth!" and virtue is quietly displayed in Mr. Mell's absolution of David, the unheroic hero. In David Copperfield the villain looks like a hero and gets away with his villainy, even to some extent in death. The real hero looks ludicrous and is punished for his nobility of spirit, and the hero-to-be is given a first lesson in the deceptiveness of appearances and the need for moral courage, which he feels but does not appreciate for years to come. Such subtlety is alien to melodrama.

In melodrama of defeat, in contrast with melodrama of protest, "a blameless hero fights against external forces but this time they succeed and he goes under, leaving an audience to pity his distresses or admire the fortitude with which he bears them."²⁷ Smith notes that in the eighteenth-century the cult of sensibility allowed plays tailored to this pattern to dominate the stage. At the beginning of the century Richard Steele justified the telling of tales of pathetic melodrama. He uses the example of a loving wife who, eagerly awaiting her husband's return from overseas, is walking by the seashore when his sodden corpse is washed up at her feet. She faints across the body and is "gone for ever".²⁸ Steele suggests that:

The contemplation of distresses of this sort softens the mind of man, and makes the heart better. It extinguishes the seed of envy and ill-will towards mankind, corrects the pride of prosperity, and beats down all that fierceness and insolence which are apt to get into the minds of the daring and fortunate. 29

This reads like a gloss on the effects of Smike's story on Ralph Nickleby, and we can see Smike and his story as an example of melodrama

of defeat. Smike's hopeless love for Kate arouses real pathos, as the simple physical conditions of his slavery to Squeers and his undeveloped intellect never do. Yet Smike has too many strikes against him to live on as noble, disappointed retainer. That alternative is explored in Martin Chuzzlewit, which is written from a satirical stance. Tom Pinch, who has some Smikean characteristics at the beginning of Martin Chuzzlewit and who functions at first as gull to Pecksniff's knave in the satire, takes on the role of idealized norm by the end of the story. That role is a necessary one in satire but clearly if Smike is to elicit the maximum of melodramatic pathos he has to face more hopeless odds than Tom Pinch, and the only transformation he can be allowed to suffer is the transformation of death.

While the Squeers and Smike parts of the novel seem to fit into the categories of melodrama of protest and melodrama of defeat respectively, the bulk of the novel almost perfectly fits Smith's description of the melodrama of triumph:

There is a simple formula for making a play which will give its audience the easy pleasures of vicarious triumph. Take an innocent man and a defenceless woman, both of them wholly admirable and free from fault. Present them sympathetically, so that an audience will identify with them and share their hopes. And then set against them every obstacle you can devise. Persecute them with villains, dog them with ill-luck, thrust them into a hostile world which threatens at every moment their instant annihilation. Dramatize these excitements as effectively as the resources of the stage will allow, heighten the suspense with music, relieve it with laughter and tears. And then, when all seems lost, allow your hero and heroine to win. Let villainy be outwitted, ill-luck reversed, physical danger overcome and virtue finally rewarded with infinite joy. Present your play honestly, without condescension, and its warm and simple message will help every spectator to face life more courageously than before. This is the pattern of the melodrama of triumph. 30

And it was a sentiment and a purpose much like this that Dickens expressed at the end of the preface to the first edition when he

quoted Henry Mackenzie's words on the periodical essayist: "But the periodical essayist commits to his readers the feelings of the day, in the language which those feelings have prompted." In the preface Dickens asks his readers to grant him the indulgence to "think of the papers which on that day of so many past months they have read, as the correspondence of one who wished their happiness and contributed to their amusement."

Having identified the mode of Nicholas Nickleby we now come to the question of the author's narrative stance. Did Dickens consciously choose to write in imitation of the popular theatre? For this novel I have not found convincing external evidence. Both of his prefaces, to the first edition and to the Charles Dickens edition, are concerned mainly with the Yorkshire schools. More telling, though, is the Nickleby Proclamation by "Boz" in 1838, wherein notice is given to the public:

That in our new work, as in our preceding one, it will be our aim to amuse, by producing a rapid succession of characters and incidents, and describing them as cheerfully and pleasantly as in us lies; that we have wandered into fresh fields and pastures new, to seek materials for the purpose; and that, in behalf of Nicholas Nickleby we confidently hope to enlist both their heartiest merriment and their kindest sympathies. 31

This does at least suggest that Dickens sees his novel as a kind of good-humoured joke shared by author and readers, with the author confident that the conventions he is working in are familiar to his public.

Nicholas Nickleby was dedicated to Dickens's new friend, the actor Macready, whom he also asked to be godfather to his second daughter, Kate Macready, born at the end of October, 1839, the month of publication of the last number of Nickleby.³² If the great actor was in Dickens's thoughts as he finished Nickleby, the stage occupied him in other ways during the novel's composition, and even, perhaps, at its conception. When Dickens signed the agreement for

Nickleby he was a third of the way through Oliver Twist. In a rare Fielding-like introductory essay on art and life at the beginning of Chapter 17 of Oliver Dickens wrote:

It is the custom on the stage: in all good, murderous melodramas: to present the tragic and the comic scenes, in as regular alternation, as the layers of red and white in a side of streaky, well-cured bacon. (Cl OT, 105)

This chapter appeared in Bentley's Miscellany in November, 1837. On 18 November the agreement with Chapman and Hall for "another and new Book or work the title whereof has not yet been decided on of similar character and of the same extent and contents in point of quantity as the said work entitled The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club" was concluded. This work was to be Nicholas Nickleby. The text of the agreement "is from a draft dated 18 Aug, 37, differing only in layout and minutiae from the agreement concluded on 18 November."³³ Thus it was written or drafted at precisely the time of Dickens's dispute with Bentley over the payment and copyright arrangements for Oliver Twist and Barnaby Rudge. There was no October installment of Oliver in the Miscellany, and the November number comprised chapter 16 ("I am glad you like Oliver this month - especially glad that you particularize the first chapter. I hope to do great things with Nancy.")³⁴ and chapter 17, from which the first sentence on melodrama was taken. It was at this time, too, that Dickens was reading the manuscript, which he finally agreed to edit for Bentley, of The Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi. At the time of concluding the agreement for Nicholas Nickleby, the first part of which was to be delivered to Chapman and Hall "on or before the fifteenth day of March 1838", Dickens was thus thinking about the stage and arguing for the realism of melodrama:

Such changes appear absurd; but they are not so unnatural as they would seem at first sight. The transitions in real life from well-spread boards to death-beds, and from mourning-weeds to holiday garments, are not one whit less startling; only,

there, we are busy actors, instead of passive lookers-on; which makes a vast difference. The actors in the mimic life of the theatre, are blind to violent transitions and abrupt impulses of passion or feeling, which, presented before the eyes of mere spectators, are at once condemned as outrageous and preposterous. (Cl OT, 106)

This apology for the validity of melodrama introduces the chapter in which Mr. Bumble visits Mrs. Mann's baby farm, and both tone and subject are reminiscent of the Squeers section of Nicholas Nickleby. Bumble shares Squeers's attitude to his charges:

'You're going by coach, sir? I thought it was usual to send them paupers in carts.'

'That's when they're ill, Mrs. Mann,' said the beadle. 'We put the sick paupers into open carts in the rainy weather, to prevent them taking cold.' (Cl OT, 108)

Mrs. Mann is no match for the comic grotesquerie of Mrs. Squeers, but her role as straight man is similar, while little Dick plays a role in Oliver's life similar to Smike's in Nicholas. The hero maligned is common to both, and in both the hero's deep chagrin as he fears what those who love him may think of him is a motive for setting the score right. If it is possible to pin-point a novel's germination, the coincidence of the draft agreement for Nickleby with the comparable pattern and tone of Oliver might suggest that Dickens adopted his narrative stance and his attention-getting social charge for the opening of Nicholas Nickleby here. The reflections on melodrama that introduce Chapter 17 of Oliver may then be seen as spreading out beyond the melodramatic elements in that novel ('Lord, Lord! - to think of it; - it's as good as a play -- as good as a play!' Cl OT, 32) to associate themselves with the core of Nicholas Nickleby. This is scarcely conclusive evidence for Dickens's conscious choice of the melodramatic mode in Nicholas Nickleby, but the combination of need to consider the content and scope of Nickleby, these dramatic interests, and the thoughts on melodrama is at least suggestive.

This melodramatic core implies a structure in which plot is paramount. The function of the plot is to expose the hero and the

heroine to as many dangers as possible. Its effect seems episodic, and this linear quality, broken by alternations of pathos and farce, may account for the frequent labelling of Nicholas Nickleby as picaresque. In the picaresque, however, all of these episodes would be disconnected; in Nickleby they have a pattern.

The story begins on a once-upon-a-time note with the original family circle of Mr. Godfrey Nickleby and his two sons down in Devonshire. It moves quickly into the present with the broken family circle of one of those sons whose widow and children come up, in their country innocence, to the city in some expectation of completing their circle with the other brother as father surrogate. But Ralph Nickleby shocks them by being a bad father. The first sight of Nicholas reminds Ralph of his own lack of charm and youth, and of the jealousy and rejection that had, when he was Nicholas's age, driven him to the city to make the money these attractive young people now need. Ralph's almost insane desire for revenge directs the plot from this point. He arranges jobs for both Nicholas and Kate and, in addition, arranges the dinner party at which Kate is threatened and humiliated by Sir Mulberry Hawk. The resulting conflict between Nicholas and Sir Mulberry brings the Kate and Nicholas threads of the story together, and the thoroughly unlikely defeat of Sir Mulberry Hawk is a foreshadowing of Nicholas's final defeat of Ralph. Sir Mulberry Hawk is a representative of Ralph and suitably exemplifies the relentless sexual rapacity of the dark villain of melodrama. Lord Frederick Verisopht, by comparison, bears a close resemblance to the "white villain":

There are two main kinds of villains: the grim, determined, immensely evil; and the shifty, cowardly, half-comic. When the latter is present he exists in conjunction with the former and is dominated by him, but often turns traitor at the end and deserts to the side of goodness. 35

Squeers and Arthur Gride share the stage with Lord Frederick. They do not desert to the side of goodness, being immune, as the young lord

is not, to the beauty and goodness of the heroine. In Lord Frederick's case, these defeat evil on its own ground. The young lord's death and Sir Mulberry's subsequent flight are necessary to rid England of Sir Mulberry without straining the hero overmuch.

Once Ralph has been defeated in his sexual role, which Hawk represents, the story branches out again, with Kate and Nicholas united but with the Madeline Bray plot in the foreground to challenge Nicholas. Driven by a force even stronger than the need to protect his sister, and assisted to a vital degree by the good humour Cheerybles, Nicholas, the now almost heroic hero, rescues the desperate heroine who possesses the essential qualities of her role: she appears to be irrevocably tied by noble filial bonds to a fate worse than death, her considerable estate, of which she is not even aware, about to be taken from her by a trick on the part of the very man who should most protect her. Madeline Bray may not be an interesting heroine, but the situation in which she is placed by the plot is gripping indeed.

In this part of the plot the Brothers Cheeryble figure prominently. They make possible the setting-up of the new idyllic family circle in which they serve as benevolent father figures, their faceless nephew as Kate's beloved. Supported by this circle the hero goes out to rescue the heroine. He is aided by Newman Naggs, the comic man, and by the defection of Peg Sliderskew, a comic grotesque who plays Newman's game with her unappreciative employer. Squeers re-appears to act for Ralph, having recovered from John Browdie's rescue of Smike. At the very moment of his recovery of the fateful deed Squeers is felled by a blow with a bellows delivered by Newman Noggs, the comic man. From this point it is plain sailing. The villain is foiled in his financial aggressiveness by the hero's good father figures, and takes his own life. Before his death he learns that Smike, his own rejected son, has given the devotion that might have been his to the despised Nicholas. "Poor Smike", who has brought

down many a curtain in these last numbers, is sent to die and be buried in Devonshire. In time his grave becomes a ritual meeting-place for the children of the new circles formed by Nicholas and Kate. The final celebration at the Cheerybles' house unites not merely two pairs of young lovers but also Tim Linkinwater and Miss LaCreevy, like Newman provided with an appropriately decent background. It is only, perhaps, the remnants of the mimetic novel that cling to this melodrama that protect one of the brothers Cheeryble and Mrs. Nickleby from the folly of a permanent alliance. As Nicholas journeys to Yorkshire, a triumphal march over the ground of his earlier humiliation and bondage, to assure good John Browdie of his happiness, he is fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of Mantalini. The Mantalini's perpetual drama of flirtation, courtship, and marriage has provided a parody of the young lovers, complete with one poor, distinctly ignoble partner. Nicholas's final view of him, with a new wife and more miserable than ever, completes the parody. The final page of the novel describes the new dynasty in Nicholas's father's old home in Devonshire, with Newman Noggs in a neighbouring cottage as old family retainer.

If this pattern has a familiar ring it may be because the plot follows so closely the typical action of New Comedy. According to Northrop Frye, "the structure that Dickens uses for his novels is the New Comedy structure, which has come down to us from Plautus and Terence through Ben Jonson, an author we know Dickens admired, and Molière".³⁶ While the pattern of New Comedy structure can be discerned in all the novels it is certainly not the central structure in, say, David Copperfield, and even less so in Great Expectations. But the fact that it does so well describe the action in Nicholas Nickleby strengthens the argument that Nickleby's informing mode is a dramatic one. Frye continues:

The main action is a collision of two societies which we may call for convenience the obstructing and the congenial society. The congenial society is usually centred on the love of hero and heroine, the obstructing society on the

characters, often parental, who try to thwart this love. For most of the action the thwarting characters are in the ascendant, but toward the end a twist in the plot reverses the situation and the congenial society dominates the happy ending. A frequent form of plot reversal was the discovery that one of the central characters, usually the heroine, was of better social origin than previously thought. 36

Here is the general structure of the action in Nicholas Nickleby. In place of a simple "twist in the plot" such as one might find in Shakesperean comedy, however, successful resolution of melodrama often depends, as here, on the unusual strength of the hero and on split-second timing. The villainous plot is unwound, usually by the hero, who then unmask the villain.

Villain and hero exist in melodrama to initiate and to be harrowed by the action. Thus the mode of melodrama implies certain kinds of characters, indeed certain roles, but the implications of the mode for characterization in a melodramatic novel are still not always recognized. Bergonzi speaks of "the amiable stock figures such as Nicholas and Kate", distinguishing them from the memorable Mrs. Nickleby, Squeers, and the Kenwigs, among others, and from "the obviously melodramatic types such as Ralph, Sir Mulberry Hawk, Lord Frederick, and Gride...".³⁷ This is an interesting division, to which I shall refer further, but it betrays some uncertainty as to the range of melodrama. Chesterton says that "Nicholas is what is called in theatricals a stick"³⁸ and Chesterton's observation is an accurate one, in its context. But Angus Wilson, in an essay on "The Heroes and Heroines of Dickens"³⁹ makes clear that his judgement of Nicholas as a nullity is made within a critical framework that ignores questions of generic appropriateness. He finds the hero poor of his kind:

To examine the heroes and heroines of Dickens is to dwell on his weaknesses and failures. Only a strong conviction of Dickens's extraordinary greatness can make such an examination either worth while or decorous; since

the literary critic, unlike the reviewer, can always choose his fields and should seek surely to appreciate rather than to disparage. Even in the weak field of his heroes and heroines, Dickens made remarkable advances, for though he matured -- or, to use a less evaluating word, changed -- late both as a man and as an artist, his immense energy drove him on through the vast field of his natural genius to attempt the conquest of the territory that lay beyond. The development of the heroes and heroines of his novels is indeed a reflection of this change or maturing, and a measure of his success in going beyond the great domain he had so easily mastered.

Farther on in the same essay, speaking of the heroes before Copperfield, Wilson says:

Like Mr. Pickwick, this 'walking gentleman', genteel hero group begins in near nullity: one cannot discuss Harry Maylie or Edward Chester, for they are not there. Nicholas and Martin advance us a few steps...40

This notion of the novelist advancing toward the maturity of the late novels is now a critical commonplace, but it makes no allowance for the modifying effects of mode. Smith observes facetiously:

You always know where you are with the characters of Victorian melodrama. A complete set of two-dimensional stereotypes, all sharply defined and all different, they are the 'whole' men who can be guaranteed to think, speak and act exactly as you would expect. No time is lost footling about with motivation, for there is no pretence that these are real people. 41

This, though limited and belittling, is a more valid point of departure than the strictures of psychological realism implied by Wilson's judgement.

Because stage conventions are strongly at work in this novel the characterization is not less, but more interesting. Let us look, first, at the stage conventions, and then consider ways in which Dickens gives some of these conventional figures further dimensions. This will introduce a distinction between the humour characters and those which are caricatures. This distinction leads to a brief discussion of some of Dickens's methods of characterization that seem particularly clear in this novel because one can see him working with

a combination of melodramatic stereotypes and figures from real life, whose traces have been well-documented.

"A complete set of two-dimensional stereotypes" is what Michael Booth provides as he lists the principle character types of melodrama and then gives a more detailed description of each. Although Booth's tone is facetious, the rather crude outlines that emerge from his descriptions do not seem to me to be out of keeping with the youthful exuberance of Nicholas Nickleby. Booth notes:

By its very nature melodrama demands superficial "instant" characters who behave in the same way, think in the same way, and act in the same way. Such facility of presentation was necessary to the author, for having signalled to the audience the character, likely behaviour, and moral position of his dramatis personae, he could immediately proceed to the meat of his emotion and action. Both their conception as ideal types and their actual performance on the stage were extreme, and they were sharply differentiated from one another....The stock character types of melodrama - hero, villain, heroine, old man, old woman, comic man, comic woman - are almost unvaryingly present in every play. 42

Nicholas Nickleby is richly endowed, not merely with these stock types, but usually with a parodic variation of each. Nicholas, of course, is the hero and Kate, at first, the heroine. As Madeline becomes more important to Nicholas, Frank Cheeryble becomes Kate's hero. John Browdie is a comic, provincial version of the hero, huge, fearless, and jovial, his mindless good humour a nice parody of the hero's high-minded intensity. Ralph is the villain and Arthur Gride and Squeers his parodies, while Sir Mulberry Hawk takes over one of his aspects, sexual rapacity. Old man and old woman are less clear, but comic man is certainly Newman Noggs and Mrs. Nickleby is one of the great comic women of all time.

Nicholas is a typical hero:

...a handsome young man of action and courage, eternally devoted to sweetheart or wife [and sister], with a physical prowess frequently demonstrated in a series of desperate encounters with the villain and his allies, usually in defence of the heroine. 43

Booth's footnote to this description is also apt:

Like all good people in melodrama, the hero possesses miraculous powers of survival in fires, earthquakes, shipwrecks, etc. He can also speedily recover from injuries of the most mortal kind.

In the classic battle between the hero and one of the villain's surrogates, Sir Mulberry Hawk, although much more powerfully built and armed with a whip, is maimed for life, while slight young Nicholas, armed only with the purity of his heart and righteous indignation over his sister's honour, stumbles home with a few bruises. Some numbers later the classic battle is repeated as Frank Cheeryble defies the pimply youth from the employment agency for the honour of Nicholas's sweetheart. Then John Browdie gives us the comic version of this confrontation as he carries through the deception of Squeers on Smike's behalf, and the joke is that John does not use his enormous strength on this occasion, but his much slighter native wit.

Such heroes need worthy opponents to bring out the best in them. These are the villains:

The moving force of melodrama, however, is not the hero, as a rule a passive creature, but the villain. The villain thinks, chooses, initiates every action, alters his plans, makes new ones; the hero is merely the punching bag of the villain's brain, the pawn on his chessboard. The villain is a remarkably purposeful man: revenge on the hero, the acquisition of his money and property, and the possession (sometimes the death) of the heroine are his objectives, and with relentless single-mindedness he pursues them.... In the villain the darkness and violence of melodrama are incarnate. From the point of view of ability the villain should certainly be the hero. In melodrama he is a king, but a king who must die. 44

Booth then describes the black and white villains as above (p. 99). Again Nickleby is richly endowed since it boasts not only a primary villain and secondary villains, but understudies for each. When

Ralph's determination to revenge himself on Nicholas begins to lose its obsessional character as Dickens falls into the novelist's habit of probing character and providing motivation, after Kate's discomfiture at dinner, Sir Mulberry Hawk takes over Ralph's role as blind seeker after revenge, and Ralph retires into his machinations. Similarly, as Squeers begins to lose his sting after John Browdie has tricked him out of Smike, Arthur Gride appears to threaten Nicholas's new centre of emotional gravity. But,

...villains suffer contumely, exposure, imprisonment, loss of ill-gotten gains, and violent death at the hands of the hero, comic man, or a benevolent Nature. 45

The nature that reveals Smike's identity to Ralph can scarcely be described as benevolent, but certainly Ralph is destroyed by the combination suggested here of Nicholas, Newman Noggs, and the re-appearance of his natural son.

Throughout the first third of the novel Nicholas's adventures are particularly close to Booth's description of the career of the melodramatic hero:

Indeed the hero is always in trouble, and spends much of his time trying to clear his good name of crimes the villain has committed. Often he wanders perilously in different lands [Yorkshire], languishes in prison, or rots in the bandit's secret cave. In such cases it is the comic man who keeps an eye on the heroine, insults the villain, and overhears and frustrates his plots. The hero compensates for inherent inability to cope with the villain or make his way in the world by being enormously virtuous, defying and deriding the forces of evil, and uttering moral speeches of which he has a large stock. 46

When he comes back to London after his defiance of Squeers, Nicholas takes matters into his own hands and is thus preserved from the worst ineptitudes of his type. But he is entirely dependent on the assistance of comic man. Newman Noggs has kept his eye on the heroine and is able to give Nicholas information about his sister and his mother; he is responsible for giving Nicholas insight into Ralph's schemes, both for revenge and for Madeline's money and virtue.

Again, the novel is well-endowed. Nicholas has not only Newman Noggs to help him foil the villainous plots, but he has Miss LaCreevy to protect his mother. We may even see Miss LaCreevy as a kind of double of Newman's, but one who moves within the conventions of normal speech and gentility, and is therefore able to relate to Mrs. Nickleby in a useful way.

Once Newman is seen as the comic man of melodrama his function in the novel is much clearer:

The comedian-servant, artisan, or tradesman, usually a member of the working class and thus closely identified with his audience - is a friend or man-servant of the hero, and sometimes carries on the battle against villainy (though by comic means) in the absence or incapacity of his superior. His strength and energy can be astonishing.... In many ways he is much better at coping with the villain than the hero is, and is frequently entirely responsible for the triumph of virtue. He overhears the villain's plots, insults him, snatches the heroine from his clutches, and ends the play by killing him. 47

At the beginning of the novel Newman Noggs is down and out, in thrall to Ralph and a caricature of himself. Part of his misfortune may be attributed to his drinking but, though he has known better days and is not really a member of the working class, the basis for reader identification is broad because he is poor. As the novel proceeds Newman, like his master, begins to acquire the fuller dimensions of a novel character as he becomes Nicholas's friend and as we learn something of his history.

Scholes and Kellogg, in The Nature of Narrative, make a distinction between two kinds of dynamic characterization that may help to explain this evolution in certain Nickleby characters:

the developmental, in which the character's personal traits are attenuated so as to clarify his progress along a plot line which has an ethical bias, (as in Parzifal, The Faerie Queen Bk. 1, Pilgrim's Progress, Great Expectations, and The Power and the Glory); and the chronological, in which the character's personal traits are ramified so as to make more significant the gradual shifts worked in the

character during a plot which has a temporal basis. This latter kind of plotting and characterizing is highly mimetic and is perhaps the principal distinguishing characteristic of such realistic fictions as the novel, which does not emerge as a literary form until Western culture develops a time-consciousness sophisticated enough to make the kind of temporal discriminations which this sort of characterization requires. 48

It is perhaps not schematizing Nicholas Nickleby too much to say that the melodramatic plot, deriving from contemporary drama, employs developmental characterization. But the novel form, in which this melodrama is framed, then causes the treatment of certain characters to change to chronological characterization, to fill out and change, before our eyes, from flat to round. Miss LaCreevy, like Newman Noggs, is given both a past and a future towards the end of the novel. This places the miniaturist, that recorder of man's idealized self-dramatizations, firmly on the temporal plot line and accounts for her rounded character.

Most striking of these, however, is Kate Nickleby, and the degree to which she has become a mimetic character becomes apparent when we compare her both to her foil, Madeline Bray, and to her parody foils, the Infant Phenomenon and Morleena Kenwigs. At the beginning of the novel Kate is a stereotype of the well-brought-up nineteenth-century heroine. Her melodramatic affiliation is suggested by her very lack of character. Neither witty, like Elizabeth Bennett, sturdy, like Jeannie Deans, nor passionate beneath her demure mien, like the Brontë heroines to come, Kate at the beginning is an object, a piece of bric-à-brac, whose only sign of life is a tell-tale loyalty to the hero. Her path in life is quickly laid out in the formula Booth describes: "To separate hero and heroine is one of his [the villain's] fundamental tasks" and "A cardinal rule of melodrama is that at some point, usually early in the play, the heroine begins to suffer". Kate's initial suffering, her sensitivity to her crude surroundings at the Mantalins, seems more suitable to social

realism than to melodrama. It is not this, however, but the slaving old man, a foreshadowing both of Sir Mulberry and of Arthur Gride, that destroys her position and marks her as a heroine of melodrama. Similarly, at the Wititertlys her suffering becomes unbearable only when the attentions of Sir Mulberry are added to the inanities of her employer. Kate's role as melodramatic heroine is clearest as Sir Mulberry's pursuit at Ralph's dinner party drives her to defy her uncle, her only protector. Booth points to the melodramatic pattern:

In order to keep their heads above water, heroines, despite their natural feminine fears and weaknesses, have to develop qualities of pluck and courage, especially in defying and resisting the villain. 49

Kate's interview with Ralph nicely exemplifies this sturdy straightening of the back:

"Who's that?"

"Me," said Newman Noggs, looking in. "Your niece."

"What of her?" asked Ralph sharply.

"She's here."

"Here?"

Newman jerked his head towards his little room, to signify that she was waiting there.

"What does she want?" asked Ralph.

"I don't know," rejoined Newman. "Shall I ask?" he added quickly.

"No," replied Ralph. "Show her in! Stay." He hastily put away a padlocked cash-box that was on the table, and substituted in its stead an empty purse.

"There," said Ralph. "Now she may come in."

Newman, with a grim smile at this manoeuvre, beckoned the young lady to advance, and having placed a chair for her, retired; looking stealthily over his shoulder at Ralph as he limped slowly out.

"Well," said Ralph, roughly enough; but still with something more of kindness in his manner than he would have exhibited towards anybody else. "Well, my--dear. What now?"

Kate raised her eyes, which were filled with tears; and with an effort to master her emotion strove to speak, but in vain. So drooping her head again, she remained silent. Her face was hidden from his view, but Ralph could see that she was weeping.

"I can guess the cause of this!" thought Ralph, after looking at her for some time in silence. "I can--I can--"

guess the cause. Well! Well!" thought Ralph--for the moment quite disconcerted, as he watched the anguish of his beautiful niece. "Where is the harm? Only a few tears; and it's an excellent lesson for her, an excellent lesson."

"What is the matter?" asked Ralph, drawing a chair opposite, and sitting down.

He was rather taken aback by the sudden firmness with which Kate looked up and answered him.

"The matter which brings me to you, sir," she said, "is one which should call the blood up into your cheeks, and make you burn to hear, as it does me to tell. I have been wronged; my feelings have been outraged, insulted, wounded past all healing, and by your friends."

"Friends!" cried Ralph, sternly. "I have no friends, girl."

"By the men I saw here, then," returned Kate, quickly. "If they were no friends of yours, and you knew what they were,--oh, the more shame on you, uncle, for bringing me among them. To have subjected me to what I was exposed to here, through any misplaced confidence or imperfect knowledge of your guests, would have required some strong excuse; but if you did it--as I now believe you did--knowing them well, it was most dastardly and cruel."

Ralph drew back in utter amazement at this plain speaking, and regarded Kate with the sternest look. But she met his gaze proudly and firmly, and although her face was very pale, it looked more noble and handsome, lighted up as it was, than it had ever appeared before.

"There is some of that boy's blood in you, I see," said Ralph, speaking in his harshest tones, as something in the flashing eye reminded him of Nicholas at their last meeting.

"I hope there is!" replied Kate. "I should be proud to know it. I am young, uncle, and all the difficulties and miseries of my situation have kept it down, but I have been roused to-day beyond all endurance, and come what may, I will not, as I am your brother's child, bear these insults longer."

"What insults, girl?" demanded Ralph, sharply.

"Remember what took place here, and ask yourself," replied Kate, colouring deeply. "Uncle, you must--I am sure you will--release me from such vile and degrading companionship as I am exposed to now. I do not mean," said Kate, hurrying to the old man, and laying her arm upon his shoulder; "I do not mean to be angry and violent--I beg your pardon if I have seemed so, dear uncle,--but you do not know what I have suffered, you do not indeed. You cannot tell what the heart of a young girl is--I have no right to expect you

should; but when I tell you that I am wretched, and that my heart is breaking, I am sure you will help me. I am sure, I am sure you will!"

Ralph looked at her for an instant; then turned away his head, and beat his foot nervously upon the ground.

"I have gone on day after day," said Kate, bending over him, and timidly placing her little hand in his, "in the hope that this persecution would cease; I have gone on day after day, compelled to assume the appearance of cheerfulness, when I was most unhappy. I have had no counsellor, no adviser, no one to protect me. Mama supposes that these are honorable men, rich and distinguished, and how can I-- how can I undeceive her--when she is so happy in these little delusions, which are the only happiness she has? The lady with whom you placed me, is not the person to whom I could confide matters of so much delicacy, and I have come at last to you, the only friend I have at hand-- almost the only friend I have at all--to intreat and implore you to assist me."

"How can I assist you, child?" said Ralph, rising from his chair, and pacing up and down the room in his old attitude.

"You have influence with one of these men, I know," rejoined Kate, emphatically. "Would not a word from you induce them to desist from this unmanly course?"

"No," said Ralph, suddenly turning; "at least--that--I can't say it, if it would."

"Can't say it!"

"No," said Ralph, coming to a dead stop, and clasping his hands more tightly behind him. "I can't say it."

Kate fell back a step or two, and looked at him, as if in doubt whether she had heard aright.

"We are connected in business," said Ralph, poisoning himself alternately on his toes and heels, and looking coolly in his niece's face, "in business, and I can't afford to offend them. What is it after all? We have all our trials, and this is one of yours. Some girls would be proud to have such gallants at their feet."

"Proud!" cried Kate.

"I don't say," rejoined Ralph, raising his fore-finger, "but that you do right to despise them; no, you show your good sense in that, as indeed I knew from the first you would. Well. In all other respects you are comfortably bestowed. It's not much to bear. If this young lord does dog your footsteps, and whisper his drivelling inanities in your ears, what of it? It's a dishonorable passion. So be it; it won't last long. Some other novelty will spring

up one day, and you will be released. In the mean time--"

"In the mean time," interrupted Kate, with becoming pride and indignation, "I am to be the scorn of my own sex, and the toy of the other; justly condemned by all women of right feeling, and despised by all honest and honorable men; sunken in my own esteem, and degraded in every eye that looks upon me. No, not if I work my fingers to the bone, not if I am driven to the roughest and hardest labour. Do not mistake me. I will not disgrace your recommendation. I will remain in the house in which it placed me, until I am entitled to leave it by the terms of my engagement; though, mind, I see these men no more! When I quit it, I will hide myself from them and you, and, striving to support my mother by hard service, I will live, at least, in peace, and trust in God to help me."

With these words, she waved her hand, and quitted the room, leaving Ralph Nickleby motionless as a statue. (CD, 229-30)

Sir Mulberry's role as Ralph's surrogate, a typically Dickensian dispersal of facets of a central character through several minor characters, is suggested by Booth's comment:

The villain may be the primum mobile, but desire for the heroine generally causes him to set in motion the long train of melodramatic events. To separate hero and heroine is one of his fundamental tasks; that done, as it nearly always is, to win her by ardent wooing, threats, relentless persecution, and abduction becomes his end in life. 50

Should the critic suggest that all the Sir Mulberry and Lord Frederick incidents are included, in adherence to Mackenzie's journalistic aims (quoted in Dickens's preface to the first edition) merely as a reference to contemporary aristocratic hoodlums, he would be overlooking both the conventions of melodrama and melodrama's dark roots in repressed sexuality and in aggression. In Ralph Nickleby these forces are much more strongly repressed than in his younger and titled surrogate. But they haunt the book none the less, in the pathetic figure of Smike and in the kaleidoscope of ruined figures, Newman Noggs, Mantalini, Brooker, Gride, who have depended upon him and been reduced to destitution through his clever heartlessness.

After she has left the Wititterlys and been rescued from the Ralph-Sir Mulberry villainy Kate has served her melodramatic function

and begins to turn into a believable person. Her association with Miss LaCreevy and her patience with the most trying of mothers, as well as her sympathetic perception of Smike's feeling for her, are all, though sentimentalized, part of a realistic portrait in which Kate becomes a person who interacts with other characters, and with the reader, instead of playing a conventional role necessitated by the pattern of melodrama.

This change from stock melodrama to novel character scarcely occurs in Nicholas. In his protection of Smike, defiance of Squeers, defence of his sister's honour, and thrashing of Sir Mulberry Hawk Nicholas is just flexing his heroic young muscles. His real work in the story is the rescue of the second heroine, Madeline Bray.

By no means, then, is the heroine only the female equivalent of the hero. True, both are virtuous, both suffer, and both are rewarded with happiness, wealth, and the downfall of villainy. However, the melodramatic function of the heroine is an enlargement and intensification of that of the hero. Although the weaker vessel in one sense, in another her strength is far greater, and she is far more persecuted, far more suffering. Her predicaments are extreme, her agonies immeasurable. Most of the necessary sentimentalism and pathos attaches to the heroine, who is the emotional core of melodrama and very often the storm centre of its action. 51

Madeline's relationship to Kate in the pattern of the melodrama is clear in the person of her particular villain. Arthur Gride is a lecherous and repulsive version of Ralph; his associate, Madeline's father, abrogates his protective role for selfish reasons, just as Ralph does with Kate. Further, since neither Kate nor Madeline could be deprived of her virtue in a Dickens novel, nor could Kate marry Nicholas, one of them needed to have money to be robbed of.

The complicated and none too clear machinations of Bray-Gride-Nickleby vs. Cheeryble-Nickleby over securing Madeline's inheritance are equally suitable to the mode. It is interesting that in Oliver Twist, where the moral fable requires a clear antithesis of good and evil, the complex plotting and counter-plotting for Oliver's

inheritance, that is, Oliver's soul, are made perfectly clear. Here, where the failure of the villain's plots and the emotional excitement that accompanies the trickery are all-important, the scenes of the loss and recovery of the crucial documents are worked up for their own sake. There is much play of the comic grotesque, instead of the ponderous sermons through which Mr. Brownlow reveals the discovery in Oliver. The discovery, indeed, is not the climax of the story at all in Nickleby, for it merely makes Madeline rich. The real horror of her situation is not that she is poor but that she must marry Arthur Gride, and the emotional centre of the last part of the novel is the scene of her rescue, just as the emotional centre at the beginning was Nicholas's rescue of Smike, echoed in the re-rescue of Smike in the middle of the story by the hero's comic foil. Madeline's fateful wedding-day begins with her scbs, the only form of struggle she can put up against the villain.

What remains of a heroine's strength is consumed in a physical struggle with the villain, ended only by the arrival of help in the person of the hero, comic man, or some other benevolent character. Much melodrama is incomplete without this kind of scene, which is a classic moment of interaction between heroine, villain, and rescuer, where climactic tension is combined with the sudden reversal of an evil triumphant-goodness defeated situation, an anticipation of the end of the play, although it hardly ever occurs at the end. 52

Add to this interaction among villain, heroine, and rescuer, the heaven-sent timeliness of Bray's death, and we are surely safe in saying that we are dealing with a work that is intentionally cast in the melodramatic mode.

In contrast with Kate and Madeline, whose fathers and uncles let them down shamefully, the parody heroines, Morleena Kenwigs and the Infant Phenomenon, are only mildly ill-used by their sponsors. Crummles, while sending his girl-child down into a dark world of grotesques, as Frye points out,⁵³ thinks he is acting for her welfare since he cannot see around the edges of his obsession. Morleena,

the beautiful and talented repository of her mother's Mrs. Nickleby-like fantasies, is abandoned by the uncle whose wealth her gifts would have graced. Mrs. Kenwigs's concern with Morleena's hair and clothes are a nice parody of Mrs. Nickleby's quite proper concern with Kate's decorous appearance for Ralph's dinner. The social pretensions of the Kenwigs in general, and their expectation that their uncle will do something for them, provide, in spite of their being burlesqued in the condescending manner of a number of the Sketches, a dimension of parody to Mrs. Nickleby's already comic expectations.

Dickens's treatment of children in Nicholas Nickleby should be, in itself, an indication that he is using some of his characters as pawns in a larger scheme. Smike is a figure of pathos from beginning to end, and the frequency with which he is used to bring down a tearful curtain in the later numbers confirms his role in reinforcing pathetic effects. Booth comments:

On the whole, however, children are used as an additional source of emotional distress for the heroine and as objects of misery and pity in their own right. 54

Moreover Nicholas Nickleby is richly blessed in this particular child since, in addition to wringing the heroine's heart and his own hands, he also illustrates the evils of the Yorkshire schools and becomes the nemesis that helps to give Ralph's character the realistic touches of a past composed of mistaken emotional involvements leading to ironical regrets. In the terminology of New Comedy, Smike is the natural or fool who assists in the recognition. Like the apothecary in Romeo and Juliet whose lines he struggles so valiantly to master, Smike's role in the plot is minor, but essential.

The typical roles of melodrama, hero, heroine, villain(s), comic man, comic woman, pathetic child, with their various under-studies, replacements, and parodists, account for most of the major characters in Nicholas Nickleby. These roles are different from

those essential to the fairy tale, which are treated in detail in the chapter on Great Expectations. In the fairy tale we have a hero (dispossessed and often of uncertain parentage), heroine (usually complete with father to impose tasks on the hero), villain, a magic donor, and a magical helper. In the fairy tale the emphasis is on the hero's proving himself worthy of the heroine, and, even when he rescues her from danger (St. George and the Dragon), the emphasis is usually placed more strongly on his courage than on her plight. There is not the split-second timing, the act-now-or-the-girl-is-lost-for-ever excitement of melodrama. In melodrama, magic donors and magical helpers may exist in an attenuated form, as they do in the Cheerybles, but there is far more emphasis on timing; the rescue comes in the nick of time, as Newman eavesdrops and pieces things together just in time to rescue Madeline. The Cheerybles' help can scarcely be called magical; they offer Nicholas a job because he is an upright, well-spoken, gentlemanly young man. Convenient this may be, but it is not of the same order as providing him with a magic sword or a pebble that gives wise advice just when it is needed, or any of the other typical fairy-tale devices. Newman's role as comic man necessarily cuts him off from the role of magical helper. He extricates the hero from the tight spots engendered by the villain's plots but, being comic, he scarcely possesses the means to help in the transfiguration of the hero. And, finally, the hero of melodrama is not transfigured at all because he was right from the first.

Having observed the principal characters in their typical melodramatic roles we must now look at them, and at others in the novel in the conventional way. There are, generally speaking, three types of characters in Nickleby. First there are the stereotypes, such as the hero and heroine. Next comes a large group that I shall call caricatured norms, characters with a certain roundness to them, a past, or an element of surprise in their behaviour, but identified for the reader by the method of caricature. Finally there are the

humours or obsessed characters, also frequently identified through caricature, but differing from the norms in their lack of human feeling.

Nicholas and Kate are both stereotypes. Kate becomes something more than a stereotype in the second half of the novel as Madeline Bray takes over her role as heroine of melodrama, but Nicholas remains a stage hero, easily distinguished from the heroes of the other life-and-adventures novels by that staginess. He is not a pawn between the forces of good and evil as Oliver is. He can be counted on to combat evil and win. Though "not always blameless or agreeable", as Dickens pointed out in the 1867 preface, he is far from being the selfish and parasitical young gentleman of great expectations that Martin Chuzzlewit is. He neither needs a change of heart nor experiences one, merely a change of circumstances. We do not meet him as a child and therefore do not know him as we do David and Pip, and there is an air of unreality and staginess about him that David, as a young man, has nothing of, and that even Steerforth, because he lives so much in David's consciousness that we see him through David, does not suggest. Nicholas huffing about the old man next door, or making the final trip to see John Browdie, or taking Kate aside to remind her of the delicacy of their obligations where Frank Cheeryble is concerned, are all incidents that are related to his role as upright young hero. He is typical of his class, full of an earnest desire to make good at all costs and to do what is honourable, but he makes such a pother about it that we cannot believe in the reality of his feelings.

"There's genteel comedy in your walk and manner, juvenile tragedy in your eye, and touch-and-go farce in your laugh", said Mr. Vincent Crummies. "You'll do as well as if you had thought of nothing else but the lamps, from your birth downwards." (CD, 247)

The one place where we feel with Nicholas is in the scene where he defies and beats Squeers, quoted above. Dickens's sympathy

was actively engaged here. He was drawing on reality, not on other stories and plays, and in spite of the heavy-handed satire and burlesque the "poor monkey" in each of us feels that Nicholas's violence was deeply justified. Whatever latent sadism smoulders in readers who have endured parents or teachers such as Squeers rises to empathize with every blow. Melodrama of protest rides on just this feeling.

Even in these scenes dedicated to exposing and correcting an abuse, the consciousness of evil is precise and limited. These scenes have neither the nightmare quality nor the seductive jollity of the wicked society in Oliver Twist. The evil is the evil of misers, bullies, and stepfathers, evil emanating directly from individual human hearts, rather than the collective evil of tyrannical institutions or the cumulative, almost cosmic evil lurking in the dark labyrinths of Oliver's London. Instead, during Nicholas's and Kate's job experiences, Dickens satirizes mild, what one might call routine, social evils: political corruption, social pretension, usury. In later novels he treats these seriously, but here they merely serve to indicate the rough world where Nicholas and Kate, having lost their privileges, must make their way. The fruit of these experiences in the novel is the knowledge that some few people are very good and some other people are very bad. The reader, our hero, and our heroine are very good and hero and heroine offer flattering portraits for the reader's idealized self-image.

It is no vision of the perfect society, however, that animates Nicholas, and no search either for his identity or for the glory the overreacher yearns for that drives him forward. Rather, he makes the necessary transition from innocence to experience simply by rubbing shoulders with the world. Except for a moderately mature assessment of his financial status when he considers marrying Madeline, which must pass here for the assumption of manhood necessary to support his claims of gentlemanliness, Nicholas never arrives at any crisis of self-knowledge. He does not say, like Elizabeth Bennett

in Pride and Prejudice, "Until this moment I never knew myself," or like Dorothea Brooke at the end of Middlemarch, "I will try to find out what things cost". To do so, of course, would take him out of fantasy or off the boards to the ordinary streets where people have to make do with the selves that they are, rather than with some image they have created. No one could argue seriously, for instance, that Nicholas's upright confrontation of the Cheerybles over Frank's and Kate's romance is anything more than role-playing. Stage melodrama is just this - a figure silhouetted against a stereotype, playing out against it. The stereotype is itself an abstraction generalized from many particulars, and someone who is role-playing is thus at two removes from reality.

Because these characters are being used by the plot their nature is almost pre-determined. The next group, the caricatured norms, contains characters whose function does not necessarily limit them to one plane. Some of these, "little" Miss LaCreevy, Newman Noggs (grimacing), John Browdie (eating), Peg Sliderskew (sliding askew), Lord Frederick Verisopht (sucking his cane), and Ralph Nickleby (calculating, and abusing Newman), are as close to wounded, individualized characters capable of moving and surprising us, as this novel has. All of these caricatured norms are important characters for the plot, essential in the final triumph of the good society over the old and evil one. Each has an opportunity to choose a course of action and takes it, and we are shown enough of their behaviour to believe in them as slightly eccentric but feeling individuals.

Miss LaCreevy and Newman Noggs, for example, exist chiefly for their roles as confidantes and, in Newman's case, as comic man. But their message-bearing and linking jobs still leave them room to be something more than caricatures. Miss LaCreevy cannot be said to be a character of great richness, yet her common sense and her perception - of Smike's feeling for Kate, for instance - make her more human or realistic than Mrs. Kenwigs. Miss LaCreevy is Mrs. Nickleby's foil,

possessing in large measure concern for others, good sense, and the ability to come to terms with life as it is, qualities that Mrs. Nickleby so conspicuously lacks. Newman's effect on the reader is more interesting. At the beginning of the novel Newman Noggs is a freak, his convulsive movements and strangulated speech reminding the reader of a frightened bullfrog, in a Disney cartoon. These suggest Newman's descent from Pantaloon, a mute old man in the pantomime who talks by means of dumb show. As we see more of Newman his loyalty to Nicholas engages our sympathy, and his animosity to Ralph increases it. By the end of the story Newman has begun to take on enough human form that his appearance at the final celebratory dinner, in new clothes, is not incongruous at all. His idiosyncracies fade; that is, Dickens scarcely mentions them, as we come to know him better as a person.

But most of the cast of this populous novel in which "no fewer than one hundred and seventeen of the characters speak"⁵⁵ may be classed as humours. Arthur Gride is a miser whose obsession pulls levers to make the action go. Mrs. Nickleby, Squeers, and Vincent Crummles are all humours who, for various reasons, deserve individual comment. Fanny Squeers, the brothers Cheeryble, the Mantalini, Sir Mulberry Hawk and his hirelings, Pike and Pluck, and the Wittiterlys are all humours either because, like Pike and Pluck, they are single-mindedly in pursuit of one goal, or because they are obsessed with themselves in some particular role that takes over their lives. Fanny, the ill-natured and rejected flirt, cannot see herself as anything but a desirable member of a desirable family, rehearsing her role as heroine of a sentimental romance. The Cheerybles are obsessed with their own charitable motives, the Mantalini with their endlessly repeated ritual of flirtation, love, courtship, marriage and re-marriage ; Sir Mulberry Hawk with dominating and milking Lord Frederick; and the Wittiterlys with their position, of which Mrs. Wittiterly's delicate health is, according to their conceptions, a

function. All of these humour characters are significantly out of touch, not only with reality but with other people beyond the circle of their immediate obsessions. The Squeers family forms a Squeers unit as does the Crummles family a Crummles unit. Smike and the gentleman in small clothes, Mrs. Nickleby's tormentor, are naturals or fools, good and bad respectively, familiar figures in New Comedy.

The difference between a humour and a caricatured norm is a difference in kind. A humour is an obsessed character; he is distinguished from others by the cast of his mind. Because he is obsessed, the humour is flat. The caricature need not be flat; he is merely a character with some trait that the author exaggerates. He is not obsessed, as a humour is, and the author makes some tell-tale habit or some abnormality the key to recognizing him. Often this exaggeration serves the added purpose of suggesting motivation and background. As a humour, Arthur Gride's greed and lust serve the merely mechanical function of bringing Madeline's story to a head. But Ralph Nickleby, as a caricatured norm, is essential to the plot in more complex ways. He is a miser whose miserliness is shown to have arisen from his having been the loser in the sibling rivalry with his brother. His sadistic desire for revenge arises out of deprivation; this explains his hatred of Nicholas and is made to account for his almost-human chagrin over Kate's distress:

As the door of the vehicle was roughly closed, a comb fell from Kate's hair, close at her uncle's feet; and as he picked it up, and returned it into her hand, the light from a neighbouring lamp shone upon her face. The lock of hair that had escaped and curled loosely over her brow, the traces of tears yet scarcely dry, the flushed cheek, the look of sorrow, all fired some dormant train of recollection in the old man's breast; and the face of his dead brother seemed present before him, with the very look it bore on some occasion of boyish grief, of which every minutest circumstance flashed upon his mind, with the distinctness of a scene of yesterday. (CD, 152)

It is Ralph's hatred of Nicholas rather than his greed that brings about Nicholas's early adventures with Squeers. In the last analysis

both his hatred and his greed bring the whole Madeline-Gride edifice tumbling, and Madeline into our hero's arms. These two related passions also explain Ralph's early betrayal of his only son which works so tellingly against him that, finally, in a convincingly human way, he kills himself.⁵⁶ He is essential to the plot, but he has a life beyond his plot role. Whereas the humour originates in an obsession, an over-riding passion gone wrong, that is, something in the mind, the caricature originates in a visual or verbal representation of some kind of disproportion or distortion of the normal. Caricatures exist as people, committed either to loving or to hating, whereas the true humours have all the implacable impersonality of forces of nature.

The method of caricature is often applied to humours as a way of showing what their obsession is. The three great humours in this novel, Mrs. Nickleby, Squeers, and Crummles are all caricatured through their speech. All three, that is, are presented dramatically, as are the Mantalinis and the Kenwigs, and it may be that this concentration on verbal caricature is related to the "theatrical substratum", to use Brooks's term, that accounts for the plot structure and much of the characterization in Nickleby.

To describe Mrs. Nickleby as having the impersonality of a force of nature may sound strange, for few characters in Dickens's novels have been so much admired for their exuberance. For this very exuberance, indeed, Bergonzi finds Mrs. Nickleby and her fellow humours, Squeers and Crummles, "something of an embarrassment":

Some of the positive qualities in Nickleby are of a kind greatly relished by the Victorians, and still readily appreciated by unsophisticated readers; in particular, the richness of characterization. Here, however, the alert modern critic has nothing to say: he may secretly enjoy the exuberance of Squeers, of Mrs. Nickleby, the Kenwigs, Mr. Lillyvick, Mr. Mantalini, and Crummles and his associates; or he may, if he is sufficiently fastidious, find them something of an embarrassment. They are not, of course, realistic figures as we are used to finding them

in, say, Jane Austen or George Eliot; but on the other hand, the comparison with Jonson's comedy of humours which is sometimes made is only of limited value. There is a solidity and vitality about these characters which one would not expect to find in mere stage types; still less are they simply 'caricatures' as is sometimes alleged. Dickens, in creating these characters, seems to have had access to certain deep springs of unconscious life of a kind which are not available to more sophisticated novelists. 57

The first thing that must be said about Mrs. Nickleby, Squeers and Crummles is that, whether or not Dickens "had access to certain deep springs of unconscious life" in creating them, he had, as is well-known, access to the conscious life of his models. Two of these are well-documented and a third vouched for as typical of his profession, so that one is struck instead by the realism. It is not the realism of Jane Austen or George Eliot but of the great entertainers who, like Dickens, recognize the forces of irrationality that are at the root of so much human experience which is, of course, not real, ordinary, or shapely at all.

The forces of irrationality are certainly at work in Mrs. Nickleby and she herself suggests the dramatic inclinations of this novel, for her whole raison d'être is to be a comic spectacle. She is not, like Miss Bates in Emma whom she so much resembles, an agent for the moral awakening of the central character, nor is she, like Pickwick, transformed from humour to well-developed hero in the course of the novel. Rather she exists like some free spirit of comedy, endlessly amusing and irritating in herself and serving no purpose whatever. At the peak of her career in the novel she plays Columbine to her demonic Harlequin, the gentleman next door, who is most originally costumed in small-clothes and armed with vegetable marrows in place of a sword. Their "dance" immediately precedes the introduction into the story of three themes suggestive of pantomime, the stories of Frank and his Cinderella, of Ralph's rejection of Brooker, and of Nicholas's association with Madeline Bray.⁵⁸

Mrs. Nickleby's humour is her inconsequence about her consequence.

Driven from irrelevance to irrelevance by the vagaries of her associative memory, she becomes confused and overwhelmed in a world of objects. That the novel as genre is profoundly conditioned by the precise relationship of the "world" of the novel to the real world is a truism, and like so much else in Nickleby, Mrs. Nickleby is almost a parody of the novel character who defines himself by his relation to society, to his village, his house, or his lands, in short, to that which is outside of him. Mrs. Nickleby tries desperately to establish her identity through her past, if only she can get straight exactly what her past was. Her rambling monologues are always touched off by a name or an object and this leads to a chain of recollections in which the objects take over. Objects have taken over Mrs. Nickleby's life to such an extent that she is unable to comprehend Smike's circumstances. Nicholas's introduction of Smike to his mother, for example demonstrates her inability to respond to what is before her:

"Mr. Smike is from Yorkshire, Nicholas, my dear?" said Mrs. Nickleby, after dinner, and when she had been silent for some time.

"Certainly, mother," replied Nicholas. "I see you have not forgotten his melancholy history."

"O dear no," cried Mrs. Nickleby. "Ah! Melancholy, indeed! You don't happen, Mr. Smike, ever to have dined with the Grimble of Grimble Hall, somewhere in the North Riding, do you? said the good lady, addressing herself to him. "A very proud man, Sir Thomas Grimble, with six grown-up and most lovely daughters, and the finest park in the county." (CD, 277)

And in the late scene with Kate where Kate patiently tries to anchor her mother's motivations in people and in the present, we see how profoundly dislocated Mrs. Nickleby is:

Although Mrs. Nickleby had been made acquainted by her son and daughter with every circumstance of Madeline Bray's history which was known to them; although the responsible situation in which Nicholas stood had been carefully explained to her, and she had been prepared, even for the possible contingency of having to receive the young lady in her own house, improbable as such a result had appeared only a few

minutes before it came about; still, Mrs. Nickleby, from the moment when this confidence was first reposed in her, late on the previous evening, had remained in an unsatisfactory and profoundly mystified state, from which no explanations or arguments could relieve her, and which every fresh soliloquy and reflection only aggravated more and more.

"Bless my heart, Kate;" so the good lady argued; "if the Mr. Cheerybles don't want this young lady to be married, why don't they file a bill against the Lord Chancellor, make her a chancery ward, and shut her up in the Fleet prison for safety?--I have read of such things in the newspapers a hundred times. Or, if they are so very fond of her as Nicholas says they are, why don't they marry her themselves--one of them I mean? And even supposing they don't want her to be married, and don't want to marry her themselves, why in the name of wonder should Nicholas go about the world, forbidding people's banns?"

"I don't think you quite understand," said Kate, gently.

"Well I am sure, Kate, my dear, you're very polite!" replied Mrs. Nickleby. "I have been married myself I hope, and I have seen other people married. Not understand, indeed!"

"I know you have had great experience, dear mama," said Kate; "I mean that perhaps you don't quite understand all the circumstances in this instance. We have stated them awkwardly, I dare say."

"That I dare say you have," retorted her mother, briskly. "That's very likely. I am not to be held accountable for that; though, at the same time, as the circumstances speak for themselves, I shall take the liberty, my love, of saying that I do understand them, and perfectly well too; whatever you and Nicholas may choose to think to the contrary. Why is such a great fuss made because this Miss Magdalen is going to marry somebody who is older than herself? Your poor papa was older than I was, four years and a half older. Jane Dibabs--the Dibabses lived in the beautiful little thatched white house one story high, covered all over with ivy and creeping plants, with an exquisite little porch with twining honeysuckles and all sorts of things: where the earwigs used to fall into one's tea on a summer evening, and always fell upon their backs and kicked dreadfully, and where the frogs used to get into the rushlight shades when one stopped all night, and sit up and look through the little holes like Christians--Jane Dibabs, she married a man who was a great deal older than herself, and would marry him, notwithstanding all that could be said to the contrary,

and she was so fond of him that nothing was ever equal to it. There was no fuss made about Jane Dibabs, and her husband was a most honorable and excellent man, and everybody spoke well of him. Then why should there be any fuss about this Magdalen?" (CD, 448)

Her obsession with a story-book image of what is right and proper in this life, based on whatever clues she can pluck from the flood of memories of the past, has displaced her awareness of what this life is for herself and her children. Yet, as the story works itself out, Mrs. Nickleby's expectations for herself and for them (barring the perfidy of the gentleman in small-clothes and the lack of a successor to him) are, indeed, realized. Her role in the melodrama is that of comic woman and in her stubborn maintenance of her gentlewoman's role she does make it possible for her children to have their story-book romances and marriages, so appropriate to the dream world of this mode.

Wackford Squeers is a key figure in an important section of the novel and Dickens's portrait of him is interesting for its method. Squeers is the chief grotesque, the obsessed centre of the Squeers family whose other members share to some extent both his obsession and his grotesqueness. His name, a combination of "squint" and "peers", indicates the physical abnormality with which the grotesque has a strong affinity.⁵⁹ "Wackford" suggests the whacking that he gives the boys in his school and thus his brutality, the horrible or demonic aspect of his character. Kayser describes the grotesque as "an attempt to invoke and subdue the demonic aspects of the world".⁶⁰ Squeers's son, young Wackford, is fat and oily, his skin described in such a way as to suggest drops of grease perpetually forming on a shiny surface. Mrs. Squeers and Fanny, while not actually deformed, unless the wearing of curl papers counts as a deformity, are of a plainness that approaches deformity and associates them with the grotesque.

What we know of Squeers's prototype, William Shaw, and of his

school, bears out Dickens's method as Humphry House describes it:

...the telling details upon which the effect depends (as 'an onion twice a week and half a roll on Sundays') are always made in the most practical terms, and run parallel to the factual 'truth'. The exaggerated components are in the same medium as the thing that is being exaggerated, and from this the created world gets its great solidity. 61

Dickens makes the most of Squeers's (Shaw's) one eye. To the uninformed modern reader this is merely an example of the physical deformity that accompanies the grotesque. To the contemporary reader, however, the detail of the one eye would provide an example of Hogarthian caricature, recalling the Jones versus Shaw trial, during which, "Two boys who had each lost one eye, and one quite blind were also examined."⁶²

This visual caricature, suitable to the stage, is reinforced by verbal caricature. Notice the advertisement for Shaw's school in The Times and the use Dickens puts it to:

EDUCATION, by Mr. SHAW at BOWES ACADEMY, Greta-Bridge, Yorkshire - YOUTH are carefully INSTRUCTED in the English, Latin, and Greek languages, writing, common and decimal arithmetic, bookkeeping, mensuration, surveying, geometry, and navigation, with the most useful branches of the mathematics, and are provided with board, clothes, and every necessary, at 20 guineas per annum each. No extra charges whatever, doctor's bills excepted. No vacations except by the parents' desire....63

Squeers mindlessly recites his obsession, "At the delightful village of Dotheboys, near Greta Bridge in Yorkshire, where youth are boarded, clothed, booked, washed, furnished with pocket money, provided with all necessaries -" (CD, 21). Dickens's reference to the medical bills would make its satirical point with his readers who would remember that neglect of serious illnesses was one of the main abuses of the schools. Ralph Nickleby's introduction to Squeers provides a fine little scene where "the mentally telling details...are...made in the most practical terms, and run parallel to the factual truth":

Nicholas bowed, said he was very well, and seemed very much astonished at the outward appearance of the proprietor of Dotheboys Hall: as indeed he was.

"Perhaps, you recollect me?" said Ralph, looking narrowly at the schoolmaster.

"You paid me a small account at each of my half-yearly visits to town, for some years, I think, sir," replied Squeers.

"I did," rejoined Ralph.

"For the parents of a boy named Dorker, who unfortunately--"

"--unfortunately died at Dotheboys Hall," said Ralph, finishing the sentence.

"I remember very well, sir," rejoined Squeers. "Ah! Mrs. Squeers, sir, was as partial to that lad as if he had been her own; the attention, sir, that was bestowed upon that boy in his illness! Dry toast and warm tea offered him every night and morning when he couldn't swallow anything-- a candle in his bed-room on the very night he died--the best dictionary sent up for him to lay his head upon--I don't regret it though. It is a pleasant thing to reflect that one did one's duty by him."

Ralph smiled, as if he meant anything but smiling, and looked round at the strangers present. (CD, 23)

This method is not, of course, peculiar to Nicholas Nickleby, for the Dotheboys section is similar to the satirical picture of the workhouse in Oliver Twist, but the means of presentation differ in two important respects. First, their heroes are different. When Oliver asks for more he is a real hero, the young untried knight rising from table, demanding on behalf of all, and requiring recognition of his hitherto unknown special quality. But when Nicholas cries "Stop! "This must not go on!"...he is a melodramatic hero. He is an intruder in the Squeers milieu, straying in from the good society to battle against the forces of evil in the name of youth, strength, and compassion. The melodrama consists in the bringing in of the pure young hero with his high-sounding sentiments to right the wrongs. It must be observed that, though he manages to get away himself and to rescue Smike, the other boys will only suffer more for his efforts. Following the dramatic scene of defiance quoted above (pp.91-93), comes the farcical performance of comic woman two, Mrs. Squeers:

The boys - with the exception of Master Squeers, who, coming to his father's assistance, harassed the enemy in the rear - moved not, hand or foot; but Mrs. Squeers, with many shrieks for aid, hung on to the tail of her partner's coat, and endeavoured to drag him from his infuriated adversary; while Miss Squeers, who had been peeping through the key-hole in expectation of a very different scene, darted in at the very beginning of the attack, and after launching a shower of ink-stands at the usher's head, beat Nicholas to her heart's content: animating herself, at every blow, with the recollection of his having refused her proffered love, and thus imparting additional strength to an arm which (as she took after her mother in this respect) was, at no time, one of the weakest.

Nicholas, in the full torrent of his violence, felt the blows no more than if they had been dealt with feathers; but, becoming tired of the noise and uproar, and feeling that his arm grew weak besides, he threw all his remaining strength into half-a-dozen finishing cuts, and flung Squeers from him, with all the force he could muster. The violence of his fall precipitated Mrs. Squeers completely over an adjacent form; and Squeers striking his head against it in his descent, lay at his full length on the ground, stunned and motionless. (CD, 97)

Issues are not raised that "make the whole world of Jane Austen tremble" because our real belief in them has been adulterated by the farcical scenes between Nicholas and Fanny Squeers and by the humorous description of the educational method of Dotheboy's. To say this is not to underestimate the seriousness of Dickens's intention; he merely wished to wash his medicine down with humour. In his own words:

Depend upon it that the rascalities of those Yorkshire schoolmasters cannot be easily exaggerated, and that I have kept down the strong truth and thrown as much comicality over it as I could, rather than disgust and weary the reader with its fouler aspects. 64

How much more moving, one would have thought, would have been the letter of little John C. Dobson,⁶⁵ telling of chicken for dinner, combined with the ensuing bill for his grave stone, and the receipt from his father. But Dickens's narrative stance and the predominant form of the novel he had committed himself to, "of a similar character"

to Pickwick, precluded the use of the documentary form that appears to us, in the age of Naturalism, to make emotional material legitimate when it is true, if not when it is imagined.

Instead, Dickens uses the combination of pathos and humour appropriate to the melodramatic mode. Here is the alternation of tragedy and comedy mentioned by Dickens in chapter 17 of Oliver Twist and referred to earlier; Dickens's comments are extended with some precise discriminations by William F. Axton:

The principal dramatic effect of melodrama, as in many genres contemporary with it, depends upon a sharp contrast and mingling of exaggerated moods; but where pantomime, say, relied on the mixture of realism and fantasy which creates the grotesque, melodrama rather contrasts or fuses pathos, sentiment, and suspense with farce. Yet all these dramatic forms exploited striking alternations of scene and mood, a pronounced burlesque approach to comedy, parallel plotting, and the same preoccupation with masking and unmasking, especially, in the case of melodrama, with the hidden relationships between disguised characters and with the transparent mask. 66

The fusing of "pathos, sentiment, and suspense, with farce" summarizes the effects deployed in the scene of the fight between Nicholas and Squeers. This scene, quoted in full above, was described as an example of the melodrama of protest and melodrama of protest has been compared with a political rally.⁶⁷ A political rally nicely suggests the mixture of righteous indignation, flamboyance, and genuine appeal to emotion that we find in this section of Nicholas Nickleby, but it is very different from the effect produced in Oliver Twist where a similar method of characterization is used, that is, the caricature of Bumble and the Board, to produce satire.

In his own description of the violent swings of mood to be found in melodrama, quoted above, Dickens writes that "The actors in the mimic life of the theatre, are blind to violent transitions and abrupt impulses of passion or feeling." The comparison between real life and "the mimic life of the theatre", written just before the agreement for Nickleby was signed, may be the whole point of the

novel. For if Mrs. Nickleby is to Mrs. John Dickens as Wackford Squeers is to William Shaw, then the third ratio of the equation must be Mr. Vincent Crummles to a typical strolling actor-manager of the period between 1815 and 1830. The centrality of the Crummles section has already been noted. Its relevance is no less central. Far from being the hilarious exaggeration the uninitiated reader takes it to be, it is rather an accurate journalistic account, as is shown by J. Harvey Darton in Vincent Crummles, His Theatre and His Times:

The preposterous thing about the Crummles scenes in Nicholas Nickleby, however, is that they are not a parody at all. They are transcribed direct from the real life of the stage of Dickens's boyhood. The pomp, the magic circumstances, the seriousness of the provincial theatre are not in the least degree exaggerated, even though Dickens obviously enjoyed writing about them. For instance, the actor who blacked himself all over to play Othello veritably existed. Neither the London manager nor the comic countryman is an invention. Dickens was simply drawing upon his inexhaustible memory and his passionate vision of detail, and possibly using - Macready hints it in his Diaries - a good collection of newspaper cuttings. 68

That the Crummles scenes are not a parody of the country acting circuit makes them more convincingly a parody of the material of the novel. The novel is a comic domestic melodrama, and the Crummles troupe parodies the roles of its characters. This gives an extra dimension to the novel, as does the play of the rude mechanicals to A Midsummer Night's Dream.

The members of the troupe are shadows of the main characters: Vincent Crummles, who welcomes Nicholas and accepts his friend, finds him a place to live and invites him home, is a comic foretaste of the brothers Cheeryble, the good fathers who shelter Nicholas after his battle with Squeers-Ralph, who play the bad or destructive fathers. Mrs. Crummles and Mrs. Grudden play the roles of Mrs. Nickleby and Miss LaCreevy, respectively in Nicholas's life. And the Infant Phenomenon provides a kind of emblem for the journeys that both Kate and Madeline Bray must make as they walk the moral tightrope between

self-respect and filial duty. Mr. Lillyvick unites the world of the Kenwigs to the Crummles's world through his enchantment with Henrietta Pettowker. This relationship, too, follows the rule of parody since Lillivick, though pompous, is not greedy or evil like Ralph and Arthur Gride, while Miss Pettowker's gifts are a parody of the genuine graces of Kate and Madeline.

The position of Nicholas within the Crummles company is reminiscent of his position within the Squeers milieu as the promising upstart whose success unsettles the old hands. Nicholas is careful not to let Miss Snevellicci trap him as Fanny Squeers had done; he is acquiring some practical education. Since the Crummles world is a good world Nicholas does not come into conflict with Mr. Crummles himself but only with Mr. Lenville, who resents his success. This conflict, again, is a parody of the conflict with Squeers and a preparation for the more consequential conflict with Sir Mulberry Hawk and with Ralph. When Nicholas meets the Crummles again and Mr. Crummles is about to make positively the last appearance with "a new melo-drama" the timing is suggestive. The new melodrama on stage would do well if it managed to outdo the off-stage rescue of Madeline that begins at this point and is to be the crown of Nicholas's career.

There is similar suggestiveness in Dickens's use of an apposite play to foreshadow his story. Mr. Crummles's choice of Romeo and Juliet for Nicholas's first performance is an appropriate reflection of the novel; Mrs. Nickleby reminds us of the nurse, Ralph of Old Capulet, and Kate of Juliet. Smike becomes a true apothecary; knowledge of his identity and his death is the final bitterness that leads to Ralph's hanging himself from the trap door that had terrified Smike as a child. Split-second timing works better for Madeline Bray (melodrama of triumph) than it does for Juliet (melodrama of defeat), but the audience could not be sure that it would. Dickens's use of the play within the play is a skillful and subtle method of arousing and directing the reader's interest.

The Crummles section has been worrying to critics, several of whom have seen it as the peak of Nicholas's picaresque adventuring. If we see it rather as an example of "the mimic life of the theatre" that Dickens is both enjoying and laughing at with his readers, it points the way to an appreciation of the author's conscious use of the melodramatic mode in this underestimated novel which then becomes more artful and more fun than "alert modern critics", to use Bergonzi's phrase (p.122, above) have found it.⁶⁹

Turning now to setting, we find two distinct types of background in Nicholas Nickleby. First, there are the many representative settings where the name of a street, such as Regent Street, or Thames Street, serves as a sign to call up an appropriate set of associations. Or, a precise list of stage props gives the reader a setting such as might have been lifted from a set of stage directions that Shaw or Ibsen might have written.

When we think of setting in melodrama we think of the heroine shivering with her babe in a snowstorm, or poised on a rocky ledge between the mountain cataract and a worse fate standing behind her. The colourful scenic effects which were the glory of the Victorian stage in the years after 1850, and which contributed to the sensational quality of such plays as The Colleen Bawn and Irving's production of The Bells, were preceded and prepared for by increasing realism in the more manageable stage-settings of domestic melodrama. According to Michael Booth: "It is with domestic melodrama that the curious paradox begins of a mostly unreal content combining with increasingly realistic settings, a dream world disguised as a true one."⁷⁰ The description of Dotheboys Hall has this solidity. When Nicholas arrives, it is deep winter and he sees "a long, cold-looking house, one story high, with a few straggle out-buildings behind" (CD, 48). Inside, Squeers bolts the door to keep it shut and ushers him into "a small parlour scantily furnished with a few chairs, a yellow map hung against the wall and a couple of tables; one of which bore some

preparations for supper; while, on the other, a tutor's assistant, a Murray's grammar, half a dozen cards of terms, and a worn letter directed to Wackford Squeers, Esquire, were arranged in a picturesque confusion" (CD, 49). The stage is set for his introduction to Mrs. Squeers and the young noblemen of Dotheboys Hall.

In Oliver Twist, by contrast, we neither know what the workhouse looks like, nor have a three-dimensional picture of Sowerberry's, but we feel the terror of the small boy locked up for the night with the coffins. In David Copperfield we know in detail what Mr. Peggotty's house is like, but it is described with the emotion that distorts, and it is used as a touchstone to emotion at various times during the novel. Where these two novels carefully internalize settings, or make clear that the settings are seen through certain eyes, the settings of Nicholas Nickleby provide, instead, notation to the reader. The series of interiors that the Nickleby's inhabit is carefully described: "old and gloomy and black", "in one were a few chairs, a table, and old hearth-rug, and some faded baize." Again this is objective and specific, different from the generalized descriptions of Pip's lodgings in the Temple, or of David's room, or Fagin's den, all of which are given emotional atmosphere. Here we have chairs and tables and rugs, a representative stage-setting that indicates decent, spare poverty. The details are carefully chosen to create the right background effect.

In contrast, the wealth of Ralph Nickleby's house leaves details to the imagination. It is "crammed with beautiful and luxurious things", "the softest and most elegant carpets, the most exquisite pictures; the costliest mirrors..." (CD, 195). Again a formula, "rich city gentleman's house", would describe it. Details could be left to the imagination of a reading public newly literate and blessed with mass circulation newspapers where they could read about domestic scenes of the wealthy and titled whose rich interiors must have seemed to them another kind of fairy land.

While Ralph's house is located in Golden Square, and can be

found on the map, it lacks locality. The offices of Dombey and Son, in contrast, are precisely located: "The Royal Exchange was close at hand; the Bank of England...was their magnificent neighbour. Just around the corner stood the rich East India House..." (CD, 21) This is both geographically precise and thematically suggestive. The world of Dombey is solid and lasting, that of Nickleby generalized and shifting, like a backdrop.

Although a few members of the graver professions live about Golden Square, it is not exactly in anybody's way to or from anywhere. It is one of the squares that have been; a quarter of the town that has gone down in the world, and taken to letting lodgings. (CD, 4)

And "The Square in which the counting-house of the brothers Cheeryble was situated...was a sufficiently desirable nook in the heart of a busy town like London..."(CD,291). Deeply as Tim Linkinwater is engaged in the life of this square it is not identified beyond a general description appropriate to any city square. We are told that Kate walks with Ralph toward Cavendish Square when she is to work for the Mantalinis, that Miss LaCreedy's studio is in the Strand, that Lord Frederick and Sir Mulberry Hawk are "reclining listlessly" in a handsome suite of private apartments in Regent Street, and that, when Newman Noggs is leading Kate and Mrs. Nickleby to the home Ralph has provided, they "stopped in front of a large old dingy house in Thames Street: the door and windows of which were so bespattered with mud, that it would have appeared to have been uninhabited for years" (CD, 82). Like Cadogan Place, appropriately adjacent and looking up to Belgrave Square where the Wititterlys play their arriviste games, these places are simply sign posts that signal sets of associations appropriate to the district. They might as well be stage directions saying "another part of the forest" or "smart city house", or "slum".

The exceptions to this generalization of background are certain interiors, Ralph Nickleby's and Arthur Gride's houses, which are those

of successful and unsuccessful miser respectively, and the house where Newman Noggs and the Kenwigs live. In this "by-gone, faded, tumble-down street, with two irregular rows of tall meager houses" (CD, 99) the houses are described with so much particularity that the very gait of the hens pecking outside is "in keeping with the ugly habitations of their owners" (CD, 100). The stairs and landings of this mansion are symbolically furnished in keeping with the degrees of wealth and poverty of their respective tenants. First floor has a spare old mahogany table - real mahogany; the second story, a couple of old deal chairs with that belonging to the back room being shorn of a leg and bottomless; the story above, a worm-eaten wash-tub; and the garret landing, two crippled pitchers and some broken blacking-bottles. This, though detailed in comparison with other settings in the novel, is not the Biedermeier world that presents "the case of" a character defined by his accumulated possessions, but rather the symbolic setting of the stage where an object stands, as at the narrow end of a megaphone, for a whole set of congruent surroundings that stretch out in expanding lines behind it.

In The Old Curiosity Shop, by contrast, "Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Quilp resided on Tower Hill; and in her bower on Tower Hill Mrs. Quilp was left to pine the absence of her lord"..(CD, 17). While Tower Hill would give a contemporary reader sociological data to be inferred about its inhabitants, it is not a picture that, like the stairs and landings of Noggs's house, a choreographer might readily sketch for a backdrop. Instead it is the language of fairy tale, where the words "tower", "bower" and "lord", all nouns, all poetic, are charged with associations that measure power and good and evil, and carry strong sexual weight. But in Nickleby the cottage provided by the Cheerybles is simply a pretty cottage with a perfectly tended garden, evidence that the fortunate recipients of the Cheeryble paternalism are worthy of their good fortune, which the cottage represents.

Reading Nicholas Nickleby one is reminded again and again of The Sketches. Instead of the oppressive labyrinthine London streets of Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby has a series of little worlds. If the poor are present, they are there almost by implication; hundreds of seamstresses form a backdrop to Kate, as hundreds of young men with their way to make move in shadow behind Nicholas. Indeed some part of the vitality and freedom of this healthy, young man's book comes from the sense of movement and freedom as we are constantly shifting from one to another of these little worlds, each a scene with a setting and a life of its own. The total effect is not unlike that of a diorama.

If the typical settings of melodrama are either representative or conscientious in their realism the typical rhetoric is extreme and passionate. Nicholas's confrontation with Squeers is full of high-sounding phrases and desperate intent. No one in this novel speaks in a normal voice; he is either dramatizing some emotion, breathless with crisis, or playing a role. In case we should miss the melodramatic quality of, say, Nicholas's speeches and sentiments, our attention is drawn to them by the parody in the Crummles section: "Object of my scorn and hatred!" said Mr. Lenville, "I hold ye in contempt" (CD, 236); "Farewell, my noble, my lion-hearted boy!" (CD, 248). The rhetoric of melodrama is merely the language of excess, and not inappropriate to the extreme situations melodrama manufactures. It becomes ludicrous, as in these examples, when the language is applied to something less than chastity-or-ruin, life-or-death crises.

Melodrama acts out our fantasies, freed from restraints of humdrum reality. In our imaginations we are the heroes of every adventure, blameless victims of any mishap. Our identification with hero and victim applauds them emotionally. Where the situation allows, even a sophisticated reader feels, as in Nicholas's defiance of Squeers, or in the contemplation of Madeline Bray's projected fate, a frisson that welcomes extravagant expression. In both of these instances

Dickens manages to engage us, whether the characters are fully-developed or not, because he presents an assault on real sensibilities that it is healthy and right to protect.

The language of melodrama may find expression, in a plot situation typical of its nineteenth-century heyday, in Nicholas's speech at the rescue of Madeline Bray

"Aye!" said Nicholas, extending his disengaged hand in the air, "hear what he says. That both your debts are paid in the one great debt of nature. That the bond, due to-day at twelve, is now waste paper. That your contemplated fraud shall be discovered yet. That your schemes are known to man, and overthrown by Heaven. Wretches, that he defies you both to do your worst!" (CD, 447)

Or, in a situation typical of the 1590's, in Tamburlaine's

Is it not passing brave to be a king
And ride in triumph through Persepolis!

where fantasies are also carried on a current of emotionally charged language. One may prefer the speeches of Marlowe to the posturings of Dickens's characters, but it is unfair not to recognize that they are in the same melodramatic stream.

There is another, an everyday language, that takes more account of exhaustion and obstacles and small cowardices. Shortly after Marlowe's time a real monarch commented that "To be a king and wear a crown, is a thing more glorious to them that see it than it is pleasant to them that bear it..."⁷¹ The two sentiments and their forms of expression, Tamburlaine's dream and Elizabeth's reality, would be separated only in highly disciplined works of art. In Dickens's "loose baggy monsters" they occur together. The predominance of one kind of rhetoric over another is an indication of the predominant mode.

Although I have argued that the dominant mode of Nickleby is melodrama, there is a movement towards something else. Ralph Nickleby is certainly more than the Black Ralph of melodrama. As he hands Kate into the coach and sees his younger brother's face in hers, in the scene quoted above, he is aware of the rejection and

envy that have made him what he is. When Kate comes to see him at his office, Ralph is far from the single-minded, black-hearted villain of the extravagant melodramatic mode:

"I can guess the cause of this!" thought Ralph, after looking at her for some time in silence. "I can--I can--guess the cause. Well! Well!" thought Ralph--for the moment quite disconcerted, as he watched the anguish of his beautiful niece. "Where is the harm? Only a few tears; and it's an excellent lesson for her, an excellent lesson." (CD, 229)

In these scenes and in the ones dramatizing the thoughts that precede his suicide, particularly those of his remorse for Smike, Ralph moves toward a kind of dignity, like Richard's before Bosworth, that lifts him out of melodrama. No longer the whole-hearted villain, Ralph begins to show the symptoms of divided, tragic man.

Kate also moves beyond her stereotype in melodrama. The innocent country girl unprotected in the grim city and exposed not only to its follies but to the advances of vicious and profligate young noblemen, is part of "the dogma of melodrama".⁷² But after her defiance of Ralph Kate becomes more like the heroine of a novel. When Nicholas protects and shelters her with his rewards from the Cheerybles she is no longer simply an endangered species. She does not have to marry or starve. Her patient Griselda role with Mrs. Nickleby, her distress over the strength and hopelessness of Smike's attachment, and, most of all, her failure to realize by herself that Frank Cheeryble is forbidden fruit for a girl in her position, all add individuality. Too, they give rise to scenes like the one in which she comforts her mother who reflects, as she prepares for the Cheeryble's visit to her diminished home,

with bitterness of spirit on the absence of a silver teapot with an ivory nob on the lid, and a milk-jug to match, which had been the pride of her heart in days of yore, and had been kept from year's end to year's end wrapped up in wash-leather on a certain top shelf which now presented itself in lively colours to her sorrowing imagination.

"I wonder who's got that spice-box," said Mrs. Nickleby,

shaking her head.

"It used to stand in the left-hand corner, next but two to the pickled onions. You remember that spice-box, Kate?"

"Perfectly well, mama."

"I shouldn't think you did, Kate," returned Mrs. Nickleby, in a severe manner, "talking about it in that cold and unfeeling way! If there is any one thing that vexes me in these losses more than the losses themselves, I do protest and declare," said Mrs. Nickleby, rubbing her nose with an impassioned air, "that it is to have people about me who take things with such provoking calmness!"

"My dear mama," said Kate, stealing her arm round her mother's neck, "why do you say what I know you cannot seriously mean or think, or why be angry with me for being happy and content? You and Nicholas are left to me, we are together once again..." (CD, 349-50)

As the novel moves into its final third, the melodrama of the Nicholas-Madeline theme is relieved less by the farce and burlesque episodes that provided the counterpoint to intensity in the earlier chapters than by occasional domestic scenes, such as this, where the language of emotion is the language of spice-boxes and of gardens tended out of special love, and of the shrewd observations of Miss LaCreevy, rather than of wills and plots, vengeance and fatal duels. This building-up of the every-day life of Mrs. Nickleby and Kate helps to make the wish-fulfillment ending, appropriate both to melodrama and to New Comedy, acceptable.

A happy ending, even though it is in keeping with Mrs. Nickleby's absurd fantasies, is essential to this melodrama of triumph. As Michael Booth says,

An idealization and simplification of the world of reality, it is in fact the world its audiences want but cannot get. Melodrama is therefore a dramatization of this second world, an allegory of human experience dramatically ordered, as it should be rather than as it is. 73

This is not to be confused with the happily-ever-after dream of the fairy tale. The climax of the fairy tale is not the simple triumph of good over bad, but a moment of perception or recognition that transforms surface poverty to riches appropriate to its moral worth.

The Beast becomes a prince because Beauty loves him. The fairy tale is inside-out reality, the nap on the velvet, spiritually and emotionally realistic beneath a patently extreme exterior ("the richest king", "the ugliest old woman"). Melodrama, on the other hand, floats just above the head in a fantasy world of daydreams, where self-knowledge is wrapped in a pretty box that the character may constantly save to be opened on some rainy day that never comes for him if he is born good. Thus Nicholas learns much about the world and its ways; he becomes a rich merchant who has made his way in heroic and providentially assisted fashion, but he does not grow as David Copperfield does, or change, like Pip, and of himself he learns, and needs to learn, not a jot.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

1. Peter Brooks, The Melodramatic Imagination, Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess (New Haven and London, 1976), Preface, ix.
2. Romeo and Juliet is not usually classed as a melodrama, but rather as a tragedy that fails. Smith argues, convincingly, that it is more accurate to see Romeo and Juliet as an example of melodrama of defeat because the hero and heroine fall through an accumulation of accidents, rather than through a flaw in either of their characters. The tragic dramatist, he points out, keeps forces such as those that destroy the young lovers in the background. Aristotle would have considered their deaths shocking, rather than tragic. See James L. Smith, Melodrama (Methuen, 1973), pp. 61-66.
3. F.J. Harvey Darton, Vincent Crummies: His Theatre and His Times (London, 1926).
4. Philip Collins's Bibliography lists the following:
 - 'Bos' [T.P. Prest?]. Nickelas Nickelbery: containing the adventures of the family of Nickelbery, embellished with forty-two engravings. [1838?]. In weekly and monthly pts. Onwhyn, T. Thirty-two illustrations to Nicholas Nickleby. [1838-9].
 - 'Guess'. Scenes from the life of Nickleby married, with 22 plates by Quiz. 1840.
 - Stirling, E. Nicholas Nickleby: a farce. [1838] (in B.N. Webster, Acting drama), Leipzig 1841 (in L. Hilsenberg, Modern English comic theatre). Produced 19 Nov. 1838. The ptd text contains a preface and dedication to Dickens.
 - The fortunes of Smike: or a sequel to Nicholas Nickleby. nd (in B.N. Webster, Acting drama), Leipzig 1841 (in L. Hilsenberg, Modern English comic theatre). Produced 2 March 1840.
 - Simms, H. Nicholas Nickleby: a drama in four acts. Stirling's adaptation is described in a letter to Forster [? 23 November 1838] Letters I Pilgrim, pp. 459-60, 460, fn. 3. Dickens wrote to Edmund Yates praising the adaptation, though Forster records that he was only "more or less satisfied with individual performances, such as Mr. Yates's Quilp or Mantalini and Mrs. Keeley's Smike or Dot...". Ley, p. 321.
5. Jerome Meckier, "The Faint Image of Eden: The Many Worlds of Nicholas Nickleby" in Dickens Studies Annual, I, Ed. Robert B. Partlow, Jr. (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1970), p. 136.
6. Sylvère Monod, Dickens the Novelist (Norman, 1968), p. 152.

7. J. Hillis Miller, Charles Dickens (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), p. 92.
8. Miller, p. 90.
9. Bernard Bergonzi, "Nicholas Nickleby" in Dickens and the Twentieth Century, ed. John Gross and Gabriel Pearson (London, 1962), p. 75.
10. Richard Hannaford, "Fairy Tale Fantasy in Nicholas Nickleby", Criticism 16 (1974): 247-59.
11. J.K. Fielding, Charles Dickens (London, 1958), p. 42.
12. Bergonzi, p. 67.
13. Stuart Miller, The Picaresque Novel (Cleveland, 1967), p. 28.
14. Steven Marcus, Dickens: From Pickwick to Dombey (New York, 1965), p. 93 fn.
15. Hannaford, pp. 249-50.
16. Michael R. Booth, English Melodrama (London, 1965), p. 14.
17. J.R.R. Tolkein, "On Fairy Stories", The Tolkein Reader (New York, 1966), p. 22. Quoted by Hannaford, p. 249.
18. Bergonzi, p. 69.
19. Frank Rahill, The World of Melodrama (Pennsylvania, 1967), p. xiv. Quoted in James L. Smith, Melodrama (London, 1973), p. 5.
20. Robert Bechtold Heilman, "Tragedy and Melodrama" in Tragedy: Vision and Form. Ed. Robert W. Corrigan (San Francisco, 1965), pp. 245-57.
21. James L. Smith, Melodrama (London, 1973), pp. 7-8.
22. Smith, p. 8.
23. Smith, pp. 8-9.
24. Smith, p. 9.
25. Smith, p. 9.
26. Smith, p. 73.
27. Smith, p. 56.
28. Tatler, 18 Oct. 1709. Quoted by Smith, p. 56.
29. Quoted by Smith, p. 57.
30. Smith, p. 15.
31. Boz Proclamation, 28 Feb., 1838.
32. J.W.T. Ley, ed., The Life of Charles Dickens by John Forster (London, 1928), p. 133.
33. Letters I Pilgrim, pp. 658n-659.
34. Letters I Pilgrim, p. 328 (3 Nov., [1837]).

35. Booth, p. 18.
36. Northrop Frye, "Dickens and the Comedy of Humors" in Experience in the Novel, ed. Roy Harvey Pearce (New York and London, 1968), pp. 52-53. This definition is given in more detail in A Natural Perspective (New York, 1965), pp. 72-78.
37. Bergonzi, p. 66.
38. G.K. Chesterton, Charles Dickens (London, 1914), p. 89.
39. Dickens and the Twentieth Century ed. John Gross and Gabriel Pearson (London, 1962), p. 3.
40. Gross and Pearson, p. 6.
41. Smith, p. 18.
42. Booth, pp. 15-16.
43. Booth, pp. 16-17.
44. Booth, p. 18.
45. Booth, p. 20.
46. Booth, p. 17.
47. Booth, pp. 33, 34, 35.
48. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (New York, 1966), p. 169.
49. Booth, p. 26.
50. Booth, p. 28.
51. Booth, p. 30.
52. Booth, p. 28.
53. Frye, "Dickens and the Comedy of Humors" (above), pp. 74-75.
54. Booth, p. 32.
55. Monod, p. 149.
56. See Introduction to Nicholas Nickleby (Harmondsworth, 1978), p. 25, fn. Again, I would suggest that Ralph has by this time become a character in a novel, rather than the typical miser of melodrama.
57. Bergonzi, p. 66.
58. Dickens was working on the Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi just before beginning Nicholas Nickleby. The Grimaldi Preface is dated February, 1838. The first number of Nicholas Nickleby was published in April, 1838. Both Joseph Grimaldi and his father, Guiseppi, played in the pantomime at the Royal Court for many years.

59. Philip Thomson, The Grotesque (London, 1972), p. 9. According to Eric Partridge's Dictionary of the Underworld (London, 1949) "queer" means "false, counterfeit money". The idea of pretense and falsification as a source of roguery is suggested by all combinations. Michael Slater points out that Squeers's acting, the "...ludicrously clumsy act of being a moral schoolmaster..." is what links him originally to the rest of the novel. Introduction to Nicholas Nickleby (Harmondsworth, 1978), pp. 14-15.
60. Wolfgang Kayser, On the Grotesque in Art and Literature, tr. Ulrich Weisstein (New York, Toronto, 1966), p. 188.
61. Humphry House, The Dickens World (London, 1942), p. 221.
62. See "Shaw Academy Trials" The Dickensian, Oct. 1915, pp. 262-3.
63. Times Advertisement, Saturday, July 4, 1829.
64. Letters I Pilgrim, To Mrs. S.C. Hall, 29 December 1838, p. 481.
65. See Dobson letter, Dickens House.
66. William F. Axton, Circle of Fire (Lexington, 1966), p. 25.
67. Smith, p. 72.
68. Darton, Introduction, p. xviii.
69. This point has been made recently by Michael Slater in his Introduction to the Penguin edition of Nicholas Nickleby (Harmondsworth, 1978), p. 28. In spite of his appreciation of the "theatricality and role-playing that are the living heart of Nicholas Nickleby" Slater appears to miss the element of fun in Dickens's treatment for he comments that "the extreme melodramatic mode of the novel would still not matter, however, if...". The point is suggested, too, in Geoffrey Tillotson's comments on Nickleby in A View of Victorian Literature (Oxford, 1978), pp. 140-41.
70. Booth, p. 120.
71. Speech of Elizabeth in Answer to Parliament's Protest on Monopolies, November 30, 1601.
72. Booth, p. 126.
73. Booth, p. 14.

The Life and Adventures of MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

"Your homes the scene, yourselves the actors, here!"¹

If Nicholas Nickleby learns nothing of himself in his triumphant progress through his melodrama, it is largely because this virtuous young hero has nothing to learn. The eponymous hero of Martin Chuzzlewit, in contrast, plays an almost minor role in his story, but the lesson he learns is all-important to its theme. If we compare Martin with the heroes of Dickens's other single-hero novels, we find interesting variations on the same distinction. Oliver's natural goodness is almost supernatural, but for much of his story he is an innocent pawn in the battle between good and evil forces. Martin, though with much good in his nature, has to experience a change of heart before he becomes as good as Oliver and Nicholas are to begin with. This change does not occur until nearly two-thirds of the way through the novel; until that time he is blocked, held in stasis, by a combination of the selfishness bred in him as a member of the Chuzzlewit family and of the manipulations the members of that family practise on him. Since the genealogy at the beginning clearly tells us that the Chuzzlewits are representative of man in general, Martin's individual conquest of the selfish part of his nature, conveniently paralleled by a similar growth in his grandfather, is a portrait of a man learning to be good in a selfish world. We must distinguish, again, between Martin and David Copperfield. David, the feeling subject of a Bildungsroman, does not experience a dramatic change of heart but a growing, a gradual absorption of experiences from which he learns, that enables him to accommodate his own nature to the demands of a not un-benevolent society. The society Martin encounters, both in his own representative family and in America, is the opposite of benevolent and much of the novel is designed to say so.

That Martin Chuzzlewit is satirical in intention and in tone few would dispute. Dickens's Preface to the 1850 edition makes both his satirical aim and its object clear:

My main object in this story was to exhibit in a variety of aspects the commonest of all the vices; to show how selfishness propogates itself; and to what a grim giant it may grow, from small beginnings... 2

Clear as Dickens's aim is, the critical response to this work is as varied as the following summary suggests:

I can truthfully say that the Martin Chuzzlewit of Jack Lindsay (Charles Dickens, London, 1950), Dorothy Van Ghent ("The Dickens World: A View from Todgers's", Sewanee Review, lxvii, 1950), and J. Hillis Miller's (Charles Dickens, Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1958) is a novel - or rather, three different novels - which I should like to read....And there is Sylvère Monod's poetic novel (Dickens romancier, Paris, 1953)...and Edgar Johnson's morally unified novel making the transition from gloom to warmth. 3

Even critics prepared to agree that the novel's general subjects are selfishness and hypocrisy offer diverse interpretations of these words, as H.M. Daleski shows:

The difficulty of reading Martin Chuzzlewit as a 'vast series of multiple perspectives on selfishness' (Edgar Johnson, Charles Dickens, I, 470) is that Pecksniff, as 'a type of character' (and 'the origin of the book') is clearly an exemplar of hypocrisy rather than selfishness, it being in this sense that his name has passed into the language. Some critics, accordingly, have attempted to have their intentional cake and eat it: 'The theme of Martin Chuzzlewit is a sort of selfish hypocrisy, and the unity of the book lies in the panoramic picture of this vice'; (Edwin B. Benjamin, "The Structure of Martin Chuzzlewit", Philological Quarterly, 34 (1955), 40); the novel is 'a study in selfishness and hypocrisy'. (R.C. Churchill, "Charles Dickens", The Pelican Guide to English Literature, Vol. VI (Harmondsworth, 1958), p. 120). There is no intrinsic connection, however, between selfishness and hypocrisy; and readings of the novel which are productive of even such cautious modifications of 'the design' point to the existence of a discrepancy between the supposed intention and the impression actually made by the work itself.

J. Hillis Miller approvingly quotes Dickens's statement of intention, but then goes on to say that 'selfishness exists in the novel not only as the ethical bent of the characters, but also as the state of isolation in which they live. The novel is full of people who are wholly enclosed in themselves...' (Charles Dickens, p. 104) .

Dafeski continues:

Like Miller, Steven Marcus invokes the theme of selfishness, but then proceeds to analyse the novel in terms remote from it. Consequently 'the problem of self in Martin Chuzzlewit', is said to be 'synonymous with the problem of authority', and the novel to be 'concerned with the question of authority and obedience'. (pp. 224-25) 4

And even if this general theme, whatever the interpretation put on the words, be accepted, the novel may still not be seen in its true light for, according to Barbara Hardy,

The theme fits where it touches, and I would have thought what engages our interest - what is central - is the problem of crime and punishment rather than the anatomy of selfishness. 5

Surely it is the criticism that fits where it touches. Whatever Dostoievskyan or Bradleyesque interest in crime and punishment the critic may privately hold, it is precisely as an anatomy of selfishness that we must examine Martin Chuzzlewit. Tale and teller both testify to the subject matter, and internal evidence points to the form, derived from Menippean satire, of the anatomy; Mrs. Hardy's perhaps unwitting pun describes the content in the very word that categorizes the form.

One reason for the engaging variety in recommended ways of reading Martin Chuzzlewit may be that, while satiric intention and tone are easy to recognize, satiric form is more protean and its conventions less clearly defined than those of other modes. In this chapter I shall attempt to show that Martin Chuzzlewit conforms not only to the conventions, but to the typical patterns of satiric form. Satire has its own characteristic plot, and typical roles and settings of its own; formal criticism of this novel begins, I suggest, with the recognition of these patterns.

The conventions of satire have been outlined by Gilbert Highet⁶ and it is worth noting them in order to distinguish these surface characteristics from the underlying structure of satire that influences movement of plot and types of characters. First, Highet says, the author gives a generic definition and a satiric pedigree, and chooses a traditionally satiric subject. These may be seen in the Preface to the First Edition, written at the end of the novel:

I set out on this journey which is now concluded; with the design of exhibiting, in various aspects, the commonest of all the vices. It is almost needless to add, that the commoner the folly or the crime which an author endeavours to illustrate, the greater is the risk he runs of being charged with exaggeration; for, as no man ever yet recognized an imitation of himself, no man will admit the correctness of a sketch in which his own character is delineated, however faithfully.

But, although Mr. Pecksniff will by no means concede to me, that Mr. Pecksniff is natural; I am consoled by finding him keenly susceptible of the truthfulness of Mrs. Gamp. And though Mrs. Gamp considers her own portrait to be quite unlike, and altogether out of drawing; she recompenses me for the severity of her criticism on that failure, by awarding unbounded praise to the picture of Mrs. Prig.

The similarity of this last paragraph to Swift's Preface to The Battle of the Books:

SATIRE is a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own: which is the chief reason for that kind reception it meets with in the world, and that so very few are offended with it.

gives the reader the first of Martin Chuzzlewit's many links to satirists of the past. The names of Pecksniff's daughters, Charity and Mercy, for example, also establish this as a work in the same mode as Defoe's Shortest Way with the Dissenters, where Defoe's persona uses the words "Charity" and "Mercy" to give the words a new and sinister meaning.

Highet suggests that the subject matter of satire is always concrete, usually topical, and often personal. Here, the Watertoast Association, modelled on the proceedings of the Brandywine Associ-

ation, which were printed, according to Dickens's 1849 preface, in The Times in June and July 1843, as well as many close topical references in the American section, and frauds such as that of the Anglo-Bengalee Company, are transparently topical.⁷

While the subject matter of satire is multifarious, its vocabulary and the texture of its style are hard to mistake. Irony, parody, burlesque, wit, antithesis, and sarcasm flicker through the text. Response to the American section proves that the satirist's intent to shock has been realized.

Finally, there can be no question that Martin Chuzzlewit passes Hight's final test of satire, that "the typical emotion which the author feels, and wishes to evoke in his readers... is a blend of amusement and contempt".

All of these conventions provide a kind of satiric ground against which the action of the satire moves. This action arises from certain relationships inherent in the form of satire and from typical patterns in it. Basic to the form is some pattern of comparison. The formal satiric poem, as Mary Claire Randolph has observed in the work of Horace, Persius, and Juvenal, always contains two layers.⁸ There is a thesis layer attacking vice and folly, elaborated with every kind of rhetorical device, and, much briefer, an antithesis layer illustrating or implying a philosophy of rational control, usually embodied in some more or less ideal norm, like the stoic vir bonus, the good plain man.

It is not surprising that in characterization we find two layers also, for without a situation in which a bad man acts on one less bad, or less shrewd, the qualities being satirized cannot be demonstrated. Ronald Paulson points this out in his explanation of what he calls "the fictions of satire":

...the fictions used by satire are essentially relationships between people. Plots may be borrowed, but certain relationships - between the bad, the foolish, the good - are indigenous to satire. Even the static emblematic

image of punishment usually involves the punisher as well as the punished. Without a situation in which one man exploits or injures another, knavery cannot be demonstrated; and to demonstrate folly he must himself be discomfited. A knave is only finally a knave by virtue of his impingement on the lives of others; a fool's actions are not foolish unless they are ineffectual or bring down upon him unpleasant consequences. The satirist even goes so far as to suggest that the knave is less a knave when his villainy fails or backfires, or when he is punished; these consequences may turn his knavery into folly. 9

In its second chapter, Martin Chuzzlewit establishes this necessary relationship between knave and fool in the persons of Pecksniff and Tom Pinch. It also introduces the positive ideal, the vir bonus, John Westlock, and his satirized counterpart, young Martin, who, though not yet present, is discussed. Something of the necessary pattern of development is inherent in these relationships. The knave must eventually be punished, and the fool must become wise to his folly, perhaps coming thereby to resemble the vir bonus. In many satires the knave is shown to be a fool, and folly precipitates his punishment.

Characters and their relationships must carry the burden of the interest in a satire. Whereas in melodrama characters are subservient to the demands of the plot, in satire there is a plot pattern that tends to limit the possibilities for interest in events. This pattern: journey, recognition, expulsion, and return is familiar from Varronian satire and best-known to English readers through Gulliver's four voyages; it would seem, as Scholes and Kellogg say, to provide the most satisfying combination of representational, illustrative, and esthetic elements with which to explore the relationship between a particular society and its inherited social and moral ideals. 10

The text of Martin Chuzzlewit is scored with journeys. Their prevalence may account for the frequency of the observation that this novel retains more of the flavour of the eighteenth century than any of Dickens's other early works. These are not, however, picaresque journeys. Young Martin's voyage to America is instead a marvellous

journey, a favourite device of satire. It is precisely this journey and the pattern of its relationship to the other major journeys, along with the uses to which journeys are put in this work, that indicates Martin Chuzzlewit's affinity rather to the element of satire in the picaresque than to its episodic structure.

The pattern of comparison between a thesis layer and an anti-thesis layer is also repeated in the settings. Salisbury Cathedral becomes an ideal norm when it is set against the ornamental structures of Pecksniff's students. In the city, the Temple Garden is a haven of peace in comparison with the labyrinthine jumble displayed in the view from Todgers's. As Alvin Kernan points out:

Somewhere in his dense knots of ugly flesh the satiric author or painter usually inserts a hint of an ideal which is either threatened with imminent destruction or is already dead. Humanity, what man is capable of achieving, is reflected in the lovely human faces of Bosch's tortured Christ and his St. Anthony, both about to be destroyed by the monstrosities which surround and press inward on them. Far above and in the distance behind Gin Lane rises a church steeple, but the three balls of the pawnbroker, in the form of a cross, dominate the immediate scene of squalor and filth. ll

So suggestive are some of the settings in Chuzzlewit that they seem like the images in an allegory: the tangled forest of Eden, the London labyrinth of Todgers's, the Cathedral spire, even the Monument that misleads. This it is, perhaps, that causes E.A. Dyson to wonder if the novel's organization is "conventionally picaresque or daringly symbolist?"¹² for conventional symbols of order and disorder appear to become organizing principles. In fact these conventional symbols are polarized by the demands of the satiric form, and their potency arises, in part, from the interplay amongst them. Thus they are organizing principles in a work of satire.

If we examine Martin Chuzzlewit, then, as a novel shaped by the demands of its satiric stance, a number of the things in the book that have been criticized may be seen in a new light. First, the

mock-heroic genealogy of the Chuzzlewit family with which the novel begins has often been misunderstood, as the following quotation shows:

The book opens (if we ignore the puerile irony of the opening chapter giving the genealogy of the Chuzzlewit family) with the curious description of the wind blowing...¹³

The point to be made is not whether the genealogy is "puerile irony" or, as another critic finds it, "rather charming", but that this is a typical satiric genealogy. Thus when Barbara Hardy attempts to explain the relatively poor reception of Martin Chuzzlewit by pointing out that this novel lacks the exciting opening of Oliver Twist, A Tale of Two Cities, or Great Expectations, one has only to remember the form Dickens's stated satiric purpose commits him to. The opening chapters, whatever they may lack in excitement, admirably fulfill their purpose of underlining, perhaps more heavily than the modern reader appreciates, the emphasis on the human family, that is, on the implications of satire for all of us. The human family needs correction.

Again, Tom Pinch has had more than his share of vituperation; he is dismissed with scorn that is almost as automatic as that which falls on Dickens's women, and the same reason is usually given. He is thought to be unbearably sentimentalized. While there are some grounds for this criticism in the section of the novel in which Ruth and Tom conduct their sentimental romance, "even such a total and odious failure as Tom Pinch"¹⁴ gains considerably in stature if he is seen as a developing character who plays a specific role in the satire. Beginning as the fool who plays gull to Pecksniff's knave, Tom progresses, through his rejection of Pecksniff, to something approaching the vir bonus as played by his friend and mentor John Westlock in the first part of the novel.

Martin's journey to America has suffered in critical literature both from the exacerbated sensibilities of latter-day American critics and from the fact that the journey does not seem to have been part of Dickens's original conception. It is regarded as an interpolation

designed to boost sales by making ungenerous use of Dickens's American experiences. Once we recognize this long episode as the typical marvellous journey of satire, its importance to the novel becomes clear. In America Martin finds selfishness in the form of greed, and hypocrisy like Pecksniff's; the American and the English scenes are carefully played off against each other. It is through his journey to America that Martin comes to know both himself and his own society, just as Gulliver's voyage to the Houyhnhnms gives him a view of himself, and of the institutions and customs of his own society that would not have been possible from within his own country.

The major criticism of Martin Chuzzlewit has been that it is not unified. First, the sentimental romance that centres around Ruth and Tom Pinch is seen to be antithetical to the satire on Pecksniff and the greedy Chuzzlewits. A recent critic suggests that, "intruding into the novel is a sentimental mode which weakens the novel's effectiveness".¹⁵ This criticism deserves serious examination. It is best met, however, by recognizing the patterns implied by satire and by observing the ways in which satire changes when it is the dominant mode in a novel. More serious is Barbara Hardy's criticism that the whole concluding Jonas section is not related to the rest of the novel except in "the mechanical unifying source of family relations". She continues:

If one of the formal characteristics of this novel is the lack of integrating action, another is surely a very characteristic lack of continuity in character. Is there any other novel where the characters are so made over for new roles? Mercy and-to-some extent-Jonas, seem to begin as comic characters, and become players in the grim melodrama. 16

This, too, is related to the fact that Dickens is working out his satirical theme within the framework of a novel; the novel form has an effect on the characterization in a satire that will be discussed in the section on character. Further, there are connections to be

made between the Jonas section and other parts of the novel on a level that is more than mechanical.

It would be unfair to suggest that no critic has seen unity in Chuzzlewit. Steven Marcus and Hillis Miller, for instance, argue, respectively, for the unifying power of language, and of an argument about authority. Alan Christensen gives an interesting reading of Chuzzlewit as a Bildungsroman in which Martin is taken through the phases from Werther through Brummelism to Wilhelm Meister, but this is more valuable for its relation of the elements of Chuzzlewit to contemporary thinking, Carlyle's in particular, than for its revelations about the novel's form.¹⁷ Edward Evans, in a recent article, is the first to see that Martin's American voyage is more than either a formal aberration or a cheap trick to increase circulation.¹⁸ He sees the journey as a Utopian voyage that works to show up the positive values in English society. America is Martin's heart of darkness, and he points out that Martin's journey up the river to the swamp of Eden has allegorical overtones that integrate it with the theme. Evans concludes, however, that Chuzzlewit is still "essentially a picaresque novel".¹⁹ But the closest to a recognition of the structural influence of a predominant mode in the novel is Richard Hannaford's analysis of what he sees as the conflicting modes of irony and sentimentality.²⁰ Hannaford argues that, in spite of Dickens's achievement of a "multifaceted irony" in Martin Chuzzlewit, the sentimental story of Ruth and Tom Pinch undercuts that achievement. The careful reader might quarrel with Hannaford on two counts. First, Hannaford argues that "one aspect of Dickens's irony is his technique of reserving special words to undercut pretension and to emphasize the shabbiness beneath a superficial glitter", fortifying this point with a count of one hundred and seventy-four examples of the use of five words, "bright" (102 times), "gold" (39 times) "gleam" (14 times), "diamond" (9 times), and "jewel" (10 times). He then examines the John-Ruth love story, finding that two of the

words appear once each (one of those times to describe jewels thematically important in the novel), and that there are three cognates of one of the other words. However, allowing for differences in intensity of concentration that may exist between the Victorian common and the twentieth-century academic reader, this argument seems to depend upon a rather high degree of verbal awareness. To say that, in a 624 page novel, published over nineteen months, the reappearance of six of those ironical and deflationary words "undermines, through unconscious parody, the sincerity of the love story itself" and "egregiously disrupts an essential ironical pattern in the book", is studiously to miss the wood for the trees.²¹

The second and much more important limitation of Hannaford's argument is the impression he gives of thinking that the whole of the novel, until chapter 45, is in an ironic mode, marred by occasional lapses into sentimentality. "Whatever the cause, as Dickens builds toward the happy resolution in chapters 45 and 53 one can see where he thoroughly abandons his ironic narrative mode."²²

Both irony and sentimentality are present in Martin Chuzzlewit, certainly. In fact, the sentimental romance centering on John, Ruth, and Tom Pinch occupies much of the third quarter of the novel. But also present is the Jonas-Tigg story, a forerunner of the sensation novel of the sixties, which occupies the final quarter, and which has, as I have pointed out, often been criticized as being out of keeping with the rest. This, in a mode we might call psychological melodrama, is very different from "the controlled ironic effect" that "in the initial stages of the novel...creates a convincing and effective narrative stance."²³ There are, then, not two but three principal modes, the satirical, the sentimental, and the sensational. As long ago as 1954 Kathleen Tillotson pointed out that we must accept several modes in a Dickens novel, just as we do in poetic drama, a rule that Harvey Peter Sucksmith has recently re-affirmed.²⁴ The

critical question is, whether these modes are mutually destructive, as Hannaford suggests, or whether, in this rich book, the first of Dickens's personal and intellectual maturity, and the one he considered "in a hundred points immeasurably the best of my stories",²⁵ there is a pattern that brings all three together in some kind of harmony.

Hannaford comments perceptively on the tone of satire in Martin Chuzzlewit, but he does not look further for its form. In an effort to account for the tone of the rhetorical flourishes he suggests "that Dickens, the eiron, has unconsciously become an alazon in his own right and the reader, sensitive to posturing and rhetorical deceit, is jarred by the abrupt shift in narrative style".²⁶ This is to overlook the important role of Tom Pinch, Martin's counterpart, in the novel, for it is Tom who is the alazon up to the necessary unmasking of Pecksniff, and Dickens carefully controls the reader's changing response to this developing character. My examination of the forms of satire in this chapter should provide an implicit rebuttal of the central contention of Hannaford's otherwise close and interesting reading.

Before turning, however, to an examination of character, plot, and setting as they relate particularly to the dominating mode of satire, we should look briefly at the opening chapters where the appearance of satiric conventions alerts the reader to the tradition in which the work is written.

Confusion about this tradition as it relates to the whole work affects even those who recognize the ancestry of this chapter. A.E. Dyson refers to the first chapter as "that delightful exercise in pseudo-scholarship in the tradition of Swift, Sterne and Peacock".²⁷ Yet his opening question about the novel as a whole is whether "its organization [is] conventionally picaresque or daringly symbolist".²⁸ A few pages later, he points out that the American sections would be savage satire if they appeared elsewhere.²⁹ They are savage satire as they appear here.

In the second paragraph of Dickens's opening our attention is directed to a murderer and a vagabond, these two occupations providing "a promising means of repairing shattered fortunes" (CD, 1). They provide also the first hint of Jonas's crime. The ominous word, "murderer", strikes a note that gathers resonance as Jonas begins to treat Mercy brutally, is strengthened with his forced departure from the "Ankwerk package", and takes on a portentous dimension during the night drive to Salisbury with Tigg, increasing the effect of the sensational finale. If Jonas is the murderer, Martin must be the vagabond, and the framework is here set up for the parallel studies of two kinds of selfish grandfathers and fathers and their descendants, one villainous and one exemplary. The counterpointing is reflected in the plot as Dickens traces young Martin's fortunes and then Jonas's, uncle and nephew being far more widely divergent in character than the brothers from whom they are descended. It is tempting to pursue the Cain and Abel parallel thus established, especially in view of the references to Cain scattered through the text. In the Bible Cain is first a murderer and then a vagabond, but with a difference, as a modern commentator, S.H.Hooke, suggests:

He was no common murderer, but a priest or sacred person who had performed an act for the benefit of the community; an act which involved ceremonial defilement and the consequent temporary banishment of the slayer; but his person was sacrosanct. 30

He is also, in the second part of the myth, a builder of cities, "the founder of a line from whence spring the various elements of civilized life".³¹ While Jonas does not slay Martin he does slay Montague Tigg, or, things being in reverse in satire, Tigg Montague, and does so clearly for the benefit of the community. Tigg is not Jonas's brother, of course, but he is connected with Chevy Slyme, who is a member of the family. Tigg and Slyme first appear when Old Martin takes up residence at the Blue Dragon; Slyme is always around the corner, and Tigg is his hanger-on. Tigg makes Martin's relationship to Slyme clear while Martin is at Pecksniff's house, and Tigg reinforces this

connection in London when he offers Martin brotherly assistance at the pawn shop. Now that Martin has become a vagabond, Tigg is his benefactor. Shortly after this Martin prepares to become a victim of his own dreams of glory as a builder of cities in the fetid vapours of Eden. When Martin returns to England it is to denounce Pecksniff's stolen and spoiled grammar school, the first step in a circuitous route to building a source of the arts of civilized life. Tigg, meanwhile, has become Montague and is building that hollow empire, appropriately represented by the porter's resplendent red waistcoat, which will be the ruin of both Pecksniff and Jonas. Thus the vagabond has begun to build a city and the man who is to be murdered to build its double, the House of Pride.³²

Tigg will be murdered out of doors, not in a tilled field but in a wood where, as the Biblical narrative says, "the earth has opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood". Hooke continues,

Then follows the curse of Cain, his flight from the scene of the slaying, and the protective mark which he receives from Yaweh. Here there are obvious difficulties: Yaweh curses the slayer and at the same time places him under his protection. 33

While Jonas is not noticeably under God's protection he is protected from the final indignity society can impose on him by Slyme's recognition of his status and motivation. The opening paragraphs thus provide a prologue to the novel's deepest theme, suggested in the epigraph: "...it was to be a satire on the Family - on the poison of selfishness as transmitted within a family, and on false notions of family grandeur and the parasites which they breed."³⁴ When Dickens gives Pecksniff the Christian name of Seth, readers will recall these introductory references to Adam and Eve. In the memorable gardening scene in Chapter 24 in which Pecksniff, hastily garbed in smock, hat, and spade, receives the surprise visit of Old Martin we are reminded that the family "was, in the very earliest times, closely connected with the agricultural interest" (CD, 1).

The remainder of the introductory chapter, tracing the history of the family to its undistinguished present, provides a mock-heroic genealogy, itself a satire both on English pretentiousness and on the satiric convention of the catalogue of the gods. This, with the echoes of Swift and of the second chapter of Fielding's Jonathan Wild, both introduces the theme and establishes the kind of work that is to follow. With this introductory chapter the first threads of the general satiric ground are laid out.

In Chapter 2 these begin to be interwoven with the threads of the particular story, the specific generations of the Chuzzlewit family through whom Dickens will elaborate the theme of selfishness. The chapter opens with the "curious wind" that, like the pervasive fog that shrouds the opening of Bleak House, becomes a central metaphor in the satire. According to Alvin B. Kernan,

[The satirist's] characteristic purpose is to cleanse society of its impurities, to heal its sicknesses; and his tools are crude ones: the surgeon's knife, the whip, the purge, the rack, the flood, and the holocaust, all typical metaphors of satire. 35

The wind that blows out Miss Pecksniff's candle at the same moment slams the front door against Mr. Pecksniff, "with such violence, that in the twinkling of an eye he lay on his back at the bottom of the steps" (CD, 8). This is a cleansing satiric breeze that fulfills the same purpose as the flood and the holocaust. It is repeated in the storm that separates wheat from chaff on the journey to America, and in the wild portentous storm on the night of Jonas's crime, which precipitates the final cleansing. It is an angry wind and the leaves it chases are "scared", a satiric metaphor for the various cleansing agents that will act upon Pecksniff in the process of uncovering his hypocrisy.

The first few pages of this chapter also establish the hollowness of Pecksniff's world, and they do so, in part, by means of language. When Miss Pecksniff asks, through the keyhole, "Who's there?" she

does so "in a shrill voice, which might have belonged to a wind in its teens" (CD, 7). Her first words to her father are appropriately dramatic, "That voice! My parent!" and the tone is perfectly suited to communication between those who have "household gods" instead of homes and families. Pecksniff's daughters are named Charity and Mercy, abbreviated at times to Cherry, suggesting rosy-cheeked innocent youth, and Merry, the last characteristic Jonas's wife could possibly enjoy. This contrast between the reality and the words used to describe it is central to the satiric effect. Mr. Pecksniff's mode of business is explained. He is not so much an architect as an administrator of architects, and the young gentlemen whose premiums he pockets improve themselves "for three or five years...in making elevations of Salisbury Cathedral from every possible point of sight; and in constructing in the air a vast quantity of Castles, Houses of Parliament, and other Public Buildings" (CD, 9). Just such a young gentleman is Martin Chuzzlewit until after his contact with reality in the person of Mark Tapley, and it is Martin's preoccupation with castles in the air that blinds him to the needs of those around him and to his own selfishness. "There is nothing personal in morality, my love" (CD, 9), Pecksniff chides when Charity objects to the inclusive "we" of his moral discourse. The rest of the novel demonstrates the humbuggery of this remark as both Martins, Jonas, and Tigg explore some of the extremes of personal experience in their journey towards one or other of the satirist's poles of good and bad. The aspiring architectural students do "elevations" of Salisbury Cathedral only; they do not build their own cathedrals but simply take sights on the standard already built, or constantly measure the ideal possibilities of man and art. This is Pecksniffian: "some people likened him to a direction post, which is always telling the way to a place, and never goes there" (CD, 8). The ideal represented by Salisbury Cathedral has as its opposite not the teeming, depraved crowds of Gin Lane, but the bland sententiousness of the Chapel,

paying lip-service to human brotherhood while exploiting the emotional good-will of the ignorant to serve its own ends. While no particular connection is made between Pecksniff and the non-conformists so much deplored by Dickens, Pecksniff so obviously belongs to the brotherhood of Stiggins, Chadband, Pumblechook, and Podsnap that one suspects a connection. In the paragraph beginning, "It has been remarked that Mr. Pecksniff was a moral man..." The comparison of Pecksniff with "the girl in the fairy tale, except that if they were not actual diamonds which fell from his lips, they were the very brightest paste, and shone prodigiously" (CD, 8), provides a neat example of the way in which the verbal fabric of satire functions. The reader will recall that in the fairy tale the diamonds fell from the lips of one sister when she spoke, but toads fell from the lips of the other. The association between toads and Pecksniff is underlined later when Mark, in America, reflects on toads. "A very handsome animal is a toad", said Mr. Tapley, sitting down upon a stool: "very spotted; very like a partickler style of old gentleman about the throat; very bright-eyed, very cool, and very slippery" (CD, 323). His description recalls the early passage where Dickens mentions the fairy tale, especially as Dickens has said in that passage, "His very throat was moral. You saw a good deal of it" (CD, 8). Thus the first few pages of the second chapter in the second number set up the principle of doubleness that is inherent in satire's comparison of the false with the true, real diamonds with paste diamonds, jewels with toads.

Moving beyond the general satiric ground established here to the necessary form of satire we find that the relationships which Paulson mentions as being indigenous to satire, relationships between the bad, the foolish, and the good, are also set up in the second chapter. The formal verse satire of Horace and Juvenal, from which our tradition of satire is mainly derived, sets up a polarity between knave and fool. As Paulson points out, a knave cannot practice his knavery without a fool to victimize. For the knavery of the knave to be made

apparent, either the fool must grow wise to it, or the satirist or his persona must guide the reader's attitude. In Martin Chuzzlewit Pecksniff is clearly the knave, Tom Pinch the fool, and John Westlock the satirist's persona.

John may also be seen, in Horace's terms, as the vir bonus, or the ideal of the good man, neither knave nor fool. John's role both as norm and as satirist's persona who guides the reader is clear in the scene in which he returns to Pecksniff's, on the day of his departure, to shake hands before leaving. Pecksniff's role as blocking figure is immediately apparent when he refuses to consummate this gesture of good-will and insists, instead, on the degrading process of forgiving one who has not wronged him. John, with proper self-respect, refuses to be forgiven. Pecksniff is not discomfited by John's "Here's a martyr!" He merely slips into one of his bland moralizing stances, "Money, John," said Mr. Pecksniff, "is the root of all evil..." We have seen enough of Pecksniff and his daughters by now that there is no danger of our not recognizing the hollow ring of his words, even before John laboriously explains it to Tom.

From Tom's first entrance the experienced Dickens reader must place him as the ingenue, the put-upon, the meek who will inherit his modest share of the earth. Tom's physique and clothing have that ungainly disproportion about them that is always promising in the writings of Dickens, the dandy: the Dodger's clothes are too big for him; he is a man in a child's body, as the little Marchioness, similarly swaddled, is a woman; Oliver's clothes are at first too small; they do not stretch to his nature; Newman Noggs and his clothes are out of gear; Joe's are right only in the forge. These are all people who grow and change, and Tom Pinch shows this promise. He

was drest in a snuff-coloured suit; of an uncouth make at best, which, being shrunk with long wear, was twisted and tortured into all kinds of odd shapes; but notwithstanding his attire, and his clumsy figure, which a great stoop in his shoulders and a ludicrous habit he had of thrusting his

head forward by no means redeemed, one would not have been disposed (unless Mr. Pecksniff said so) to consider him a bad fellow by any means. (CD, 11)

This same Tom will gradually find his way into the exemplary suit his sister so carefully brushes as he sets off in the morning for his gentlemanly occupation of restoring order to the chaotic mess of Old Martin's library. But here Tom is still very much the fool. "But what can anyone expect from Mr. Pinch!" (CD, 11) the uncharitable Charity exclaims just before he appears. The roles of the two young men are economically captured in the discussion that follows John's confrontation with Pecksniff, which Tom has observed with much distress:

"How grieved he was!"

"He grieved!" returned the other.

"Why didn't you observe that the tears were almost starting out of his eyes!" cried Pinch. "Bless my soul, John, is it nothing to see a man moved to that extent and know one's self to be the cause! And did you hear him say that he could have shed his blood for me?"

"Do you want any blood shed for you?" returned his friend, with considerable irritation. "Does he shed anything for you that you do want? Does he shed employment for you, pocket money, for you? Does he shed even legs of mutton for you in any decent proportion to potatoes and garden stuff?"

"I am afraid," said Pinch, sighing again, "that I am a great eater: I can't disguise from myself that I'm a great eater. Now, you know that, John."

"You a great eater!" retorted his companion, with no less indignation than before. "How do you know you are?" (CD, 14)

Tom's role is clear from this conversation, which continues for two pages. No doubt he was set on this course by his grandmother's mistaken ambitions, which made her fair game for Pecksniff's greed. "He never speculated and traded on her pride in you, and her having educated you, and on her desire that you at least should live to be a gentleman. Not he, Tom!" (CD, 15) Although the phrase "great expectations" is reserved for young Martin in this novel, the friendly foe has also been at work in Tom's career; unmanly dependence is the

result of misguided education in Tom, as in Martin and Jonas. John Westlock, it is made clear in succeeding chapters, is also a young man of gentlemanly expectations, but these have not gone to his head - or heart. He is thus both a foil to young Martin, whom he later observes and shows up for the reader's edification, and a satiric norm between the extremes of Pecksniff and Tom. Some such gullible innocent as Tom is essential for the working of the satiric form. To say, as Hannaford does, that Dickens "cannot resist Tom's innate goodness", and that "as the novel continues Dickens' control over his ironic mode lapses",³⁶ is to misunderstand the necessity both for Tom's initial folly, and for his growth.

About Pecksniff's role as knave there can be no possible doubt, but, whereas Tom grows and changes during the course of the novel, Pecksniff moves into the background and becomes more a reference point than a character, until he re-appears towards the end in the role of gull to Tigg's and Jonas's knavery. Since Pecksniff is so clearly the central object of Dickens's aggressive satire we must ask why he does not hold centre stage throughout the novel. It is instructive to compare Pecksniff with Mrs. Gamp in this respect. As W.J. Harvey says, "The general assumption...that great novels are memorable for the characters they portray, is not likely to be disputed by any common reader",³⁷ and no one is likely to dispute the prominence of Pecksniff and Mrs. Gamp in any gallery of great creations. Having said this, one is immediately aware of disparities in the characterization that provide keys to the novel.

First, Pecksniff is a humour, as Squeers and Crummles are, and it is doubtful whether a humour can engage the reader's sympathy as a central character must. Hypocrisy is Mr. Pecksniff's humour. He is a hypocrite as completely, naturally, and unfailingly as a stone is a stone. If Mr. Pecksniff ever had motivation or feelings they are now surely disguised, even from him, by his own pervasive hypocrisy. In addition to his greed, Pecksniff is related to the

theme of the novel through his cant. "Oh self! self! self!" he pontificates, and his endless moralizing, mixed metaphors, and sententious misquotations make him both a chorus and the personification of the qualities he deplores. Poor Mrs. Todgers, for example, is taken to task for selling her soul for eighteen shillings a week immediately after Pecksniff himself has sold his daughter to Jonas for far more money and with far less justification. Pecksniff's self-righteousness and total lack of self-awareness continue to the end. When he is confronted by Tom Pinch he falls backwards, in accordance with the image established on his first appearance when he was attacked and taken by surprise by the satiric wind. When he is rejected by Mary Graham he shrinks, a foretaste of his final punishing reduction:

Not only did his figure appear to have shrunk, but his discomfiture seemed to have extended itself, even to his dress. His clothes seemed to have grown shabbier, his linen to have turned yellow, his hair to have become lank and frowsy; his very boots looked villainous and dim, as if their gloss had departed with his own. (CD, 505)

But even now Pecksniff forgives his enemy, maintaining his unassailable rightness to the end. It is part of the point about Pecksniff that he is a bad humour, but palatable, clad in good flesh, sound limbs, impeccable dress, and the suggestions of a comfortable, not unpretentious house.

Not so Mrs. Gamp, and she is the more loveable for it. The differences between Mrs. Gamp and Pecksniff arise from the degree of the author's censure and in the relative amiability of the portrait. No one could like Pecksniff. His antics may be a source of incredulous wonder and occasional amusement, but there is nothing engaging in him because he is totally absorbed by his character or humour. Pecksniff, though drawn from life,³⁸ is the superb personification of a universal human quality. Mrs. Gamp, also drawn from a specific model, is instead the representative of a class and a type:

Mrs. Sarah Gamp is a representative of the hired attendant of the poor in sickness. The Hospitals in London are, in many respects, noble Institutions; in others, very defective. I think it not the least among the instances of their mismanagement, that Mrs. Betsy Prig is a fair specimen of a Hospital Nurse; and that the Hospitals, with their means and funds, should have left it to private humanity and enterprise, in the year Eighteen Hundred and Forty-nine, to enter on an attempt to improve that class of persons. 39 (Preface to the Cheap Edition, London, 1849.)

She is what I have called, in the preceding chapter, a "caricatured norm", with maximum emphasis on the caricature and minimum on the norm. The description that introduces Mrs. Gamp concentrates on her physical appearance, though there is a note of the "character" in it:

As she was by this time in a condition to appear, Mrs. Gamp, who had a face for all occasions, looked out of the window with her mourning countenance, and said she would be down directly.

and,

She was a fat old woman, this Mrs. Gamp, with a husky voice and a moist eye, which she had a remarkable power of turning up, and only showing the white of it. (CD, 197)

In her greed and opportunism, serviced by her "face for all occasions", Mrs. Gamp is a lower-class London Pecksniff. To this extent she represents the hypocritical mask of a materialistic society, as he does, but she is not so despicable. First, she does at least put in the hours on her job, and her gains are relatively slight, and, second, Dickens's obvious joy in the ludicrous muddle of her gargantuan size brings the portrait out of the detached chill of wit and into the warmth of humour. We are helped to laugh with Mrs. Gamp by sharing the reactions of her associates to her. She has neighbours, friends, business associates (Betsy Prig, Mr. Mold), and caretakers (Poll Sweedlepipe). Most touching of all she has Mrs. Harris. Existing only in Mrs. Gamp's fantasy world, created for us entirely through language and reported speech, coloured by its progress through Mrs. Gamp's "soggy, toothless mandibles",⁴⁰ Mrs. Harris is the representative of that inner life Dickens's characters are so often said

not to have. She has come into being out of Mrs. Gamp's need for unqualified approval and companionship. Her death at the hands of Betsy Prig during that "Feast of the Homeric Gods",⁴¹ ("I don't believe there ever was sich a creature") is a blow that pierces the layers of fusty clothing and sordid fat to strike at the heart of a human need. Pecksniff never knows or feels, and so he can forgive to the end. But Mrs. Gamp is for once stung out of opportunism. So great is the pang that accompanies her desolating loss that she strikes back at Betsy Prig in revenge, quite forgetting that the continuing friendship with Mrs. Prig helps materially to keep her in gin and pickled salmon and fresh "cowcumber" in season. Old Martin's castigation may be designed to improve her, but her novelistic proportions, and the pleasure and sympathy these evoke, far outstrip his satiric tongue.

Pecksniff, the personification of a quality, is drawn entirely from the outside, intellectualized, distanced, and finally scourged. Mrs. Gamp, in contrast, is given perhaps the most dramatic inner life in English Literature. She is first humanized, and then merely ticked off, rather than scourged. This latter distinction, between the degrees of punishment inflicted by the novelist may be a most significant one. Sheldon Sacks, who has attempted to distinguish between pure satire, apologue, and novel, has this to say:

Let us assume tentatively that pure satires are works which ridicule particular men, the institutions of men, traits presumed to be in all men, or any combination of the three. But they do not do this incidentally; all their parts are designed to this end and, indeed, can only be understood as parts of a whole to the extent that they contribute to such ridicule. In other words this is the principle that actually informs the work. 42

An apologue, in contrast, is a work whose informing principle is that it is organized "as a fictional example of the truth of a formulable statement or closely related set of such statements".⁴³ Satire and apologue are mutually exclusive forms because satire ridicules the external world and the apologue creates fictional examples of ethical truths. Satire punishes; apologue instructs. The novel, however,

is a mixture of the two. Using the example of Miss Bates in Emma, Sacks points out that we both sympathize with her, and must do so in order to appreciate the lesson she teaches the heroine and the reader. Therefore, "any conscious recognition we may have of the virtuous traits revealed in Miss Bates's meanderings might well be interpreted as a flaw in a satire to the extent that it prevents maximizing the ridicule of the external object - in this case the chattering woman".⁴⁴ Thus the purely satirical, with reference to the external object, has the aim of punishing.

Sack's distinction may be useful here because it suggests that Pecksniff is a pure satire character. As the work moves in the direction of a typical novel he slips into the background. At this point Mrs. Gamp, who is his London counterpart, takes over. She has qualities that allow us to sympathize with her; her relatively light punishment is felt to be appropriate.

Pecksniff, in contrast, is far more unequivocally punished by the author than he would be in life. His creator condemns in the character the universal type Pecksniff stands for. The oily opportunist in a materialist society is particularly suspect if he does not work (as Dickens worked) or care (as Dickens cared). Bumble, in Oliver Twist, who abuses his public trust out of greed, is similarly deflated, but for Bumble there had been one saving cough in response to Oliver's "I have been so very lonely, sir..." which makes all the difference. There is a hint that inside the beadle's role Bumble lives, and this hint is enough to give the reader a twinge of pity for him at his final condemnation. For Pecksniff there is no salvation.

We may note, incidentally, that this distinction between the character who is punished by the satirist and the character whose life is allowed to develop along the lines one would expect of a character in a novel is worked out in Pecksniff's daughters. Our feelings for Merry, like our feelings for Mrs. Gamp, are stirred.

The total unattractiveness and jealousy of Charity make Merry slightly less unappealing in the early chapters than her selfish, shallow flirtatiousness and her participation in the Pecksniff family charade would otherwise dictate. When, in addition, she recognizes and admits the folly of her rejection of Old Martin's advice, we are able to appreciate the tragedy of the life she has made for herself. Dickens has no need to punish her beyond indicating the punishment this life will inflict.

Charity, on the contrary, is given the nastiest finale of any husband-hunting spinster from the burlesques in The Sketches on. She is no more than a shrill, disembodied voice, a flat character if ever there was one. The daughter of greed, self-interest, and phony sentimentousness, her vice is the lack of that benevolence her name describes, and the severity of the author's treatment underlines all the value he places elsewhere in the novel on a good heart.

The author's attempt to show what a good heart is like, and how one is to be acquired, naturally centres on young Martin Chuzzlewit and his associates, John Westlock and Tom Pinch. In this triumvirate, young Martin is the object of satire, a younger version of Pecksniff in his use of, and lack of regard for, Tom Pinch. As the novel progresses Martin and Tom both undergo reversals that change their patterns of behaviour and move them towards a resemblance to John Westlock.

The first characters we hear about after the scenes that give the full flavour of the Pecksniff family are young Martin, not yet named, and John Westlock. The first person we meet is Tom Pinch, introduced as described above. Martin and John are both young gentlemen of great expectations, but John is perceptive without being cynical, warm and affectionate without being soft, and strong enough to speak out. Thus John Westlock is set up at the beginning of the novel as the ideal norm, while Martin is satirized as the deviant. John's role is a light thread running through the story. He is host

or principal guest at the few reported meals that are not blocked, miserly, or disruptive, and he is the key figure, through having befriended Lewsome, in the unravelling of the plot that leads to Jonas's exposure. He falls in love with Ruth Pinch, who plays counterpart to Mary Graham, their analagous roles made explicit in Old Martin's gift of identical bracelets to both. When John woos Ruth he does so by the Temple fountain, a fertile image of good for Dickens here and in Our Mutual Friend, the urban equivalent of the Salisbury Cathedral spire. John sees Martin's selfishness at their first meeting, and the reader henceforth measures Martin against the ideal of warm-hearted John. Here is the narrative comment:

Young Westlock stopped upon a rising ground, when he had gone a little distance, and looked back. They were walking at a brisk pace, and Tom appeared to be talking earnestly. Martin had taken off his great coat, the wind now being behind them, and carried it upon his arm. As he looked, he saw Tom relieve him of it, after a faint resistance, and, throwing it upon his own, encumber himself with the weight of both. This trivial incident impressed the old pupil mightily, for he stood there, gazing after them, until they were hidden from his view; when he shook his head, as if he were troubled by some uneasy reflection, and thoughtfully retraced his steps to Salisbury. (CD, 131)

As John watches Martin and Tom disappearing down the road, Tom carrying Martin's coat, he gives the reader his own perspective, valuing Tom's unappreciated worth and criticizing Martin's arrogant selfishness.

Perhaps the most interesting of the three characters for our purposes, that is, as he both exemplifies a typical satire role and as he forms a kind of bridge between satire and novel, is Tom Pinch. At this early stage, and until he leaves Pecksniff's house, Tom is a fool. He is also both the narrative focus and the author's double. His folly is shown through his relationships both to food and to money, potent emblems of that external every-day reality a man must come to terms with if he is to be in right relation to the world. While he is at Pecksniff's Tom eats sparingly. He knows Pecksniff begrudges

him food and he feels undeserving of the little he does take. Tom is overwhelmed with John's goodness when John keeps his promise to celebrate with a good meal when he comes into his "expectations", whereas Martin takes John's generosity for granted. When Tom lends Montague Tigg his whole wealth, half a sovereign, he is being improvident, foolishly unselfregarding. In the absence of a convenient source of self-help to which Tigg might have been directed, Tom might have changed his coin at the Blue Dragon and given Tigg a small, token amount. Martin is conveniently without funds at the time. Tom's naivety is such that he does not suspect John's later strategy for repayment.

Martin, in contrast to John, sees that Tom is being imposed upon, but feels no twinges; he is preoccupied with his own problems. Martin's inability to pay his own way is partly his grandfather's fault and this, as Dickens points out in the Preface, is part of the moral. Where Jonas is calculating and stingy to the point of caricature, Martin is merely heedless of his obligations to others - and thus to himself - and is unappreciative of their efforts towards him. John is a foil to Martin. His "free and manly temper" is exactly what Martin lacks. This is partly the fault of his education. Where Anthony Chuzzlewit has consciously educated his son in all the arts of meanness, Old Martin has merely been selfish and inconsistent, preparing Martin ill for his anticipated position. His gift of twenty pounds, arriving anonymously just before Martin's unwise departure, itself precipitated by his grandfather's excessive harshness, nicely epitomizes this thoughtless, but not unloving parent.

To see the change that takes place in Tom we need only observe that when he is established in London, having stood up to Pecksniff and to Ruth's employer, he manages his salary of two hundred pounds per annum most properly. While Tom is impressed with the scale of John Westlock's housekeeping, he is no less proud of Ruth's much-maligned meat pie. Tom has acquired a proper self-respect and an unconstrained appetite.

Structurally, the change in Tom from gull to ideal norm begins to occur after his defiance of Pecksniff. This important change is nicely prepared for. Just after Martin and Mark arrive in Eden, a tangled mass of dark vegetation, Martin begins to sicken with the fever that will be the agent of his change of heart. The scene shifts to England, where Dickens picks up the threads left dangling earlier as Pecksniff was thrown into confusion by Tom's announcement of Old Martin's arrival, at a time when Jonas was in the house. Here is the hypocrite in danger of being caught out, a portent of his final unmasking. After the scene in which Pecksniff receives Old Martin in the garden and Old Martin tests Jonas, there is an abortive meal, whether lunch or dinner or some kind of tea is not clear, with everyone at odds, a typical satire meal. Tom acts as guide for Old Martin and Mary back to the Blue Dragon. Old Martin makes the wrong decision about Tom, taking for granted that Tom is being paid to puff up Pecksniff. (The word "toad-puffer" is used.) Here is the reader's cue that Old Martin's forthcoming visit is a trick, since we now know that Old Martin does see through Pecksniff. It is also a preparation for the "biter bit" scene much later when Old Martin is caught for a time in his own net, as he has to appear to reject his grandson. On the way back to Pecksniff's house Tom meets and fights with Jonas, a scene of the same importance as the typical one in which a small hero fights a bully and wins. This scene seemed important to Dickens too. A letter of 24 September, 1843, to Angela Burdett-Coutts reads:

But I solemnly protest against the number being read out of its proper course - especially as the first chapter is not mortally long. If Miss Meredith resorts to any such improper and unjustifiable courses, Pinch is a dead man from that moment. 45

Tom has at last stood up and been counted; he now has a supporter in Charity and an enemy in Jonas, which last subtly aligns him with the forces of good. Old Martin has tested Jonas and found him sulky, not in possession of a good heart. At this point, too, Jonas mentions the vagabond member of his family, and we make the connection set up

in the introductory chapter, beginning to see Jonas as murderer.

The scene of Tom's final confrontation with Pecksniff is crucial. Pecksniff, telling Old Martin that he has been deceived in Thomas Pinch, says, "I wouldn't have believed it, Mr. Chuzzlewit, if a Fiery Serpent had proclaimed it from the top of Salisbury Cathedral" (CD, 312). This emblem of the symbol of evil characteristically proclaiming from the spire of the symbol of good nicely summarizes the satire to date. The confrontation between Tom and Pecksniff is no confrontation. This gull, who has allowed himself to be used for the first three-fifths of the novel, immediately sizes up the situation, does not protest where protest would do no good, and, in Dickens's words, "notwithstanding that he has been described as stooping generally, he stood as upright then as man could stand" (CD, 313). Here the interesting change begins which transforms Tom from the easily-visualized caricatured fool of satire to the sentimental sub-hero of a novel. We have noticed before that neither Nicholas Nickleby nor Martin is any more precisely defined than in the broadest sketch of their ages, class, and generally well set-up appearances. This imprecision (in Nicholas's case, conventionality) is exactly what allows the hero to change and grow in the reader's mind. If a character is not going to change, if our awareness of him is not going to deepen, it is all right for him to be delineated once and for all and to be recalled to memory through the shorthand of a verbal or visual tag. If, however, we are to become involved with the character, to feel with him, to help create him, as it were, from cumulative insights and suggestions, he needs to be more open to the reader's imagination. Tom's entry into this not merely fictional, but novelistic world, is marked by his leaving his "corner" at Pecksniff's where

there were portraits of him on the wall, with all his weak points monstrously portrayed. Diabolical sentiments, foreign to his character, were represented as issuing from his mouth in fat balloons. Every pupil had added

something, even unto fancy portraits of his father with one eye, and of his mother with a disproportionate nose, and especially of his sister; who always being presented as extremely beautiful, made full amends to Tom for any other joke. (CD, 315)

The reason for Tom's transposition from satire figure into novel character follows: "there was no Pecksniff; there never had been a Pecksniff; and all his other griefs were swallowed up in that" (CD, 315).

When the man from the Dragon, engaged to bear Tom's box, appears, he does not permit Tom to help him with it. The reader is alerted here to the change in Tom's status, a change which he has earned. Tom, who has assisted so many others to set out on a journey into independence and adventure, is about to set out himself. But his is a more painful withdrawal, since he has been so much more deeply and unwisely involved. Pecksniff's outstretched hand, Mrs. Lupin's tears, the tollman's repeated attempts to assimilate the news, are all stages in Tom's withdrawal and reincarnation, and help to accustom the reader to Tom's new role. Tom's arrival in Salisbury is in contrast with the excitement of his earlier visit. At the inn where Tom had met Martin and celebrated with John, he now takes no food and goes up to his bed as soon as it is ready. Pecksniff has gone out of Tom's world and Tom dreams of "Pecksniff as he Never Was" (CD, 317). The reader may recall that, at the beginning of the complication building up to his dismissal, when Tom "fell asleep at last", he dreamed "-new source of waking uneasiness - that he had betrayed his trust, and run away with Mary Graham" (CD, 248). "Pecksniff as he Never Was" is thus firmly ushered into Tom's dream world. Pecksniff's role in the novel is now taken over by substitutes, Mrs. Gamp and Jobling, and when next we see him he is in danger of being exposed by Martin over the grammar school. Similarly Pecksniff's role is reversed; he becomes the gull who plays fool to Jonas's and Tigg's knaves.

Tom's journey to London, to the real world, marks the change

from the predominant mode of satire to a mode in which the English sections of the work take on some of the characteristics of a sentimental domestic novel. The satire itself is moved to America, with young Martin and Mark, and the American sections function not only as a satire on America, but as a satire on the corresponding vices in England. As this middle section of the novel develops, Dickens is slowly building up the antithesis layer to the satirical thesis by showing Tom's transformation. Tom's and Ruth's domestic life is contrasted with life at Todgers's and with Mercy's life at Jonas's house. Since Ruth is gradually paired with John Westlock, and becomes aware of Tom's attachment to Mary Graham, the connection with young Martin is always close; when Martin returns to step into his good fortune he returns to a norm of decency that has been established by Tom and John and Ruth. The sections dealing with Tom and Ruth in London are thus, however unpalatable to contemporary critics, a necessary part of the satiric fabric.

One of the causes of irritation with Tom throughout the novel is Dickens's use of the vocative when addressing him. An explanation for this may be that Tom is the author's double, not in the sense in which David and Pip have much of the young Dickens in them, but in the more accurate psychological sense that he represents an alter ego or a repressed self. The first clue to this identification comes with Tom's trip to Salisbury for Pecksniff. As Tom gazes with child-like longing into the book shop the reader recognizes a selection from David Copperfield's list of beloved works. Robinson Crusoe, Tales of the Genii and The Arabian Nights "did so rub up and chafe that wonderful lamp within him, that when he turned his face towards the busy street, a crowd of phantoms waited on his pleasure, and he lived again with new delight, the happy days before the Pecksniff era" (CD, 45). The young idealist, imaginative, not yet taught by picaresque experience of the folly of the world, is an unsullied child. The very sight of a shop full of books recalls him to his school days at

Grove House Academy. Was this a reflection of Dickens's memory of the relief and joy of Wellington House, after the blacking factory? We might notice at this point, too, that Scrooge is carried back to just such a time by the ghost of Christmas past and that, at the beginning of Chapter 2 of Martin Chuzzlewit, the sun that looks brightly down on the little Wiltshire village: "like a sudden flash of memory or spirit kindling up the mind of an old man...shed a glory upon the scene, in which its departed youth and freshness seemed to live again" (CD, 5). When Dickens interrupted Martin Chuzzlewit to write A Christmas Carol he was deeply concerned with himself and with the changes in himself that his American trip had helped to bring into focus. And the pressing need for a period of rest that Dickens felt during the writing of Chuzzlewit suggests the strain of impending self-awareness.⁴⁶ Certainly this novel seems to mark a beginning of looking back to try to account for the springs of personality and character in early experience.

In addition to this list of books, Tom has other affinities with the young Dickens. Tom's grandmother was a housekeeper who was willing to give him all she had to secure him an appropriate place in life. Dickens's grandmother was a housekeeper and it was from her that his pleasure in hearing and telling stories began. There is no mention of Tom's mother, but mothers in future Dickens novels die young, before they can taint their sons' lives with the memory of their disregard. The relationship between Tom and Ruth Pinch may have some links with Charles and his sister Fanny. When John Dickens was released from prison, Mrs. Dickens agreed to have Charles return to the blacking warehouse while Fanny, who was gifted musically, might continue her schooling and music. Years later Dickens wrote to Forster "I never afterwards forgot, I never shall forget, I never can forget, that my mother was warm for my being sent back";⁴⁷ the memory of his mother's failure to cherish her gifted first-born son was more painful even than that of the blacking factory itself. Tom, we note, has little except music and a cherished sister to cheer him,

and it is the disregard Ruth Pinch's employers feel for her that makes a man of Tom. Without pursuing this diagnosis of Dickens and his sister too far, we must still be aware that Ruth's employers treat Ruth as Charles's mother treated him. Charles may well have wished for his present Scrooge-like self a more generous, if humble, character.

The suggestion that Tom may be Dickens's double is put forward as a possible explanation for the sentimentality that surrounds him. The other possible explanation for the use of direct address with this character may lie in the demands of the form. It is not at all unusual, of course, for the Victorian novelist to intrude into his story as teller of the tale. But other novelists of the period were given to exchanging confidences with dear reader. The tone of these authorial intrusions is usually either persuasive or confessional. ("Reader! I married him".) When Dickens addresses Tom, in contrast, it is as though he were speaking to the reader through Tom: "Blessings on thy simple heart! Tom Pinch". This has the curious effect of directing the reader's response while appearing not to do so. The difference between this kind of direction and that provided by third person narration may be seen by looking at an ordinary passage of satirical narration:

Another little trait came out, which impressed itself on Martin forcibly. Mr. Bevan told them about Mark and the negro, and then it appeared that all the Norrises were abolitionists. It was a great relief to hear this, and Martin was so much encouraged on finding himself in such company, that he expressed his sympathy with the oppressed and wretched blacks. Now, one of the young ladies - the prettiest and most delicate - was mightily amused at the earnestness with which he spoke; and on his craving leave to ask her why, was quite unable to speak for a time for laughing. As soon however as she could, she told him that the negroes were such a funny people; so excessively ludicrous in their manners and appearance; that it was wholly impossible for those who knew them well, to associate any serious ideas with such a very absurd part of the creation. (CD, 181)

Here Dickens is inside the story, the controlling narrator commenting as satirist, and we note that Martin has now become the satirist's persona. In his effusions to Tom, in contrast, Dickens steps right out of the narrator's role and uses a direct method of directing the reader's attention to an ideal. The effect of his effusions is to make us see that while it is not useful to be a fool, as Tom is, it is better to be a fool than to be a knave; only a good man can wear motley. The satirist is gradually building Tom up from the object of satire to the hero of a domestic novel, and as Tom more nearly approaches some kind of norm we are spared these sentimental directives. Only at the treacherous end do they re-appear, accompanied by sombre strains of organ music and garlands from little children's hands. If these and the eternal union with "little Ruth" provide something less than a triumph of the new society, they are said to entwine the Present and the Past and to soar towards the Future, which at least suggests that, however satirical the beginning of this work, its ending has a good deal of something else.

If the author as satirical commentator often summarizes the action from within for the benefit of the reader, or points, through the apostrophes to Tom, to a sentimental ideal that is the antithesis of the vices satirized in Pecksniff, he also takes a firm satirist's stance outside his fictive world. "What is exaggeration to one class of minds and perceptions, is plain truth to another." So begins the well-known Preface to the Charles Dickens Edition, the last of the three prefaces, each of which proves, as Paulson says in another connection, that:

The satirist customarily regards reality as something that the ordinary person can see only if he takes off the glasses of convention (the conventions of romance, pastoral, epic). He says, in effect: I am going to show you things as they really are. See how simple -- all of this that appeared complex can be reduced to lust and greed; or else, See how complex -- all of this that appeared to be simple is less easily formulable than you think. Surprising exposure is a basic satiric aim, and satirists have developed

many ingenious ways of revealing truth under appearance. They have accordingly tended to adopt the pose of convention-destroyers and anti-romanticists. Beginning with Horace and Juvenal, satirists have established their "true" picture of life by contrasting it with the imaginary world of tragedy and romance. 48

Dickens certainly takes this stance in his Prefaces, but, as we have seen, he does not maintain it to the end. Except for Oliver Twist which is also partly satirical in its intention, Martin Chuzzlewit has more prefaces than any of the other Dickens novels, and it is the only one to have a Postscript. The Preface to Nickleby, too, expresses Dickens's concern with the truth of what he is saying. These, like those of Shaw, draw the satirist outside the vice or folly described and attempt to establish him as a concerned, thinking, outraged member of society who exposes in order to reform. But the conventions of the form of satire seem to give at the seams when the satire takes over another genre, the drama or the novel. The satirist sets his fictive or dramatic world spinning while he remains outside to justify his vision. If, as here, the necessary relationships of satire between knave and fool and ideal norm modulate into a love story, and then into a sensation novel, the intellectualized, punishing, satirical element becomes less strong. Tom's development plays a considerable part in this modification. Perhaps Tom's role combines that of gull with another role described by Paulson:

Satura, or formal verse satire...is the most influential of all satiric fictions. Its main aim is to expose a succession of different aspects of a single vice, a catalog or rogues' gallery, reserving a small niche somewhere for an indication of the good. The first person speaker, however, is as important an element as the rogues described. The fiction constructed around him suggests a thoughtful or an outraged man describing what he sees or recalls, whether sitting in the solitude of his study or standing on a crowded Roman street....

Sometimes a third figure appears (or rather emerges) as the satire progresses: an adversary who questions the satirist or takes the contrary view. He is a vague figure who only serves to draw the satirist out, but he contributes to the illusion of a man talking and receiving occasional responses from a companion. 49

In Martin Chuzzlewit we may see Tom as this third figure; his naivety draws the satirist out. The pose of his being talked to then adds a dimension of emotional involvement that limits his satiric function and increases his suitability for the novel, according to Sacks's distinction between the two. As Scholes points out:

Frequently, in the course of a long narrative, they [the values of the satirist himself] shift, especially when the author cannot resist the esthetic and mimetic potentials of his plot. The natural tendency is for satire to drift toward mimesis proper, the characters losing their status as generalized types and taking on the problematic qualities we associate with the novel....What starts as satire ends as mimetic fiction if the developing esthetic aspects of the narrative weaken our purely intellectual interest in the dichotomy between the real and ideal worlds. We become absorbed into the fictional world and experience a resultant emotional concern for the well-being of the hero. Such a drift into mimesis proper is thematically satisfying when, as in the case of Swift and Dickens, man's common sense and spontaneous emotion are seen as more reliable instruments than his reason for resolving the contrary claims of the real and the ideal. 50

I have suggested that young Martin, in the beginning, uses Tom in much the same way that Pecksniff does, and that his behaviour is shown for what it is by John Westlock's actions and observations. Martin, that is, has the makings of another Pecksniff, except that his air castles are related to his great expectations. He tells Tom, as Tom admires his design for the grammar school, that if he should turn out a great architect one of the first things he will build is Tom's fortune:

"I'd build it up, Tom," returned Martin, "on such a strong foundation, that it should last your life - aye, and your children's lives too, and their children's after them. I'd be your patron, Tom. I'd take you under my protection. Let me see the man who should give the cold shoulder to anybody I chose to protect and patronise, if I were at the top of the tree, Tom!" (CD, 122)

With the same confidence and condescension Martin makes Mark Tapley "Co" in the firm of Chuzzlewit and Co. When Martin departs from

Pecksniff's house, what he leaves, as Stuart Curran has pointed out, is a mock incarnation of "the pastoral age" and the innocence of Eden.⁵¹ (The parody is continued in Chapter 24 when Pecksniff, now called Seth, hastily dresses up in gardening hat and smock and staff to receive and deceive Old Martin in the garden.) Both rejecting and being rejected, Martin sets out from this false Eden to another Eden, which turns out to be not even a parody of pastoral innocence. Martin has always seen through Pecksniff, though not through himself, and the minute he lands in America he takes on the dual role of satirist and satirized. Only after the dramatic conversion brought about by his illness does he see enough of himself to be able to move towards the role of vir bonus, a change of role that is affirmed by John Westlock's final acceptance of him.

It is thus not quite correct to see Martin's story as a Bildungsroman⁵² because in the Bildungsroman the hero makes some accommodation between the needs of his own nature and the society he lives in. Much of the society Martin lives in is here shown to be all too similar to Martin's selfish character. His conversion, too, has more in common with the sudden transformation of allegory than with the gradual accumulation of shaping experiences that we will find in the Bildungsroman as it is examined in the next two chapters. By the time Martin and Mark have returned from America both Tom and young Martin have become John Westlock's equals; what is important thereafter in their stories is simply the working out of the love relationships. But the serious themes of the novel must also be seen to their conclusion, and the objects of satire given their punishment. And so Pecksniff re-enters, ruined by the pretensions of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company, which is as insubstantial as all the airy castles and Houses of Parliament his students have constructed.

The other representative of the Chuzzlewit family, Jonas, also alternates between knave and gull throughout. He is easily played on

by both Mercy and her father and vicious to both in return, and he has the same range of responses to Tigg. The fact that Jonas actually commits murder to free himself again seems to change the mode. Just as satire cannot contain too many sympathetic characters and be effective satire, so a domestic novel cannot contain too many perversions of domesticity without turning into something else. The fascinating portrait of the double in Jonas's separation of his innocent from his guilty self as he leaves the dummy at home in his bed is also a separation of the two roles that he plays in the satire. Where Pecksniff has no self, Jonas has two selves that he cannot get together. He feels guilt for the supposed murder of his father, and this prepares us for his suicide, his killing of both selves. Pecksniff, in contrast, never shows any sign of knowing that anything has happened to him. Both are balanced in the novel by old Martin, whose conversion to yet another vir bonus in the form of a kindly old grandfather, sorry for his sins, is scarcely convincing, though necessary to the resolution of the theme.

The author's stance towards Jonas changes during the course of the novel. Beginning as an object of satire, almost a comic turn, Jonas reveals that there are smouldering depths to his character that begin to affect the reader as soon as his interest in Mercy Pecksniff acquires a purpose beyond that of greed. The cluster of scenes that occur during Old Martin's visit, in Chapter 24, serve as a cross-roads. Seth Pecksniff traps old Martin, Merry taunts Jonas, also in the garden, and tempts him sufficiently to arouse the viciousness of his nature. Wise old Martin attempts to save Mercy; Tom fights Jonas and Jonas loses not only the fight, but also his role in the distanced, intellectualized world of the satire, as does Charity. From this moment in the novel Jonas becomes a real villain, bearing a family resemblance both to Ralph Nickleby and to Bill Sikes. Greed, brutality and fear mark his life, suicide by hanging his death.

The typical dissociation of satire takes its most extreme form in

Jonas. His surroundings are ugly in the extreme, his meals sparse, his life, unlike that of Ralph Nickleby, completely graceless. Whereas Pecksniff is surrounded by reflections of himself in bust and portrait, and has an attitude toward the world that can be satirized, once Jonas is removed from surroundings where his oafishness is ludicrous, he loses even the mask of his role. This dissolution of role is accompanied by a dissolution of personality. Pecksniff thinks himself a good fellow; Charity thinks she deserves the best; the contrast between the reality and the role is the raison d'être of the satire. When Jonas's social role as miserly oaf and gull peaks in his unceremonious removal from the "Ankwerk package" the vengeful brutality of his character takes over. (We should note, in passing, that Tom is the unwitting agent of Jonas's destruction, as pre-figured in their fight, and that Mrs. Gamp, after creating as much disorder as possible, shows that she is present out of concern for Merry.) In Jonas the inappropriate relation between an inner self and its objective embodiment is carried to the extreme as his own body or self becomes an object. When Jonas leaves on his fearful, melodramatic night journey he leaves a dummy behind him in the bed. And, as he thinks back fearfully to the dummy from the scene of the crime, it is clear that the satiric dissociation between parts of a whole has reached a new dimension:

And he was not sorry for what he had done. He was frightened when he thought of it - when did he not think of it! - but he was not sorry. He had had a terror and dread of the wood when he was in it; but being out of it, and having committed the crime, his fears were now diverted, strangely, to the dark room he had left shut up at home. He had a greater horror, infinitely greater, of that room than of the wood. Now that he was on his return to it, it seemed beyond comparison more dismal and more dreadful than the wood. His hideous secret was shut up in the room, and all its terrors were there; to his thinking it was not in the wood at all. (CD, 452-3)

This is the first and most dramatic of a line of doubles in Dickens, beginning in the schizoid division of one into itself and a dummy

version of itself. Here, too, is the sensation novel, twenty years before its time, a mode lacking the humour and intellectual perception of satire and substituting for it the frissons of obsession and the involvement of romance. Once Jonas stops being an object of satire he acquires some psychological life. He enters humanity as he takes leave of it, and what began as the author's depersonalized caricature creation, wholly satirical, becomes a living character in a different mode.

Turning to the plot of Martin Chuzzlewit, we are faced with critic after critic who considers the plot picaresque. No doubt this is because Martin goes on a journey to America with his Sancho Panza, though a less roguish and opportunistic pair it would be difficult to find, and though the journey itself occupies only about one-sixth of the novel. If, however, we see Martin's visit to America as the marvellous journey of satire, and look for similar, though less spectacular, journeys within the novel, we find that these journeys accomplish a satirical purpose, that is they "explore the relationship between a particular society and its inherited social and moral ideals".⁵³

The first of these is Martin's journey to Pecksniff's house. The young man is quick to see the pretension, niggardliness, and opportunism that characterize this new territory. (Martin's design for a grammar school, which does, in fact, take first prize in a competition, is an honest piece of work, and Pecksniff's dishonesty is underlined, by contrast, when he steals the design.) Martin's expulsion from Pecksniff's results in his discovery of some of the realities of his society as he attempts to live in London on what he can get from pawning his clothes. This is rather different from the airy castles of expectation he has been accustomed to building. Martin's journey to America is an extension of this expulsion. As soon as he arrives he begins to discover, at Mr. Bevan's house and in conversation with the Norrises, the relation between the ideal of freedom in America

and the particular treatment of negroes. This is one of the first disparities Martin notices. He can also have little faith in the opportunities of a classless society when he observes the dedication of the Norris family to news of the doings of the English and European aristocracy. Finally, Martin's very presence in the Norrises' drawing room as a gentleman who has travelled steerage knocks General Fladdock out full-length on the rug. The rigidity of the General's social beliefs is represented by the military accoutrements which make it impossible for him to return to an upright position without extensive assistance. The General's fall reminds us, of course, of Pecksniff's fall at the beginning of the novel. Shortly after this American fall, Pecksniff, in England, falls backward into the fireplace at a party given by the young gentlemen at Todgers's to mourn his departure. This is the first action in a series of wonderfully farcical scenes which provide a preparation for the important one in which Tom Pinch performs a service parallel to that of Martin's to General Fladdock by confronting Pecksniff in his hypocrisy. The former tyrant is downed by the new clear-sightedness of the former fool, and falls backwards -- into the fireplace. Pecksniff has been caught out in his much-vaunted morality just as flagrantly as have the civilized Americans in their devotion to freedom.

This is the beginning of Martin's disillusionment with America, but the main point of his journey is that he learns, not only about America and, by inference, England, but that he learns about himself. His journey thus accomplishes the change from the episodic, action or situation-centred series of adventures that we find in the first half of Pickwick and in Smollett, to the character-centred, inward journey of the Bildungsroman, the confession, the spiritual autobiography, whose elements contribute to the character-centred novel of the nineteenth century. Martin's change of heart occurs appropriately in January, and immediately after it he and Mark discuss home and Tom

Pinch, another signal to the reader that Tom is beginning the metamorphosis from ingenue to vir bonus. It is interesting to note that Martin's resolution for a New Year and a new life is echoed in the work Dickens interrupted Chuzzlewit to write, that is by Scrooge's ghosts with their triumphant allegorical conversion of the epitomy of greed into a touchstone of Christian charity.

Harry Stone has dealt exhaustively with the American sections of Martin Chuzzlewit and the perceptions these express can need little additional comment at a time when the vices satirized have blossomed beyond even Dickens's imagination. What does seem to need emphasis is the fact that Dickens is here writing in the satirical mode. In an article dealing with the comparison between Dickens's experiences as he records them in both letters and in American Notes and in the novel, Stone makes the following observation:

By the same token, the idea that youthful Martin Chuzzlewit, an obscure steerage passenger, could once he arrived in America, be treated as a fascinating celebrity, a man of infinite sagacity, and the proper recipient of formal tributes and levees, is an absurdity which turns Dickens's imagination into farce and his realism into caricature. Dickens is here too emotionally involved with his recent memories to modify and subdue them sufficiently for credibility. As a result the purest autobiography becomes the wildest fictional extravagance. 54

Indeed yes, "fictional extravagance" of the type that bring about the "absurd" changes in the size of Lemuel Gulliver.

A number of satirical devices are used in this section. At the beginning of Part IX, in Chapter 21, the authorial comment makes the necessary satirical connections: "Mr. Pecksniff's house is more than a thousand leagues away; and again this happy chronicle has Liberty and Moral Sensibility for its high companions". Eden is patently allegorical from the first. Mark, a walking satire on the "everything for the best in the best of all possible worlds" philosophy, sets the tone, "Impossible for a place to have a better name, sir, than the Walley of Eden. No man couldn't think of settling

in a better place than the Walley of Eden. And I'm told," added Mark after a pause, "as there's lots of serpents there, so we shall come out, quite complete and reg'lar" (CD, 216). All gatherings, like that at the National Hotel, are peopled by such just representations of general nature as Jefferson Brick and Colonel Diver. Martin negotiates for his share of Eden with General Scadder whose dissociated face ought to warn him of Scadder's satirical function:

Two gray eyes lurked deep within this agent's head, but one of them had no sight in it, and stood stock still. With that side of his face he seemed to listen to what the other side was doing. Thus each profile had a distinct expression; and when the movable side was most in action, the rigid one was in its coldest state of watchfulness. It was like turning the man inside out, to pass to that view of his features in his liveliest mood, and see how calculating and intent they were. (CD, 223)

During the trip up the river things become drearier as more people leave until,

the monotonous desolation of the scene increased to that degree, that for any redeeming feature it presented to their eyes, they might have entered, in the body, on the grim domains of Giant Despair....

At last they stopped. At Eden too. The waters of the Deluge might have left it but a week before: so choked with slime and matted growth was the hideous swamp which bore that name. (CD, 237)

This is Eden after the flood, unmistakably a fallen world. The arrival of an Edener, an allegorical figure decrepit upon a stick, who leads them to their cabin, continues the satirical motif. The cabin has scarcely enough structure to provide even an allegorical shelter, being "rudely constructed of the trunks of trees" and "open to the wild landscape and the dark night". Martin weeps in complete despair, and has the grace to ask Mark's forgiveness. The meal they share immediately afterwards has something of the grace of Pip's meal for the convict in Great Expectations, being bravely presented and graciously received. In contrast with so many of the blocked satirical meals in the novel it is a shared experience in which the

pledge of loyalty inherent in the "and Co" is consummated. This, of course, is the counter-image of a brotherhood of equals in a free society that gives point to Dickens's satirical treatment of a country that had fallen so far short of his idealization of it.

The tangled mass of the forest is an appropriate setting for a satire and Mark's efforts are to bring order to it. Once the travellers have begun on these first positive steps towards the creation of a new society, Dickens shifts the scene back to Pecksniff and the worst of the old society as Pecksniff locks Jonas up while he receives Old Martin, at the beginning of Chapter 24. Chapters 30 to 32 are occupied with the change in the situations of Pecksniff, Tom and old Martin. Charity has retreated to Mrs. Todgers's, and the transition back to Eden and a more direct satiric mode is accomplished through a reference to Mr. Moddle, "living in the terrestrial paradise of Miss Pecksniff's love". Just as Miss Pecksniff is something too good for fallen man, so is the city of Eden. There is a reference to the perfection of the American Eagle, and then to Mark, whose whole scheme of looking for something to bring him out strong is itself a satire on the convention of the picaro, the cheerful opportunist who seeks a chance to turn the affair of the moment to his personal advantage. We are not allowed to forget that there are objects of satire on both sides of the Atlantic; Mark's cheerful comments on toads and their resemblance to Pecksniff unite the two countries and provide an example of the satirist's emblematic use of certain animals. This scene is followed by what might be called the mock-unheroic one in which Martin presses Mark for suggestions as to how they could be worse off. Immediately, general misery pales before the particular horror of Hannibal Chollop's American boasting, the national sin, as Pecksniff's hypocrisy is of his country, and the anxiety lest he should have over-estimated his ability to judge and control the circumference of his spitting range.

As Mark and Martin leave, the novel is punctuated again by a

departure and a journey, but a journey to a pogrom. A final departure ends the American trip, marking the final stage in this journey and completing the visit-expulsion-return pattern, typical of one of the conventions of satire, that is represented so often throughout the novel. Appropriately, this journey ends with the satirical device of the beast epic as Martin comments finally on the emblematic American eagle:

"I should want to draw it like a Bat, for its short-sightedness; like a Bantam, for its bragging; like a Magpie, for its honesty; like a Peacock, for its vanity; like a Ostrich, for its putting its head in the mud, and thinking nobody sees it-" (CD, 343)

Martin's return to England begins with a scene showing his genuine fellowship with Mark in the tiny tavern where they have lunch and where they hear about Pecksniff's visit to lay the cornerstone for Martin's grammar school. This scene balances the one which occurred in the tiny lodging-house room where Mark became his servant before they left for America, and where the two had enacted the charade of the master-servant relationship, with the servant being so clearly the better man. Similarly, Martin's journey to "the little Wiltshire village" and his penitent return to his grandfather is set against his defiance on setting out. Everything is designed, even the awkward meeting with John Westlock, to show what Martin has learned. What he has learned, really learned, are the inherited social and moral ideals of his society; his return to a world where Pecksniff receives adulation and Jonas plots to kill his father out of greed, that is to the realistic surface of that society, heightens the contrast between the ideal and the real. Thus Martin's journey encompasses much of the novel. It involves Pecksniff, Tom, John, old Martin, and all of the American characters.

Six pages after Mark's description of the American eagle and precisely two-thirds of the way through the novel, Tom Pinch's journey begins. After his expulsion from Pecksniff's, Tom is filled with disillusionment. But he gradually moves towards self-respect and, in

this progress from ingenue to ideal norm, provides a picture of ideal domesticity that highlights the falseness of Pecksniff's house and the misery of Jonas Chuzzlewit's. His naivety also provides a mildly satirical view of the city, which will be discussed further under setting. The only sense in which Tom returns to Pecksniff's is that he is present when Pecksniff is denounced, and Pecksniff's cringing obsequiousness is highlighted by contrast with Tom's self-respect.

Tom's journey is a contrast to Martin's in several ways. First, there is the spirited ride to London that captures all the exhilaration of newly independent living and the excitement of the city; this is to be contrasted with Martin's terrible ship passage. Tom's first shock is his discovery of the way Ruth has been treated by her rich employers; this is similar to Martin's meeting with the Norrises. But from this point on, Tom begins to consolidate his fortunes through sober sense, while Martin moves towards destruction. The contrast between the two is indicated in the passage where Tom points out to Ruth the folly of "people who read about heroes in books, and choose to make heroes of themselves out of books, and consider it a very fine thing to be discontented and gloomy, and misanthropical, and perhaps a little blasphemous, because they cannot have everything ordered for their individual accommodation" (CD, 479). This is an oblique explanation of the misunderstanding between Martin and himself, and a commentary on Martin's old self. When the misunderstanding between them has been cleared up Tom has his own place in the small society; in the end he enjoys the role of beloved bachelor uncle that Dickens reserves for some of his favourite characters, as Martin steps into the great expectations he has finally earned. Where Martin's journey exposes the fraudulent claims of America, Tom's builds up a picture of the domestic health that comes from choosing friends wisely, husbanding one's money, and performing one's job dutifully - typical concerns of satire. Tom's journey may be seen as the positive antithesis to Martin's almost fatal one.

The other journey that is related to Martin's is Jonas's ride to the country with Tigg in quest of Pecksniff's money. His wild ride in the storm reminds us of Martin's journey by sea; the tangled wood where the secret meeting takes place resembles the tangled forest of Eden. Tigg bears something of the relation to Jonas that Mark Tapley does to Martin but, where Martin is able to learn from Mark and discovers his better self in the desolate little cabin, Jonas embraces his evil self in murdering Tigg and becomes permanently alienated from the innocent self represented by the dummy who is standing in for him in his bed in London. Martin, the vagabond, finds in his travels the secret of integration; Jonas, the murderer, cannot live with himself and dies.

To summarize: if we think of this novel as being divided into three sections, each of the three has a journey as its central motif. The climax of the first section, the Martin-Pecksniff section, is in Mark's and Martin's voyage to America which takes place at the end of the sixth number; Tom's happy journey to London is described at the beginning of the fourteenth number, and Jonas's wild ride to the country at the end of the seventeenth. The journeys are thematically related and the relationship between the first and the last is underlined by the shadow of the curse of Cain that initiates both. When Martin leaves Pecksniff's house he is cursed for a vagabond, like Cain, and when Jonas sets off on his murderous errand Dickens asks whether Jonas looked back over his shoulder "to see if his quick footsteps still felt dry upon the dusty pavement, or were already moist and clogged with the red mire that stained the naked feet of Cain!" In the Bible Cain is first a murderer and then a vagabond. Here Martin and Jonas divide the Cain-like functions. In the second part of the myth, Cain is a builder of cities, an appropriate motif for Martin whose return to England is blessed by the sight of his prize grammar school. Between the two wanderers in the wilderness is Tom Pinch's quiet establishment of domestic decorum and his ordering

of the chaos in old Martin's library. Tom's awareness of the discordant elements of London life underlines his role as representative of the values and ideals of his society. These are in sharp contrast with the violence, aggressiveness, and hypocrisy that Martin finds in America and that we are shown in slightly different form in England. The Anglo-Bengalee Company is as empty and dishonest as the Eden Land Development Scheme; the difference between the two is that the porter of the Anglo-Bengalee wears a splendid waistcoat and the directors of the Company dine in style, in contrast with their uncouth American counterparts, a surface difference only. The events that make up the plot of the novel, then, are designed to work out the contrast between the ideals of English society and its realities. American society is contrasted with English society but both are wrong. Far from being an irrelevant afterthought, Martin's journey to America is an allegorical statement of Dickens's professed subject. The more mechanical elements of plotting, such as old Martin's machinations with Martin and Mary, and Jonas's plot to murder his father, both viciously selfish acts, are simply that, plot machinery. The answer to A.E. Dyson's question, "Is its organization conventionally picaresque or daringly symbolist?" is that it is neither.⁵⁵ The actions that are crucial to the story, old Martin's rejection of his grandson, Pecksniff's rejection of Tom, Tom's delivering Nadgett's letter to force Jonas off the "Ankwerk package", are all contrivances to show the differences between the real and the ideal, and to bring about the punishment of the rogues and sinners.

Ideas about the settings of satire may be gathered from different sources. From Frye comes the association with winter, with what is cold, dead, harsh, severe;⁵⁶ from Hogarth, the densely populated and squalid London streets; from allegory, the association with a tangled mass of vegetation. Streets in satire are crooked and blocked, rooms disordered, inharmonious, or clearly pretentious. Dissociation is paramount. Dissociation suggests non-function; the typical satire

meal, for instance, is one in which both food and ceremony are robbed of their function. Satiric meals are disordered, unpleasant, destructive; the wine is sour and spilled, the food meagre or past its prime, the company quarrelsome. What ought to be is forced to remain in the background behind the unpleasant reality of what is.

Martin Chuzzlewit is full of such settings. The story begins, after the mock-heroic genealogy of the first chapter, with the declining sun of autumn struggling through the mist that had obscured it all day and looking down on a village near Salisbury where:

The vane upon the tapering spire of the old church glistened from its lofty station in sympathy with the general gladness; and from the ivy-shaded windows such gleams of light shone back upon the glowing sky, that it seemed as if the quiet buildings were the hoarding-place of twenty summers, and all their ruddiness and warmth were stored within. (CD, 5)

The cathedral, at some distance from Pecksniff's house, and at cross purposes to it, as suggested by the finger-post in the frontispiece, gleams mistily in the background, rising out of a green and smiling landscape. Travellers to London must go by way of Salisbury whose cathedral and organ, its bookshops and accommodating inns, represent a warm world of affection and imagination. The cathedral itself represents "humanity, what man is capable of achieving", but the foreground is dominated by Pecksniff's house. At Pecksniff's house we meet the harsh satiric winter wind that scatters the frightened leaves and knocks Pecksniff backward on his own doorstep. This motif is repeated several times in the novel both with Pecksniff himself and with General Fladdock. A similar wind blows in the storm at sea as Mark and Martin sail towards Martin's self-discovery:

Here! Free from that cramped prison called the earth, and out upon the waste of waters. Here, roaring, raging, shrieking, howling, all night long. Hither come the sounding voices from the caverns on the coast of that small island, sleeping, a thousand miles away, so quietly in the midst of angry waves; and hither, to meet them, rush the blasts from unknown desert places of the world....

Among these sleeping voyagers were Martin and Mark Tapley;...the first objects Mr. Tapley recognized when he opened his eyes were his own heels--looking down to him, as he afterwards observed, from a nearly perpendicular elevation. (CD, 156)

We note that the satiric wind reverses normal angles of vision by knocking people over.

America, of course, abounds in satirical settings; the Norris's drawing room, with its imitation of all that is correct and luxurious in English appointments, becomes a parody when the Misses Norris concern themselves solely with the activities of the aristocracy, and perform in several European languages, including Swiss, which does not exist. The contrast between this, which represents the inherited ideals of the society (mocked), and the crudity of its egalitarian reality, where men and women eat greedily without civility or ceremony and where social intercourse is replaced by lectures and religious meetings forms a micro-satire. We have observed that Pecksniff's house and garden are mock pastoral: the other Eden is a more savage mockery. The tangled mass of vegetation, the swamp that breeds plague-carrying insects, the dead trees and unproductive soil are reversals of the paradisaal garden. The river itself that winds through the dismal swamp is a far cry from the pure water of the river of life as it carries its victims inland to their death, or their emaciated forms back to confess the death of their dreams.

Returning to London, we recall Mrs. Gamp's wonderful room where, "only keep the bedstead always in your mind; and you were safe. That was the grand secret. Remembering the bedstead, you might even stop to look under the little round table for anything you had dropped, without hurting yourself much against the chest of drawers, or qualifying as a patient of Saint Bartholomew, by falling into the fire" (CD, 466). In this appropriate setting occurs the great final meal between Mrs. Gamp and Betsy Prig in which Mrs. Harris's very being is questioned. This conflict between the ideal and the real

nicely epitomizes many other details in the London sections of the novel: Mr. Mould's carefully arranged funeral procession for Anthony Chuzzlewit, where the splendour is purposely bought to camouflage the hatred; Charity Pecksniff and Mr. Moddle as the happy young couple shopping for furniture; Young Bailey causing terror as he careens through the streets in his sporting livery, as deceptive as Mould's mourners; and the offices of the Anglo-Bengalee Company, a House of Pride whose porter's resplendent waistcoat shows the whole operation to be as empty as the Eden Land Corporation, but expressed in an idiom as representative of the national English vices as the fraudulent Scadder is of the American ones.

Finally, Tom Pinch's arrival in London provides a classic device of satire whereby the outsider's naivety offers an unconsciously critical view of the city. In the midst of his enthusiastic first breakfast with John Westlock, Tom observes:

"No. I have been looking over the advertising sheet, thinking there might be something in it, which would be likely to suit me. But, as I often think, the strange thing seems to be that nobody is suited. Here are all kinds of employers wanting all sorts of servants, and all sorts of servants wanting all kinds of employers, and they never seem to come together....Even those letters of the alpabet, who are always running away from their friends and being entreated at the tops of columns to come back, never do come back, if we may judge from the number of times they are asked to do it, and don't." (CD, 355)

This dissociation between a part and its complement is a repetition of the approach to Todgers's:

You couldn't walk about in Todgers's neighbourhood, as you could in any other neighbourhood. You groped your way for an hour through lanes and bye-ways, and court-yards, and passages; and you never once emerged upon anything that might be reasonably called a street. A kind of resigned distraction came over the stranger as he trod those devious mazes, and, giving himself up for lost, went in and out and round about and quietly turned back again when he came to a dead wall or was stopped by an iron railing, and felt that the means of escape might possibly present themselves in their own good time, but that to

anticipate them was hopeless. Instances were known of people who, being asked to dine at Todgers's had travelled round and round for a weary time, with its very chimney-pots in view; and finding it, at last, impossible of attainment, had gone home again with a gentle melancholy on their spirits, tranquil and uncomplaining. Nobody had ever found Todgers's on a verbal direction, though given within a minute's walk of it. Cautious emigrants from Scotland or the North of England had been known to reach it safely, by impressing a charity-boy, town-bred, and bringing him along with them; or by clinging tenaciously to the postman; but these were rare exceptions, and only went to prove the rule that Todgers's was in a labyrinth, whereof the mystery was known but to a chosen few. (CD, 81)

And over this maze lies, as one can see when he climbs to the terrace on the roof to see the view, the shadow of the Monument:

For first and foremost, if the day were bright, you observed upon the house-tops, stretching far away, a long dark path: the shadow of the Monument: and turning round, the tall original was close behind you, with every hair erect upon his golden head, as if the doings of the city frightened him. (CD, 83)

The Monument, with its spiky top and fraudulent keeper ("The Man in the Monument was a Cynic; a worldly man!") (CD, 362) is the city representative of Pecksniff; its shadow lies athwart the view from Todgers's as Pecksniff's spirit casts its shadow over different levels of society in the city in the persons of Mrs. Gamp and Dr. Jobling. Todgers's is the centre of dissociation, the representative of dissociated city life. Here live commercial gentlemen frequently changing jobs, the dispossessed Charity and her Augustus, Mark's double (everything for the worst in the worst of all possible worlds), and the scheming Pecksniff when in town. Todgers's is the scene of Charity's abortive wedding. The terrace of Todgers's, from which the famous view is to be seen, provides Young Bailey with scope for his hubristic desire to escape the ordinary. He balances on the parapet, inviting accidental suicide. He threatens to go into the army to play the drums and the reader stores this information in his memory, coloured with the pathos of all the cocky little drummer

boys of song and story, as a preparation for Young Bailey's probable death. Young Bailey, soon to be metamorphosed into "a highly-condensed embodiment of all the sporting grooms in London" (CD, 265), is an urban picaro whose near death in the final section is a key to that section's difference of narrative mode; he will live to fall off other things, if he steers clear of murder and melodrama. Recalled to life, he enters a realistic novel where Poll Sweedlepipe's love may save him. In the fragmented world of monads that is Mrs. Gamp's and Mrs. Todgers's London, Poll's care for his birds and his neighbours is a healing principle of order.

For even in the midst of these typically disordered London settings there are touches of the ideal that re-assert the positive values of Christian society. At the very centre of the dissociation of Todgers's is Mrs. Todgers, "with affection beaming in one eye and calculation shining out of the other" (CD, 80). For "in some odd nook in Mrs. Todgers's breast, up a great many steps, and in a corner easy to be overlooked, there was a secret door with 'Woman' written on the spring, which, at a touch from Mercy's hand, had flown open, and admitted her for shelter" (CD, 366). She, too, cares for her boarders, and comforts Mercy after Jonas's death. The dissociation between part and its complement that Tom Pinch first notices in the advertisements begins to be bridged by Poll in his assumption of care for others, and by Mrs. Todgers, whose efforts are bent towards bringing about a union of opposites and towards accommodation and reconciliation, when these can be squared with the commercial survival of Todgers's.

The other road to survival in a world of disorder, where objects take on lives of their own, as if repelled by the wrong pole of a magnet, is to work towards order and a proper appreciation of the objects themselves. Ruth and Tom Pinch, in this second third of the novel, present this ideal. Ruth's housekeeping and her constant attention to Tom's clothing help to make the reader aware of his growth

towards normalcy. Tom and Ruth are caught up in the romance of real life. Their housekeeping and shopping arrangements are heightened by all the glamour that surrounds first adventures in independent living. A trip to the butcher's and the wrapping of a piece of meat for the meat pie have, in their lives, the seriousness of purpose that Dorothea Brooke, in George Eliot's Middlemarch, might have brought to an inspection of the domestic arrangements of the cottagers in the village. Tom and Ruth already know the excitement and maturity of 'finding out what things cost', as Dorothea Brooke knows she must do at the end of Middlemarch, and have long since learned to express love and concern through the ordinary offices of daily life. Ruth's meat pie, which she is learning to make in the midst of affectionate disparagement, is made with love and eaten with appropriate admiration. The simplicity and order of their lives is the order of a realistic romance, and Tom becomes a kind of mundane anti-hero of realism, or a sub-hero of sentimental romance. Meat, as the butcher says with some emotion, "must be humoured, not drove" (CD, 376), and Ruth and Tom share this attitude to the objects and the people around them.

It is refreshing to find that Ruth's critically berated meat pie has a certain figurative resonance: it is thematically significant in itself and related to other meals, such as the inept but loving one Martin offers to Mark in their cabin in Eden. In this resonance it resembles other significant things in the novel: the Cathedral spire, the organ, the Temple fountain, the dismal swamp, the tangled wood, the labyrinthine streets, and the various Houses of Pride. It is the insistent suggestiveness of these things, perhaps, that leads Dyson to ask whether the organization of Chuzzlewit is "darkly symbolist", that is, an organization in which "ideas may be important, but are characteristically presented obliquely through a variety of symbols and must be apprehended largely by intuition and feeling".⁵⁷ Several of Dickens's novels are symbolist in this sense but what is significant in Martin Chuzzlewit, I would suggest, is

that the symbols are arranged in a pattern of opposites: Salisbury Cathedral versus Pecksniff's house, the labyrinthine streets of London in contrast with the Temple fountain, lavish banquets greedily eaten and meat pies appreciatively savoured, the Blue Dragon and tangled forests, coach journeys to freedom, coach journeys to death, and so on. The ideas of order and love are contrasted with pretension, chaos, and death; selfishness, greed, and materialism are contrasted with warmth and generosity of spirit; Jonas's ultimate transgression against the laws of life is contrasted with Martin's acquisition of the good heart that will enable him to cherish "the inherited ideals of his society".

The sense of something "darkly symbolist" is particularly strong in the final section of the novel that deals with Jonas's crime and his capture. The identification of the obsessed Jonas with Cain, the almost symbolic settings (tangled wood, Jonas's cave-like room), the broad highway, the haunted-fugitive journey pattern, the portentous dreams and the good-versus-evil struggle implicit in the story of crime and punishment, all point to an affinity with the allegorical romance. It has been suggested, in the first chapter of this thesis, that allegory and satire are often intimately connected and we find here, in the Jonas section, so often seen as related only mechanically to the rest of the novel, an allegory of the state of mind that is being satirized throughout the novel. What may be said, however, is that this intense psychological drama is no longer in the mode of satire. As I have suggested, we lose our detached view of Jonas after his marriage to Merry. But while the final section is not in the mode of satire, its message underlines Dickens's theme by showing the extreme form and ultimate punishment of selfishness.

Martin Chuzzlewit is both a satirical study of society and, in part, a serious examination of the roots of behaviour in a personal past. As a study of society it is the precursor to the consciously

social novels to come; its examination of a personal past, already begun obliquely in A Christmas Carol, will continue movingly in Copperfield. It was perhaps this combination of serious social themes with brilliant characterization, brought together on a large canvas whose thematic organization survives shifts of mode, that made Dickens say, as he was writing Chuzzlewit, that he felt his power then, more than he ever did.⁵⁸ Once Tom Pinch is restored to his literary role as an essential figure in the working out of a satire, rather than the object of scorn he might be in real life, and Martin's journey to America is seen as an integral comment on both American and British society, the work is less a thing of brilliant bits and more a remarkable whole. Once Chuzzlewit is seen in the tradition of satire to which it belongs, many critical objections, to the mock-heroic genealogy, to the passage on the angry wind, for example, fall away. If we admit, with Scholes and Kellogg, that "the natural tendency is for satire to drift towards mimesis proper, the characters losing their status as generalized types and taking on the problematic qualities we associate with the novel",⁵⁹ many of the criticisms of inconsistency in action and character, such as those in Barbara Hardy's essay on its lack of organization,⁶⁰ can be met to some degree. Seen as an anatomy of selfishness rather than as a failed comic novel whose modes conflict, Chuzzlewit fits more neatly into the Dickens canon, looking forward not only to Bleak House and Our Mutual Friend, but also to another single-hero novel that criticizes society, Great Expectations. The differences between Great Expectations and Martin Chuzzlewit strongly underline the differences in mode. In Great Expectations, Dickens wrote a Bildungsroman in the form of a fairy tale; this provided a brilliantly economical metaphor for a society, and, at the same time, an intimate portrait of a hero who experiences both its reality and its ideal values. In Martin Chuzzlewit he set out to write a satire. Martin, in contrast with Pip, is not someone we know intimately but a representative member of

his society whom we see from the detached viewpoint of the satirist. His "Life and Adventures" take us through a general description of the real world and provide a directive towards "the inherited ideals" from which that particular society has fallen away.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

1. From Dickens's verse prologue to Westland Marston's play, The Patrician's Daughter. This was originally to have been the epigraph to Martin Chuzzlewit.
2. Martin Chuzzlewit (London, 1850), p. vii.
3. Barbara Hardy, The Moral Art of Dickens (London, 1970), pp. 101-102.
4. H.M. Daleski, Dickens and the Art of Analogy (London, 1970), pp. 79-81.
5. Barbara Hardy, p. 115.
6. Gilbert Highet, The Anatomy of Satire (Princeton, 1962), pp. 14-23.
7. An extract from The Times leader, 8 July 1843, is reprinted in Martin Chuzzlewit (Harmondsworth, 1968), Appendix B, pp. 926-9.
8. Mary Claire Randolph, "The Structural Design of Formal Verse Satire", PQ: 31 (1942), 368-94.
9. Ronald Paulson, "The Fictions of Satire", in Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. Ronald Paulson (New Jersey, 1971), pp. 349-50.
10. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (New York, 1966), p. 113.
11. Alvin B. Kernan, "A Theory of Satire", in Satire, ed. Paulson, p. 255.
12. A.E. Dyson, "Martin Chuzzlewit: Howls the Sublime", CQ, 9 (1967): 234.
13. Edwin B. Benjamin, "The Structure of Martin Chuzzlewit", PQ 34 (1955): 40-41.
14. Grahame Smith, Dickens, Money & Society (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), p. 45.
15. Richard Hannaford, "Irony and Sentimentality: Conflicting Modes in Martin Chuzzlewit", The Victorian Newsletter, 46 (1974): 26.
16. Barbara Hardy, p. 115.
17. Allan C. Christensen, "A Dickensian Hero Retailored: The Carlylean Apprenticeship of Martin Chuzzlewit", Studies in the Novel, 3 (1971): 18-25.
18. Edward J. Evans, "The Established Self": The American Episodes of Martin Chuzzlewit", Dickens Studies Annual, 5 (Carbondale and V. Edwardsville, 1976): 59-73.

19. Ibid., p. 72.
20. Hannaford, p. 27.
21. Ibid., p. 28.
22. Ibid., p. 27.
23. Ibid., p. 28.
24. Harvey Peter Sucksmith, The Narrative Art of Charles Dickens (Oxford, 1970), p. 277. (See, too, Kathleen Tillotson, Novels of the Eighteen-Forties (Oxford, 1954), p. 175.
25. Letters II Pilgrim, to John Forster, 2 November 1843, p. 590.
26. Hannaford, p. 27.
27. Dyson, p. 237.
28. Ibid., p. 234.
29. Ibid., p. 242.
30. S.H. Hooke, Middle Eastern Mythology (Baltimore, 1963), p. 126.
31. Ibid., p. 127.
32. Stuart Curran, "The Lost Paradise of Martin Chuzzlewit", Nineteenth Century Fiction, 25 (1970): 51-67.
33. Hooke, p. 124.
34. P.N. Furbank, Introduction to Martin Chuzzlewit (Harmondsworth, 1968), p. 13.
35. The Cankered Muse (New Haven, 1959), p. 33.
36. Hannaford, p. 27.
37. W.J. Harvey, Character in the Novel (London, 1966), p. 191.
38. Edgar Johnson, Charles Dickens (London, 1953), Vol. I, Part 6, Ch. 2, Notes, p. xxxix.
39. Preface to the Cheap Edition, London, 1849.
40. John Carey, The Violent Effigy (London, 1973), p. 64. This is the clearest and most economical comment on Mrs. Gamp's enunciation.
41. Marcus, pp. 264-65fn.
42. Sheldon Sacks, "Towards a Grammar of the Types of Fiction" in Satire, ed. Paulson, p. 330.
43. Ibid., p. 331.
44. Ibid., p. 336.
45. Letters III Pilgrim, p. 571.

46. Letters III Pilgrim. To John Forster [1 November 1843] pp. 587-8 and [2 November 1843] pp. 590-91.
47. Ley, p. 35.
48. Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England (New Haven & London, 1967), pp. 18-19.
49. Ibid., pp. 19-20.
50. Scholes and Kellogg, pp. 51-67.
51. Curran, pp. 51-67.
52. Christensen, p. 19. Christensen's definition is: The Bildungsroman seeks to define a representative human identity that is sufficiently cultivated and harmonious to symbolize the ideal nature of Man.
53. Scholes and Kellogg, p. 113.
54. Harry Stone, "Dickens' Use of His American Experiences in Martin Chuzzlewit", PMLA, 72 (1957): 464-478.
55. See above, note 12.
56. Northrop Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957). See "The Mythos of Winter: Irony and Satire", pp. 223-39.
57. Alfred Garwin Engstrom, "Symbolism", in The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton, 1974), p. 836.
58. Ley, p. 305.
59. Scholes and Kellogg, p. 112.
60. Hardy, "Martin Chuzzlewit", p. 100.

CHAPTER IV

THE NOVEL AS BILDUNGSROMAN

The Personal History of DAVID COPPERFIELD

The story line of a good autobiographical Waverly ^(sic.) looks like the criss-crossing of half a dozen broken switchbacks, each of them bristling with innumerable targets to infinity. 1

When Dickens wrote to Forster, near the time of the writing of Copperfield, of his sense of some happiness forever lost, some close relationship forever missed, his words recall the nostalgia that pervades this novel.² The dominant impression is, as George Ford says, "in almost every chapter of roads not taken and of doors that never opened...".³ This tone, and the unresolved tension behind it, is perhaps typical of the Bildungsroman, of which David Copperfield is one of the first English examples.

Even this, seemingly the most straight-forward identification of genre among the single-hero novels, is not unanimously supported by critics and requires brief explanation.⁴ According to Susanne Howe, whose Wilhelm Meister and His English Kinsmen was one of the first studies of the English Bildungsroman tradition, in the typical Bildungsroman the adolescent hero often sets out from home in rebellion against the father who does not understand him. He becomes an apprentice either to art or in the art of living. His apprenticeship has been served when he has mastered his art, or after he has achieved harmonious self-development. Both David Copperfield and Great Expectations are excluded from the Howe definition because:

They are autobiographical and they deal, it is true, with young men who learn from experience and who do grow up in the course of the story, but more by accident than by design. David and Pip and Arthur Pendennis are, like Tom Jones, sadder and wiser young men in the last chapter than in the first, but their essential nature has not been modified. They have not developed through any inner realization of their own powers and the resolve to make their experience function. They have stumbled good-

naturedly over their obstacles, righted themselves, and determined not to make that particular mistake again, but they are not imaginative or reflective enough to see the wider implications of what has happened to them. Their history leads back rather more distinctly to the eighteenth century picaresque tradition of Fielding and Smollett than to the German form of the Bildungsroman...5

Mrs. Howe considers both Copperfield and Great Expectations to be examples of the more general form of the Entwicklungsroman. This term, according to Martin Swales, embraces "any novel having one central figure whose experience and whose changing self occupy a role of structural primacy within the fiction".⁶ He sees the term as a "neutral indicator of a certain kind of fictive organization". According to this view, the first three novels discussed in this thesis are Entwicklungsromane. I would suggest that while Mrs. Howe's definition of the Bildungsroman is clear, her reading, both of David Copperfield and of Great Expectations is oversimplified. Whatever one's reservations about the Dickens criticism in the forty-five years that intervene between Mrs. Howe's work and the present, at least it is not now possible to dismiss these two novels as lightly as she does in her otherwise thorough study. It would be more accurate to emend the final sentence of the passage quoted above to say that David's history leads back to Defoe and the tradition of spiritual autobiography, and forward into the Bildungsroman in its specifically English form.

Indeed Jerome H. Buckley, in his recent study of the genre, places David and Pip first. Of David Buckley writes, "His autobiography describes the education, through time remembered, of the affections; his growth lies in the ordering of his undisciplined heart".⁷ A number of critics have discussed this theme of the undisciplined heart, so clearly underlined by Dickens in his repetition of the phrase at the end of Chapter 53 and the beginning of Chapter 54, after its intentional placing as the climax of the whole Strong story. In the best and fullest treatment, Gwendolyn B. Needham argues that Dickens does show David growing through the realization not so much of his powers but of his mistakes;⁸ his resolve to convert his

experience is explicit at the end of Chapter 58, when he tells himself that he must become a better person for the sake of what might have been with Agnes, shortly before the situation between them is clarified. When David has earned Agnes's love by a renunciation similar to hers, with "no alloy of self", his apprenticeship is over and the pattern of the Bildungsroman is completed.

What seems to be at issue, however, is not so much a more or less subtle reading of the novels, as some clarification in the description of the genre. Buckley's study is rather disappointing in this respect. His description of the typical Bildungsroman is limited to the outline of a representative plot:

A child of some sensibility grows up in the country or in a provincial town, where he finds constraints, social and intellectual, placed upon the free imagination. His family, especially his father, proves doggedly hostile to his creative instincts or flights of fancy, antagonistic to his ambitions, and quite impervious to the new ideas he has gained from unprescribed reading. His first schooling, even if not totally inadequate, may be frustrating insofar as it may suggest options not available to him in his present setting. He therefore, sometimes at a quite early age, leaves the repressive atmosphere of home (and also the relative innocence), to make his way independently in the city (in the English novels, usually London). There his real "education" begins, not only his preparation for a career but also--and often more importantly--his direct experience of urban life. The latter involves at least two love affairs or sexual encounters, one debasing, one exalting, and demands that in this respect and others the hero reappraise his values. By the time he has decided, after painful soul-searching, the sort of accommodation to the modern world he can honestly make, he has left his adolescence behind and entered upon his maturity. His initiation complete, he may then visit his old home, to demonstrate by his presence the degree of his success or the wisdom of his choice. 9

This scarcely goes far enough. Its limitation is unfortunate because most of the writing on the Bildungsroman has either been in German or has been by English critics writing about German literature. Several of these insist that what is called a Bildungsroman in the English

tradition is different from and, it is suggested, less complex than what is called a Bildungsroman in the German tradition. However, for the purposes of this chapter and the next, I have found the description of the Bildungsroman in Lukács's chapter "Wilhelm Meister's Years of Apprenticeship" in his The Theory of the Novel,¹⁰ and Martin Swales's The German Bildungsroman from Weiland to Hesse¹¹, particularly the introductory essay and the excursus, to be most helpful. Both critics lean heavily on Goethe's Wilhelm Meister, and it may be that Dickens's well-known admiration for this work, which he read in Carlyle's translation, led to greater enrichment of the less complex English tradition than has previously been observed. While no one, other than Mrs. Howe, has suggested that David Copperfield is not a Bildungsroman, the novel has still not been read with the emphasis on the genre and its implications.

The essence of most descriptions of the genre is that the Bildungsroman is the chronicle of the intersection or interaction of two distinct entities. According to Hegel, it is the mediation between the poetic and the prosaic, able, as Swales notes, "to redeem the prosaic facticity of the given social world by relating it to the inner potentialities of the hero".¹² Friedrich Schlegel sees the Bildungsroman as "a mediator between emotion and reason,...which encompasses both".¹³ Martin Swales suggests that "perhaps Wilhelm Meister is the archetypal Bildungsroman in the sense that it focusses with pragmatic energy on a whole number of issues concerning plot, individual development, and the selfhood of the hero, concerning above all else the poetry of the heart (inwardness and potentiality) vis a vis the unyielding, prosaic temporality of practical social existence".¹⁴ In Thomas Mann's view the Bildungsroman "is the sublimation and rendering inward of the novel of adventures".¹⁵ This comment is certainly apt for Copperfield where the very title, "The Personal History of..." indicates both a connection with and a difference from "The Life and Adventures of" both Nicholas Nickleby and

Martin Chuzzlewit. The heroes of these two earlier novels are representative young men who prove themselves in ways appropriate to their respective modes (rescuing ; desperate heroine from fate worse than death, learning to function according to the inherited ideals of society rather than its satirized norms) and get both money and the girl at the ends of their adventures. If David's adventures are to be rendered inward we may expect both rather different adventures and a very different method of "rendering" them, though he too gets money and "the real heroine" in the end.

In the earlier single-hero novels of the life-and-adventures type each of the titular heroes is, as we have seen, more representative than individualized. But in the Bildungsroman the central interest must be in the principal character. He must be an individual. At the same time he must be a representative figure, a middle-of-the-road young man who is sufficiently ordinary, along with his individuality, for his accommodation to the world to be possible. David's experiences must come out of his own nature as it meets the society he lives in. He cannot, therefore, be the unique individual who either rises far above his fellow men, or the one who is outcast from them. This requirement alone should help to dispose of the argument from autobiography whose mistaken emphasis distorts much of the criticism of this work. While Dickens has left a record of his early sufferings, both at work and in love, in the fragment of autobiography described by Forster¹⁶ and in his letters to Maria Beadnell,¹⁷ and while David has similar experiences in the novel, both of these are treated very differently in David Copperfield from the way they happened in Dickens's life. In the novel David is alone in the world and sees no end to his slavery, and he marries his early love. Dickens had his family to visit and relatives to rely on, and was rejected by the girl he doted on.

A moment's reflection, corroborated by contemporary evidence, will show that the young Charles Dickens was very different from his hero.

Dickens was the active, talented eldest son of a large family, mischievous and enterprising; David is passive, timid, sensitive, victimized, romantic, dreamy. The young David and the young Dickens are both hard-working, persevering in the face of difficulty, and intense. The first two qualities are required by the Victorian ethic of success; the intensity is typical of young men who must prove themselves in order to get on in the world. Thus only the typical or representative qualities are common to both. Sylvere Monod has pointed to other similarities: to David's self-centredness, to his lack of feeling for others, particularly Dora and the Peggottys, and to his preoccupation with his own sensitivity.¹⁸ These, one suspects, are almost unconscious similarities, a degree of autobiography that the author had not bargained for, but which is almost concomittant with the hero's learning the particular lessons the author wants his hero to learn, and might well have wished that he had learned himself. But Dickens cherished his individuality; a self-portrait would not have captured the essence of a representative young man's efforts to bring his own feelings and experience into harmony with the society he must master if he is not to be overwhelmed by it.

In his description of Goethe's Wilhelm Meister as the type of the "novel of education" Lukács says:

Its theme is the reconciliation of the problematic individual, guided by his lived experience of the ideal, with concrete social reality.

And:

The type of personality and the structure of the plot are determined by the necessary condition that a reconciliation between interiority and reality, although problematic, is nevertheless possible; that it has to be sought in hard struggles and dangerous adventures, yet is ultimately possible to achieve. 19

Lukács further characterizes the form:

The content and goal of the ideal which animates the personality and determines his actions is to find responses to the innermost demands of his soul in the structures of society. This means, at least as a postulate, that the inherent

loneliness of the soul is surmounted; and this in turn presupposes the possibility of human and interior community among men, of understanding and common action in respect of the essential. Such community...is achieved by personalities, previously lonely and confined within their own selves, adapting and accustoming themselves to one another; it is the fruit of a rich and enriching resignation, the crowning of a process of education, a maturity attained by struggle and effort. 20

If David is to be a representative individual "the content and goal of the ideal which animates the personality and determines its actions" must be related to the common experience of men. And Forster's comment, that the work "can hardly have had a reader, man or lad, who did not discover that he was something of a Copperfield himself", suggests that David was conceived in a representative mould. Forster continues, "childhood and youth live again for us in its marvellous boy-experiences".²¹

I would suggest, too, that David Copperfield, like most Bildungsromane, is the record of a quest and that the quest is a representative one. What David seeks is the restoration of the secure and loving home of his earliest childhood. The quest has been achieved when, at the end of the novel, David is sitting before his own fire enjoying the warmth and community from which he had perceived his own father as being shut out. "David's son", in Mr. Dick's phrase, had been shut out, too, because his father was dead. As an orphan, wondering about other children and their fathers, his experiences are individual; as a boy and young man, however, his feeling of being an outcast in an alien world is typical, and his attempts to find the support he needs from another follow the typical and representative pattern of marriage. The easy accomplishment of this common aim is marred by needs arising from his individual nature.

Dickens's narrative stance towards this novel is appropriately both personal and social. The "inwardness" of the hero's experience is suggested in the preface, where Dickens speaks of "dismissing some portions of myself into the shadowy world" and admits that his

interest in the story is so recent and strong that he is "in danger of wearying the reader with personal confidences and private emotions"²². This points to the autobiographical element so frequently discussed, but this element is not to be confused with the identification of the young David with the young Dickens. William Oddie's careful comparison of passages from the novel with passages from Forster's account of Dickens's life demonstrates one of the differences. He suggests that this novel provided Dickens with ways of dealing with certain autobiographical experiences, his father's temperament, for instance, that he continued to evade in life. Oddie suggests that while John Dickens's fecklessness was extremely damaging to the child, his father's charm and likeableness created an impossible ambiguity for the man trying to come to terms with it. The damage is shown in Mr. Murdstone, and the feckless charm in Micawber.²³ That is the personal aspect of Dickens's narrative stance.

The social or exterior aspect of this stance seems to me to lie in Dickens's use both of the literary traditions he inherited and of certain literary tendencies that were prominent at the time of writing. The literary traditions are indicated in David's list of literary heroes.

My father had left a small collection of books in a little room upstairs, to which I had access (for it adjoined my own) and which nobody else in our house ever troubled. From that blessed little room, Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, The Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas and Robinson Crusoe, came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. (CD, 33)

This, as Forster tells us, "is one of the many passages in Copperfield which are literally true..."²⁴ and earlier critics in particular often related Copperfield to them, seeing in David's story one that turned back, as Mrs. Howe suggests above, to the eighteenth-century picaresque tradition. I would agree that this tradition does find its way into Copperfield, but would suggest that a stronger influence is that of the spiritual autobiography, prominent during the forties and preceding decades, and stretching back to Defoe. Dickens's

adaptation of the confessional literature to his own purposes, indeed, accomplishes that change from the novel of picaresque adventures in which the adventures count for far more than any change in the hero, to the novel of growth and development. It is of some importance to recall the picaresque element in the tradition that helps to define Dickens's narrative stance because we can then see Dickens's departures from it. This throws the methods of the Bildungsroman into sharper relief in the treatment not only of character, but of plot and setting too.

John Butt, writing some twenty-five years after Susanne Howe, tends to discount the influence of whatever tradition Tom Jones represents, even though Dickens had Fielding very much in his mind near the inception of Copperfield. He summarizes the evidence of this seminal period that preceded the writing and adds the information that when Dickens's eighth child was born in January, 1849, he decided to call him Henry Fielding "in a kind of homage to the kind of work he was now bent on beginning". Butt then adds: "All this amounts to little. Substantial evidence of a commanding purpose at the outset must be found, if at all, inside the book and in the number plans, which are now published in extenso for the first time".²⁵ The text and the author's working notes are paramount, of course, but I cannot agree that it "counts for nothing" that Dickens had Tom Jones in mind as he contemplated his eighth literary child, since it is one of the findings of this thesis that the author's stance towards his material seems to determine the underlying form or genre. The form imposes certain patterns of structure which determine the kinds of specific choices Dickens is seen to be making in the number plans. In the plans for the first number Dickens gives the title as "Personal History and Adventures of David Copperfield". For Number II, he puts parentheses around "adventures" and writes "experience" above it; neither word is capitalized. The rest of the numbers are headed "Personal History and Experience of David Copperfield".²⁶ The change from adventure to experience is a change in emphasis from action in

the social world to inwardness, "the poetry of the heart".

We note, too, that Dickens has changed the title from "the adventures" of the earlier novels. "Adventure" points the hero forward on an open road to unknown events in the future. "Personal history" depends on memory. By the end of the personal history the quest either has or has not been achieved, and the narrator is looking back to trace the course of his journey. "Personal history" also recalls Tom Jones, the foundling, whose more boisterous adventures constituted the education of an eighteenth-century gentleman and the acquisition of Sophia, or wisdom. In David Copperfield Tom Jones survives in Tommy Traddles, a nineteenth-century foundling who earns his position in society by accumulation ("I'm a great compiler, Copperfield"), thrift, and forbearance, and thus acquires his Sophia. Traddles's Sophy combines the maternal benevolence of Agnes with the frolicsome charm of Dora and Emily. The difference between Tom Jones's amorous adventures and Tommy Traddles's economic ones points to the middle-class milieu of both Bildungsroman and the nineteenth-century hero who has his way to make in bourgeois society. Traddles is a model for David; his more arduous history is given to us in social or external terms. Life is a series of encounters with circumstances for him and his efforts overcome them.

David's adventures follow a different pattern. Not only is this his history, but his personal history, and the form, like that of the other great precursor frequently evoked in the course of the book, Robinson Crusoe, is that of the pseudo-memoir. Both heroes, we note, have roots in Yarmouth. Robinson sets out from Yarmouth on his journey to self-reliance. David sets out from his first visit to Yarmouth on his journey to his changed home. This is the first step in his personal, that is individual, history. There are other connections with Crusoe and one of the illustrations suggests that Hablôt Browne noticed them. As David has his first meal at the coach stop during his portentous first journey to school, the opportunist waiter makes away with much of his food and some of his money, a prefiguring of

Steerforth's behaviour. The wall behind David is decorated with a map of the county of York, where Crusoe was born, and one of "The World As It Rolls", with an auction advertisement that happens to bear the name "Robinson". Again, when David comes home from school for the last time, travelling the final stage of the journey in Mr. Omer's cart with the jolly undertaker and the courting couple, he feels like Crusoe, "cast away among creatures with whom I had no community of nature".

David's history and experience is a mid-nineteenth-century one, individual, emotional, and almost circumspect. Instead of being cast away on a desert island he is cast away on his own resources within the cities and towns of England, and even within his own homes. In this respect David's private experience takes its place with typical experiences of his time, and their literary exploration. The publication of David Copperfield very nearly coincides with the publication of The Prelude and is within the same decade as both In Memoriam and Mill's Autobiography. The journey of the decade is inward, and these memoirs, perhaps, provided a necessary background to the pseudo-memoirs in novel form that followed them so quickly. Kathleen Tillotson²⁷ points out that Jane Eyre, that other great novel of childhood, was published just two years before the first numbers of Copperfield, and that Charlotte Brontë's use of the first person may have influenced Dickens in his choice of narrative point of view.

According to Roy Pascal, the period from 1782, the date of Rousseau's Confessions, to 1831, Goethe's Dichtung und Wahrheit, is decisive in the history of autobiography.²⁸ The writers of the great autobiographical works of this period, which in England includes Gibbon (1796) and DeQuincy (1819), as well as Wordsworth, are all searching for the essential constituent of a human being. Their writing "serves a purpose all its own of self-discovery and reconciliation with the self". Of their significance Pascal says:

The most striking discovery is that man is not a state of being but a process of development, and that he can be known only in the story of his life. Wandering attentively through their childhood, recalling events and persons that are important only because of their complex effects on the child, these authors are the first to see themselves as a complex process of 'becoming' in which the past always resounds in the present. The nineteenth-century novels that delve deep into childhood, from Dickens and the Brontes onwards, are unimaginable without the great autobiographies, and their importance lies not just in the discovery of the child's world, but in the recognition that the obscure urges and vivid impressions and affections of childhood are so decisive for the adult.

But equally significant is the discovery, through the autobiography, of the great complexity of the human psyche, and this is intimately related with the discovery of the relationship between self and circumstance. 29

At first the impulse towards the examination of self was a religious one. Kathleen Tillotson has noted the growing tendency to introspection during the forties and related this to the religious novel.³⁰ Wayne C. Shumaker, in his study, English Autobiography, points out that "the nineteenth century felt analytic introspection not motivated by religious piety to be a product of comparatively recent conditions".³¹ Shumaker places the examination of the state of the soul as a major motive for autobiography from Augustine, through Bunyan's Grace Abounding, to the nineteenth century Evangelicals. With the Evangelicals, the religious impulse to self-examination finds expression in such novels as The Nemesis of Faith. The existence of the earlier tradition of self-examination, and its expression in novels, combined in the great period of confessional literature with explorations of the process of becoming, provided the necessary frame of mind for the Bildungsroman. Schumaker notes:

The Victorians were acutely aware of a transformation in the nature of consciousness: for it was nothing less than romanticism, and a complex of other forces affecting the assumptions that underlay all cognitive and emotive experience, eventuated. 32

With this new interest:

Different things were pulled out of the storehouse of memory,- reflections and feelings. Observations were found relevant to the purpose if, instead of being treated as interesting in themselves, they were thought of - and analyzed - as forces which modified character. Actions, on the other hand, were seen to express character, to show to what point, - at a given instance, it has progressed. 33

The examination of the progress of character through the analysis of actions well describes the material of the Bildungsroman.

Copperfield is the first of Dickens's works to be written in the first person, a point of view that seems natural to, but is in no way universal in, the Bildungsroman. Both Tom Jones and Carlyle's translation of Goethe's Wilhelm Meister have omniscient narrators who tell the story in the third person. Dickens's decision was not a casual or spontaneous one, as Forster indicates:

In all the later part of the year Dickens's thoughts were turning much to the form his next book should assume. A suggestion that he should write it in the first person by way of change, had been thrown out by me, which he took at once very gravely; and this, with other things, though as yet not dreaming of any public use of his own personal and private recollections, conspired to bring about that resolve. The determination once taken, with what a singular truthfulness he contrived to blend the fact with the fiction... 34

The feeling about the "singular truthfulness" of this novel comes in part from Dickens's use of the I-narrator and the pseudo-memoir form and in part, I would suggest, from his use of a retrospective narrative voice and a "rhetoric of recollection" that successfully renders the "inwardness", the "poetry of the heart" whose presence here distinguishes this work from a personal history such as that of Tom Jones, or of adventures such as those of Martin Chuzzlewit or "little Oliver". The decision to write in the first person, the glance in the direction of Tom Jones, the use and transformation of autobiographical materials, and the discovery, from the great autobiographies of his own time, of the interrelatedness of self and circumstance, all constitute the narrative stance Dickens took towards the book that was to become his favourite child.

If the Bildungsroman's theme is "the reconciliation of the problematic individual, guided by his lived experience of the ideal, with concrete social reality" as Lukács says, it follows that the character of the "problematic individual" must be preeminent in it, and that the plot must lie in the interaction of the hero with his society.

The roles essential to the Bildungsroman, or that seem to be implied in both Susanne Howe's and Jerome H. Buckley's descriptions of it, are those of hero and the hero's father, or some father substitute that causes him to leave home. In addition Susanne Howe discerns another figure:

And against this eighteenth-century background certain typical background figures begin to stand out, not labeled as plainly as Evangelist, Christian's watchful companion, or Good Counsel who browbeats the pleasure-loving Juventes of the morality play into repentance....But there are mentors... 35

The hero, with an introductory question mark attached to him, is David, and the father's role is here usurped by Mr. Murdstone, though there are other father-figures in the book. It might even be argued that the most decisive fatherly influence on David is that of his real father, through his absence. But the role that most clearly distinguishes the Bildungsroman from other modes is that of mentor, and the chief of a series of mentors in David Copperfield is Miss Betsey Trotwood. In this particular Bildungsroman the hero's apprenticeship is an emotional one and the heroine's role will be important, but important as a role, in relation to the hero. Since he is to be the focus, not merely of the action but of the combination of action and character, the hero's temperament is of central importance to the shape of the novel. His role is the one that gives meaning to each of the others.

David's character and sensibility are clearly drawn in the early chapters. These are, of course, intimately connected with the character and sensibility of his parents, which must be considered

first. He is the adored and perhaps slightly resented posthumous child of a pretty young mother. His father had been much older than his mother and we know only what Miss Trotwood tells us about him: that he has chased after wax dolls since he was a baby, that it was like him to take the rooks on faith because there were nests, and that he had settled an annuity on his wife, but had not made separate provision for his unborn child, no doubt taking his wife's responsibility for that on faith also. This is a sufficiently typical portrait of an untried, slightly unworldly man, rather than a weak one, a man with a special kind of temperament.

David's mother's character has been more debated. It is almost a truism of recent criticism that Clara is a silly, weak, frivolous creature, the model for Dora in David's affections. A number of critics take this as read, but the most detailed, almost convincing argument is that of Mrs. Leavis.³⁶ The resemblances between David's mother and Dora are, however, superficial. Both are flighty and a little vain, both are encumbered with an indulged pet (Jip and "Davy"), both die. Further, the identification is suggested when Miss Trotwood reminds David that he must not play Murdstone to Dora's Clara, and that he must not ask her to play Miss Murdstone. A careful re-reading of the early chapters will hardly support the comparison. Clara is no more flighty, or weak, or vain than she need be to be an attractive, gentle, young mother for David to mourn, and for Mr. Murdstone to prey upon. She manages her house, has the devotion of her servant, which Dora certainly does not achieve, and considers, as far as she can foresee it, the impact of marriage on her child. In the scene in which she asserts herself over the keys, (CD, 29) and when she speaks up, however timidly, for David, (CD, 71) she is a strong character. When she gives in she gives in to a man's broader experience and to almost insurmountable barriers of poverty and the laws of the day regarding child custody. Her counterpart in the novel is not Dora but Agnes, and the very sexlessness of Agnes's

portrayal, coupled with David's repeated references to her as his sister, rather underlines than negates this identification with David's mother. Earnestness of affection is what David needs, as his Aunt points out, and earnestness of affection is surely evident in Clara, who cares enough to die for what she has destroyed. Dora has no such excuse, dying of the demands of periodical publication.

Finally, Dickens makes Clara Copperfield's position as victim clear in the scene between David and Mr. Chillip in Chapter 59 which is often criticized as unnecessary. In that scene Mr. Chillip describes Mr. Murdstone's second wife as "a charming woman indeed, Sir,...as amiable, I am sure, as it was possible to be! Mrs. Chillip's opinion is, that her spirit has been entirely broken since her marriage, and that she is all but melancholy mad". He adds, "She was a lively young woman, sir, before marriage, and their gloom and austerity destroyed her" (CD, 507). David is thus reassured that his mother was not a Dora, but had been subjected to fanatical deviltry, and he can proceed to woo Agnes. Agnes lacks the vanity and weakness of his mother; he has overcome the trusting dreaminess of his father.

Whatever Freud may have taught us to think, the novelist seems to be telling us that the love that is re-awakened in David for Dora is his childhood love for little Em'ly. Both are pretty, pampered, and flirtatious. Both are treated like toys by their guardians, and later by their lovers. Both reject reality, the one in the form of Ham and the other in the form of housekeeping, even when it is clear that self-destruction and misery for those they love must result from the course each seems impelled by her nature to follow.

Much more telling, however, than these similarities, is the comic tone of both stories. The Peggotty house and its inmates are sketches in the grotesque. Dickens's relentless use of dialect alone makes them comic. Only little Em'ly is pretty enough to aspire to the serious world. Like Pip, Emily yearns for gentility, and gentility is the final temptation of Steerforth's *seduction*. Her desire to be a

lady is not unlike Dora's desire to be a child-wife. Both are contradictions in terms, and the idea of the child-wife points the reader back to the love of David's childhood. We note that the childhood attraction has not disappeared, for during Miss Mowcher's visit, which takes place just before David's entering Mr. Spenlow's practice, Miss Mowcher is convinced by David's blushes that it is he, rather than Steerforth, who is interested in Emily. Dickens underlines the bond between Emily and David on three other occasions: when David first goes down to Yarmouth after he has grown up, he says "I loved little Em'ly then..."; as Emily leaves for Australia David sees Agnes hovering near her - as she had with Dora - and David is sad to see Emily go: his "Aye Emily" is more than ordinarily nostalgic. It is as if the departure of Emily underlines his recent bereavement and really opens his eyes to the abyss of loneliness in his life. Finally, when David's recollection of Agnes, toward the end of his stay in Switzerland, plays through his mind, his recollection touches a series of notes, whose careful final harmony is Agnes..."Emily, Dora, Agnes..."

There is also a pattern of repetition in David's emotional reactions as a lonely child and a lonely young man. After little David's first visit to Yarmouth, when he returns to the Rookery and finds himself cut off from his mother's warmth, he cries to be back with Emily in the warm society of the Peggottys' boat. When young David is lonely in his rooms in Buckingham Street in London, his heart makes a similar journey to Dora and the graceful dignity of Mr. Spenlow's home. Steerforth is away, Traddles has not yet effectively re-appeared, Agnes is his good, but absent, Angel; he is cut off from the old society at the Wickfields, and from Aunt Betsey and Mr. Dick, by distance, and Dora becomes for the young man what Emily had been to the child. If Agnes had been there, and had not been victimized by her father, she would have kept him company as his mother would have done in the old days, had she not been victimized by Mr. Murdstone.

Too, the whole tone of David's reminiscences of his early love for Dora is as comic as the treatment of the Peggottys. This tone is underlined by the effusions and economies of Mrs. Crupp during David's courtship, by Traddles's visit to the newly-married pair, and by Dora's difficulties with the servants. Indeed the comic tone persists for so long in the treatment of this love affair that it is quite out of keeping with Dora's death and certainly corroborates the evidence that Dickens didn't decide to kill her until he could see no other way out.³⁷ Had David been looking back, all along, on a youthful marriage that had ended so sadly, if conveniently, the tone would surely be different. Even an elderly couple looking back on less than idyllic times would be moved by lachrymae rerum and sound a more poignant note, as David does in the early chapters about his childhood and the death of his mother. Here, the regret is all in the narrative comment, and there is very little of it there. The argument that Dickens is sounding an intentionally comic note is strengthened by his having cancelled the narrator's comment from Chapter 33,

For all this, I know that I was in my heart so innocent and young, so earnest, so impassioned and so true, that while I laugh, I mourn, and while I think of the discretion I have gained, I remember with a touch of sorrow what I have lost. 38

The suppression of David's sorrow here, like the insensitivity of his emphasis on his own suffering in the midst of the Peggottys' tragedy, helps to place the thrust of the story in the direction of David's development, and beyond the Emily-Dora connection. Dora, like Miriam in D.H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers, belongs to a stage of emotional development that David must outgrow, has already outgrown by the time she dies.

To turn, now, to the hero: "Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life..." introduces a story whose intention is ambivalent. The long form of the title, "The Personal History, Adventures,

Experience and Observation of David Copperfield the Younger of Blunderstone Rookery (Which He never meant to be Published on any Account) ", the merry crowds on the cover, with the "ER" of COPPERFIELD supporting a cheerful infant, and "The Younger" holding the clouds of the rolling world and its sun, and even more tellingly some of those titles that Dickens discarded,³⁹ and the light tone, "to begin my life with the beginning of my life", point clearly to the kind of comic detachment that surveyed the early history of the Nickleby family. But the introduction of details, hour and day of birth, and the caul, begin to suggest other possibilities for the hero and to make us concerned for him. The old women, jocularly referred to, predict that he will be unlucky, and will be privileged to see ghosts and spirits. No mention is made of the hero's being a loving and giving Friday's child - though he is one - but the caul receives a long paragraph. David will not be drowned, though Steerforth, whom he might more closely have resembled if his mother had lived, will. But does that mean he is born to be hanged? No, for in Forster's record of prospective titles the third is interesting: "The Last Living Speech and Confession of David Copperfield Junior, of Blunderstone Lodge, who was never executed at the Old Bailey". This suggests that David was conceived in the more representative mould described by Forster. More probably David will merely avoid the sea, like the purchaser of the caul. From the viewpoint of the second reading the caul may be seen as an assurance to the reader that the relation between David and the sea, one of the central symbols of the novel, will be benign. After "Let us have no meandering," the story begins and the tone changes from mildly sardonic to reminiscent.

David's first conscious memory, referred to in this paragraph, is of his father's grave. As a posthumous child he was subject at first to no paternal influence, Mr. Murdstone being too fierce to fill any role but that of deus ex machina at this stage. Of his

father, David says:

There is something strange to me, even now, in the reflection that he never saw me; and something stranger yet in the shadowy remembrance that I have of my first childish associations with his white grave-stone in the churchyard, and of the indefinable compassion I used to feel for it lying out alone there in the dark night, when our little parlour was warm and bright with fire and candle, and the doors of our house were - almost cruelly, it seemed to me sometimes - bolted and locked against it. (CD, 2)

Contrast this with the penultimate chapter of the novel, "I had advanced in fame and fortune, my domestic joy was perfect, I had been married ten happy years. Agnes and I were sitting by the fire, in our house in London, one night in spring, and three of our children were playing in the room..." (CD, 526). A number of touches in David Copperfield point to this domestic vision as the object of David's quest. First, after Mrs. Copperfield's death, David forgets the intervening time with the Murdstones. "From the moment of my knowing of the death of my mother, the idea of her as she had been of late had vanished from me...The mother who lay in the grave, was the mother of my infancy; the little creature in her arms, was myself, as I had once been, hushed for ever on her bosom" (CD, 80-81). This picture of his mother cheers David on his way to his Aunt's, but it is particularly vivid in the sunny streets of Canterbury:

...But under this difficulty, as under all the other difficulties of my journey, I seemed to be sustained and led on by my fanciful picture of my mother in her youth, before I came into the world. It always kept me company. It was there, among the hops, when I lay down to sleep; it was with me on my waking in the morning; it went before me all day. I have associated it, ever since, with the sunny street of Canterbury, dozing as it were in the hot light; and with the sight of its old houses and gateways, and the stately, grey Cathedral, with the rooks sailing round the towers. When I came, at last, upon the bare wide downs near Dover, it relieved the solitary aspect of the scene with hope; and not until I reached that first great aim of my journey, and actually set foot in the town itself, on the sixth day of my flight, did it desert

me. But then, strange to say, when I stood with my ragged shoes, and my dusty, sunburnt, half-clothed figure, in the place so long desired, it seemed to vanish like a dream, and to leave me helpless and dispirited. (CD, 114)

When David set out for London, however, he had said:

See, how our house and church are lessening in the distance; how the grave beneath the tree is blotted out by intervening objects; how the spire points upward from my old playground no more, and the sky is empty! (CD, 93)

The rooks he associates with his mother, though there are none at Blunderstone Rookery, are at Canterbury. Perhaps David's father's foolish faith in the presence of rooks just because there are nests finds an echo in his temperamentally similar son, "David's boy", as Mr. Dick often reminds us, so that he may expect a mother just because there are rooks. The light of the stained-glass window shines on Agnes there, and awakens memories and associations of long ago. David's early home is a lost paradise. In marrying Agnes David re-enters paradise, not so much because he has learned to discipline his warm heart as because he is now free to accept the maternal love Agnes has always had for him; this often seems to have more to do with Dickens's plotting than with David's discipline. Dickens's notes describe Agnes as "the real heroine". And who is the hero? The hero, of course, is the one who marries the heroine, and the questions raised about chance and luck in the opening page and a half are answered, at last, in the affirmative.

The emotional experiences of the early chapters must be read accurately if the hero's experiences, the "education" and growth that are the raison d'être of the Bildungsroman, are to be properly interpreted. The condemnation of Clara Copperfield that is almost platitudinous in recent criticism has centred on her weakness and frivolity. Her one error seems to have been her marriage to Murdstone. Perhaps many readers feel that Clara Copperfield is weak and trivial in comparison to Clara Peggotty who says she won't even consider marrying Barkis if her Davy has a word to say against it. Yet how

unhealthy it would seem if this were his mother's only reason, and David does say that Mr. Murdstone seemed very fond of her and she of him. More damningly, David's mother does not speak up after Murdstone's first harsh treatment,

"We shall soon improve our youthful humours."
 God help me, I might have been improved for my whole life, I might have been made another creature perhaps, for life, by a kind word at that season. A word of encouragement and explanation, of pity for my childish ignorance, of welcome home, of reassurance to me that it was home, might have made me dutiful to him in my heart henceforth, instead of in my hypocritical outside, and might have made me respect instead of hate him. I thought my mother was sorry to see me standing in the room so scared and strange, and that, presently, when I stole to a chair, she followed me with her eyes more sorrowfully still-missing, perhaps, some freedom in my childish tread-but the word was not spoken, and the time for it was gone. (CD, 28)

This act of omission seems to be Clara's one crime, and it is not clear from the text whether the word *must*, in any case, have come from Mr. Murdstone. Moreover, Clara's later self-assertion over the keys suggests a dawning moral courage rather than a wax doll, while her assertion of her need for affection provides an explanation of her own normal weakness and a key to her son's needs, now and throughout his life. David's parents are thus normal, good, trusting people, not obsessed or embittered, as neither has yet had reason to be. Their fallibility, indeed, is almost typical, so that their son's experience in being orphaned, step-fathered and again orphaned, is more typical than otherwise, especially in this novel where all of the principal characters of the hero's generation are orphans. Yet the point of David's loss is constantly stressed. He broods on his father's grave; he wonders about the lives of children who have fathers; he meets a succession of possible substitutes, including Micawber, none of whom will do. His fatherless state makes him a special, a "problematic" individual.

"Davy", as his mother and Peggotty call him, is a timid child;

the cock looking at him makes him shiver, the geese give him bad dreams, and he is frightened by the long passage from Peggotty's kitchen to the front room. He has, like many a middle-class English child, a dual mother image, nicely objectified by Dickens both in the repetition of the same Christian name in both mother and nurse, and in the picture of the small child running back and forth between the two. And like many an English child whose devotion is somewhat compartmentalized, he may have more than ordinary difficulty in reconciling himself either to Helen or to Andromache, or in finding some combination of the two that satisfies him.

David notes that a change comes over his heart at a certain point and from this point on it is Peggotty that he relies on. Like "the boy in the fairy tale" he does find his way home with Peggotty's buttons for Peggotty reassures him as to his aunt's heart of gold and lends him the money to get to her. Even though the money is stolen from him at the very first stage of the hero's attempt to accommodate himself to the world, he carries the knowledge of Peggotty's devotion inside until he reaches Dover. And with that knowledge goes, as far as Canterbury, the image of his mother as she had been. When David reaches his aunt at Dover he begins a new life, is, indeed, reborn as Trotwood Copperfield, after a period of being swaddled in Mr. Dick's cast-off clothes. If Mr. Dick represents feeling (sorrow over his sister's marriage had brought on his "trouble"), as Mrs. Leavis suggests,⁴⁰ he is an appropriate guardian for "David Copperfield's boy", who now needs to be re-educated in the warmth and security of childhood and in the pleasures of imagination, suggested metaphorically by the kite soaring skyward in the bright fresh air from the sea. This combination of imagination and feeling finds humorous expression in Mr. Dick's common sense that always accompanies and corrects Miss Betsey's rationality. As David begins his education again his aunt gives him advice, "Never," said my aunt, "be mean in anything; never be false; never be cruel." (CD, 135) We may note

that Steerforth is all of these, as, later, is Pip. She adds, "Be a credit to yourself, and to me, and to Mr. Dick." Give due weight, in other words, to imagination, to reason, and to feeling. With these brief precepts David's school years at Dr. Strong's are passed over quickly, with a few comic love scenes that prepare us for his later infatuation, and for his blindness to the silent devotion of Agnes.

The serious part of David's apprenticeship begins with his journey to London from Canterbury. This is in every way, except the most important, a complete reversal of his earlier ragged, forlorn, childhood tramp to Dover. The child's justifiable retreat to the womb is traversed again in the young man's journey out of it. The hero of the second phase of the novel is well-educated, well-dressed, and provided with money to allow him to find his place in life. But only the surface has changed. For David, who has paid to sit inside the coach, is taken advantage of by an older man, who takes David's place and leaves him sitting on top. He is the same boy who was taken advantage of by the waiter and by Steerforth when he left home for school, and to make the point clear Dickens has David meet another waiter with a similar disposition. This pattern is an intentional repetition, for the meeting with the waiter is followed shortly by the reunion with Steerforth. Again, as in childhood, Steerforth appears to David to protect him, but is, as before, using David's admiration for his own vain and frivolous ends.

There is a feeling, shared by many readers and critics, that the first section of the book is much more vivid than the rest.⁴¹ Perhaps the explanation for this lies in the nature of childhood itself. All childhoods are much more alike than are adult lives, so that in writing the childhood section Dickens was dealing with typical experiences and feelings. All children need security, are timid and a prey to adult manipulation and bullying; all children must face school for the first time, with its cast of bullies and

victims. Many face change and the deaths of parents, and for most the loss of innocence begins at an earlier age than is commonly thought. David's years at Dr. Strong's are almost an idealized childhood, overlaid on the traumatic earlier one, and on the forces that determine his adult life. These forces are shown, by the uneventfulness of the adolescent years, to be coming from the experiences of his real childhood. The function of the new home is to show the roots of Agnes's and David's love; the reader has to have known Agnes all along to share David's "secret experience" whose essence is that it is a long secret growth, as hidden from the hero as were the needs that led him to worship Dora. He has to be shown making choices at different stages of development, and Agnes has to have been there for a long time, just as Emily had been.

The themes of the choices and mistakes to be made in both friendship and marriage are underlined both in the text and in the illustrations. At the beginning of David's journey to school, where he is to meet Steerforth, the accompanying illustration, Plate III in the first edition, contains both the allusions to Robinson Crusoe mentioned above, and picked up elsewhere in the novel, that warn us of David's spiritual isolation, and playbills for two plays. These, Two Gentlemen of Verona and The Devil to Pay, warn us of mistakes to come. Two Gentlemen of Verona is the story of two friends, one sophisticated and already in love when the play begins, but false. The other, Valentine, is innocent, loyal, generously forgiving. Both friends go to Milan. There, Valentine, too, falls in love and at once his friend deserts his own earlier love to attach himself to Valentine's beloved. There is also a coward named Thurio who had manipulated the lady's father to gain her hand, whom Valentine puts to rout. The play thus portrays a false friend and a cowardly rival to Valentine's innocent and earnest nobility. Steerforth, the false friend who steals David's first love and abuses his trust, Uriah (Thurio), the cowardly manipulator, and David, the innocent

hero, are prefigured here just at the point where David has been sent from home to be educated and is about to fall under Steerforth's influence. The Devil to Pay, a popular nineteenth-century farce, tells the story of two marriages, both of which suffer from "unsuitability of mind and temper". By trickery, roles are reversed. Shrewish aristocratic wife finds herself wedded and bedded with bullying lout. Sweet, hard-working, faithful country wife finds herself surrounded by the care and respect of the manor, whose lord and servants are delighted by the exchange. Bully and shrew learn their lessons and, in the future, discipline their tempers. This is, of course, a metaphor for the various unequal marriages in Copperfield and for David's need to appreciate the good love he already has, but turns his back on.

To return to David's first days in London: the text mentions another play that is thematically significant. Here, at the beginning of young David's adult life, when he is to make crucial choices of friends, career, and marriage partner, he sees Julius Caesar just before his re-union with Steerforth. David's whole life, he says, passes before him like a "shining transparency", a fitting introduction to the long central section of the novel where David plays Marc Antony to Steerforth's Caesar, whom he will bury, with praise, before his final maturity takes place. That these references underline central themes may be seen from a final example. Almost immediately after Uriah's invasion of the sanctuary of David's rooms at Mrs. Crupp's, David is lonely, but secretly glad that Steerforth cannot come to town. "The influence of Agnes" is upon him. David goes to the theatre again. It is just before he meets Dora. He says, "I went to see "The Stranger" as a Doctors' Commons kind of play, and was so dreadfully cut up, that I hardly knew myself in my own glass when I got home" (CD, 234). On the way to Norwood with Mr. Spewlow a week or so later, they discuss the law. Finally David reports, "This is a digression. I was not the man to touch the Commons and bring down

the country...we talked of "The Stranger" and the Drama, and the pair of horses, until we came to Mr. Spenlow's gate" (CD, 236). Koetzbuhr's play is the story of a good but unselfconfident woman who foolishly runs off with a trivial man, leaving her adored children and devoted husband. After three years of disciplined devotion to the poor, on her part, and of isolation, on his, have chastened their souls, an accident brings them together. The husband forgives her; she demurs; they marry and live happily ever after. David is a good but diffident young man who is about to forsake his better self for a trivial woman. When he returns at the end of the novel, a chastened stranger, to Canterbury and Agnes, the contemporary reader would recall this adumbration of theme and plot in a way that may be lost to us. This subtle element of preparation is meant to keep the real heroine and her role in the reader's mind throughout the misalliance with Dora.

During his early manhood David's character is portrayed more fully. Once he is away from the protection of Aunt Betsey and Dr. Strong some of the old weaknesses reappear. He is timid and easily impressed still, much moved by Steerforth's patronage. He has, still, an idealizing sensibility that endues people and objects with more than their natural light. Warm and generous, he has still a degree of snobbishness that appears in his relations with Traddles and with Mr. Micawber, though not of course with the Peggottys where the class division has always been clear in the master-servant relationship outlined in the first visit, when his mother paid for his room and board during his stay. During the weeks David spends at Yarmouth he returns often to Blunderstone to look at the old house and graveyard. Here he broods in a reverie of the past and accompanies these recollections with dreams of the great figure he is to make in the future. A mad old gentleman, like Mr. Dick, looks out of the windows of his former home. Is this Mr. Dick warning David to take account of feeling and imagination in his future plans? Or is he warning the hero of the undisciplined heart of the pitfalls of a

world where the hero pictures great accomplishments in the future while still possessing, above all, a nature that does not act but is acted upon? At the end of two weeks this future has acquired no particular definition, and compliant David consults Steerforth about his aunt's suggestion that he should become a proctor. Steerforth reassures him; proctors are gentlemanly and earn a most comfortable living without great effort. This suits David, who is an attendant lord; thus the story of his education can be a representative one for many. Speaking of abstract idealism and Romanticism Lukács notes:

For this reason the interiority depicted in such a novel must stand between the two previously analysed types: its relation to the transcendent world of ideas is neither subjectively nor objectively very strong; the soul is not purely self-dependent, its world is not a reality which is, or should be, complete in itself and can be opposed to the reality of the outside world as a postulate and a competing power; instead, the soul in such a novel carries within itself, as a sign of its tenuous, but not yet severed link with the transcendental order, a longing for an earthly home which may correspond to its ideal - an ideal which eludes positive definition but is clear enough in negative terms. Such an interiority represents on the one hand a wider and consequently more adaptable, gentler, more concrete idealism, and, on the other hand, a widening of the soul which seeks fulfillment in action, in effective dealings with reality, and not merely in contemplation. It is interiority which stands half way between idealism and Romanticism, and its attempt, within itself, to synthesize and overcome both of them is rejected by both as a compromise.

It follows from this possibility, given by the theme itself, of effective action in social reality, that the organization of the outside world into professions, classes, ranks, etc., is of decisive importance for this particular type of personality as the substratum of its social activity. 42

David's changes of occupation during the novel scarcely constitute a "portrait of the artist", but they do provide evidence of his change from a passive to an active relation to society. He needs his aunt's injunction to be a "fine, firm fellow, not influenced by anybody," and when Miss Trotwood's money is lost David does indeed show these admirable characteristics. He becomes a fine, firm young man; he is

not false, mean, or cruel, but he is not, until much later, a credit to his Aunt or to Mr. Dick. The reason and imagination of his education are swept away in the floods of emotional need that reawaken his childhood love for little Em'ly in the socially acceptable person of Dora Spenlow.

The determining experiences of David's adult life are his choice of friends and his choice of lovers. Both choices come from his ardent, innocent, emotionally receptive nature. He needs someone to admire, and someone to dote on, as well as the "earnestness of affection" Traddles supplies before Agnes takes over. The discipline of his heart consists first in his learning to recognize the unsuitability of mind and heart between himself and the objects of his devotion, and, second, in his acquiring some appreciation of people who, though they may not meet his strongest neurotic needs, require him to grow and help him to do so.

The novelist's task is to take David through the stages of his emotional growth, convincing us that these different stages are occurring. Again, perhaps the superior vividness of the first section of the novel lies in the novelist's being free there to concentrate on the experiences and characters in David's childhood that stand out simply by virtue of having happened. The later experiences must be shown less as experiences in themselves than as events that are important because of the use David makes of them in the various stages of his emotional growth.

"An autobiography", says H.G. Wells, "is the story of the contacts of a mind and the world."⁴³ David's mind is shown with unmistakable clarity, but the world he is in contact with, the specific, middle-class, nineteenth-century world, has received less attention until Mrs. Leavis's recent study.⁴⁴ Her view that Dickens was dealing with Victorian marriage conventions in David Copperfield is worth some consideration.

Certainly marriage is one of the central themes. Mrs. Leavis

suggests that David, after his marriage to Dora, is puzzled and sad because, having done all that his society required of a young bourgeois man of good character and industrious habits, he is not ideally happy: "no one to please but one another - one another to please, for life" (CD, 385). I would suggest that Dickens is less concerned with marriage conventions than with "the unsuitability of mind and temper" he so repeatedly details for us. David could as easily, as conventionally, have married Agnes in the first place. It is not a convention of his society that forces David to choose one rather than another of two stereotypes of ideal woman, but his own emotional needs. David's romantic nature, in its undisciplined state, needs an extravagant outlet, someone to dote on, as Dora's pet name for him, "Doady", shows. Steerforth and Dora provide these outlets and Agnes and Traddles are present to show that their "earnestness of affection" is not enough until the hero has learned that the demands of his romantic nature cannot be met in the world with impunity.

In this way David's heart is disciplined through his creator's customary dialectic: comparison of opposites produces corrected assessments. Steerforth destroys Emily, but Aunt Betsey's husband does not succeed in destroying her; her withdrawal from life is only partial and she is always quick to recognize Mr. Dick as the source of her regeneration. Murdstone destroys Clara; perhaps David destroys Dora. If so, he learns from his own past and from the experiences of those about him and tries to do what he can to make up for the wrong they have done each other. Peggotty and Traddles, who enter marriage with their eyes open to their own limitations, come off best. Traddles first appreciates, then earns, the girl others make use of. Just as at school Traddles had provided the small and timid David with a model when he cried "Shame, J. Steerforth!", the young man he has grown into, now that he has cast off that tell-tale too small suit, shows David a model of a mutually helping marriage that is both orderly and gay.

The comparisons are worked out in two directions: that of youth with age, and of class with class. Peggotty makes the marriage Emily cannot make because Peggotty's nature allows her to be content with the "comfortable" lot Barkis offers. Miss Trotwood makes good her "mistake" by caring for Mr. Dick and for David and by loving and tending Dora. She accepts Dora as she is, as she should have loved and accepted Clara. Rosa Dartle, whose livid scar objectifies the ruin Steerforth has left in his wake, is more deeply damaged than Emily. Rosa's counterpart is Martha, and Dickens makes the point about both that they have no families to care for them.

The model household of Traddles and his Sophy is set against the comic exuberance of the Micawbers. The families of both wives disapprove of the connection, and the difference between the two men is not great; it lies in Traddles's want of invention. "An excellent compiler", he pulls through with the necessary hundred pounds here and fifty there, and whatever it takes to repossess Sophy's table and lamp stand. Invention Mr. Micawber has in abundance, but simple compilation, and the conquest of reality that attends it, are beyond him. Micawber's wife is not aware of any disparity of mind and temper, and together they face the disparity between themselves and social reality, requiring to be transferred to a completely different society before their optimistic assessment of Mr. Micawber's worth can find its reflection in a society where Mr. Mell is distinguished, and someone wants to marry Mrs. Gummidge. The final comparison of values is made through the Strong household which may be seen, again, as being played off against the Peggotty's story. Annie resists the specious charms of Jack Maldon for the devotion of her old teacher. Had Emily been able to displace her gratitude and devotion to her uncle in the direction of Ham, whom, it is clear, she cannot love, she might have avoided that union whose disparity of mind and purpose is made clear to us in advance through Steerforth's callous observations. Ham's final assessment of the wrong he has

done Emily is an echo of Dr. Strong, and an echo of David's own insistent and unwise devotion to Dora.

Dickens tries to make his theme of self-knowledge, through guidance and experience, clear in several ways. We may wonder why so many sets of cross-references are required, but it is through a comparison of this with that and then with the other, like an optometrist's trial and error search for the exact prescription, that the precise definition of the hero's nature, needs, and experience can be arrived at. In thinking about the number and variety of David's relationships one is reminded of Wilhelm Meister. Martin Swales suggests that:

All these figures have their intersection in Wilhelm; they are ciphers for potentialities within him. Wilhelm himself is, as it were, overgenerously endowed with possible existences: hence his characteristic receptivity and indecisiveness. He is unable to choose, to be the decisive arbiter in his own life. This overendowment is both blessing and curse: it makes him a kind of master, somehow richer in being than his fellows, yet a master who, we sense, will have great difficulty in ever calling a halt, in putting his apprenticeship behind him once and for all. 45

This comment suggests a fruitful comparison with the characters in Copperfield. David's receptive nature, his Keatsian negative capability, allows him to be friends with this diversified group of people. He can be firm and enduring like the Peggottys, harshly inclined towards Dora's weaknesses, as the Murdstone's were to his own childish self, and snobbish, insensitive, and self-centred, like Steerforth. David's dream of struggling through a forest of difficulty with a guitar case suggests Mr. Micawber, without the exuberance, and his temperamental aversion from Uriah Heep, though made perfectly believable, carries the suggestion that it is an aversion from similar potentialities in himself. A little less control of his emotions, a little less good fortune in his mentors, and gentle David might have become Dr. Strong, or even Mr. Dick. Without a

family Emily could have been Martha, or Rosa Dartle; without Mr. Copperfield's annuity and Mr. Murdstone's Machiavellian forcing of the situation, David and his mother might have been in the situation, and have taken the attitudes of, Uriah and Mrs. Heep. As it is, David's final choice of occupation allows him to be an observer and to deal imaginatively, perhaps, with the parts of himself that might interfere with his complacent adjustment to present reality.

The characters of the father and of the heroines of the Bildungsroman are related to the character and needs of the hero. Since the hero's task is to reconcile his own inward need with the demands society makes on him, the hero's initial rebellion against his father is usually a rebellion against the demands of the real world; the father or father-substitute may be expected to represent intractable reality. In this instance it is perhaps fortunate that David's father is dead: on the one hand, no reality is so intractable as death; on the other, Mr. Copperfield, alive, would seem not to have suited the genre. Mr. Murdstone's implacable devotion to firmness and to business make him a representative, like Dombey, of the rising mercantile class. His cruelty, both to Clara Copperfield and to his second wife, is merely personal, the self-interested opportunism of a Dombey, but a Dombey who has not been a commercial success and whose character and feelings have been hardened by the over-mastering effort to become one.

When David is thrust out of his home he gravitates to the other extreme, Micawber. The mercantile world offers Micawber a surface of infinite possibility. From pawning the furniture, his own and Traddles's, to throwing his talents like a gauntlet at the feet of the coal industry, Mr. Micawber is one who does not produce goods himself but lives by his agility in manipulating the productions of others. The talents of a whole century of agile facilitators are summed up in David's vignette of the Micawbers leaving Canterbury, immediately after he has received what appears to be a suicide note

from Mr. Micawber, with "Mr. Micawber, the very picture of tranquil enjoyment, smiling at Mrs. Micawber's conversation, eating walnuts out of a paper bag, with a bottle sticking out of his breast pocket" (CD, 160), Murdstone and Micawber are the artistic representations of Ruskin's more inclusive description:

...In a community regulated only by the laws of demand and supply, but protected from open violence, the persons who become rich are, generally speaking, industrious, resolute, proud, covetous, prompt, methodical, sensible, unimaginative, insensitive, and ignorant. The persons who remain poor are the entirely foolish, the entirely wise, the idle, the reckless, the humble, the thoughtful, the dull, the imaginative, the sensitive, the well-informed, the improvident, the irregularly and impulsively wicked, the clumsy knave, the open thief, and the entirely merciful, just, and godly person. 46

Between these two extreme responses to the buffettings of reality David must somehow find his way. Neither Mr. Murdstone nor Mr. Micawber is any better able to help him than his various schoolmasters. But the hero of the Bildungsroman is guided towards his reconciliation with reality by a mentor, or, as in Great Expectations, by a series of mentors. The typical blocking figures of comedy who appear so early in the preceding single-hero novels, Bumble, Ralph Nickleby, Pecksniff, and Old Martin Chuzzlewit, are here replaced by Miss Betsey Trotwood. The early and prominent appearance of Miss Betsey as mentor is one of the keys to the novel's genre. This redoubtable lady is herself comic at the outset, as she peers through the window of the hero's comfortable home. Because she is aware of the mistakes in her own life she has a vested interest in the upbringing of her anticipated namesake, whose entry into life she hopes to observe. No bad fairy, Miss Betsey reveals her own vulnerability in the very terms of her displeasure when David turns out to be a boy. Her story is, as well, the first of series of modulations on the theme of the undisciplined heart, though this is not made explicit until the final quarter of the novel. Miss Betsey's gesture of tenderness towards David's mother, observed by Peggotty and communicated to the

hero, influences his crucial decision to seek her protection. The gesture, like Mrs. Micawber's farewell kiss, "just such a kiss as she might have given to her own boy", (CD, 106) makes the difference between a caricature and a character. The reader is not even certain the gesture has occurred, but is reassured later as David remembers Peggotty's account of it.

When David rebels against the social impropriety of his employment with Murdstone and Grinby and travels to Dover to take possession of his birthright, the stage is set for this eighteenth-century guide to right reason to become the hero's mentor. At Dover, the urchin is met by the curiously androgynous figure of Miss Trotwood, who soon re-christens him Trotwood. Miss Trotwood's cottage is pretty, her sitting room both decorous and feminine, and she is Christian charity itself to Mr. Dick. But she is first described to David by a friendly fly driver as "pretty stiff in the back" (CD, 114). Her ménage is completed by one of a series of protégés that she has taken into her service to educate in the renunciation of mankind. This mental exercise, humourously translated into the need to exorcise donkeys from her premises, makes an odd start for David, almost suggesting that if he became a real man he might no longer be acceptable to her. The hero must be helped to become a man who preserves his own inwardness, his sensitivity and kindness, in his accommodation to the world. He must not become a donkey. This tension between the past, with its determining history, and the future ideal toward which the hero is making his way, is an ambiguity that is not always resolved and that, it has been suggested, is at the core of the genre.⁴⁷

David's arrival presents a problem for Miss Betsey. Had David been a little Betsey, Miss Trotwood had been determined to educate her so that she would not be vulnerable and would not suffer from the kind of mistake that Miss Betsey had made; the reader is left to wonder about her mistake until almost the end. Since David is a boy

his aunt must change her tactics. She is non-plussed and consults Mr. Dick, who says, in effect, "He's your responsibility. Treat him sensibly and kindly, having due regard for the temperament he has inherited from his father, and educate him." Thus Miss Betsey becomes David's first and chief mentor, aided by Mr. Dick and Dr. Strong. Miss Betsey's direct instructions to David are few. He is to be a fine, firm, fellow; he is never to be false, mean or cruel, and he is to seek the earnestness of affection that will steady him. Since she cannot educate a little girl to be strong enough to avoid weak men, Miss Trotwood will try to make sure that a potentially weak and destructive man becomes a man of character. She gives David the advantage of a loving home where warmth and imagination are honoured, in the person of Mr. Dick, and a school and a substitute home where the influences are congenial to David's timid sensitivity. She tries to arrange a suitable occupation for him, and, finally, she conceals her true financial position, living in some discomfort herself in order to arrange a test of character for him. Though David's test results only in his getting up early to help Dr. Strong with his dictionary, no more realistic a project than Mr. Dick's memoirs, and in learning shorthand at night, his response to the test is appropriately manly. Miss Betsey's nurture has enabled David to avoid becoming Uriah Heep; her test, nicely timed to coincide with his infatuation with Dora, ensures that he will not become another Micawber. At the crucial time, when he must learn to accept Dora as she is and not try to train her, Miss Betsey warns David not to become another Murdstone. Her own acceptance of Dora, and love for her, becomes a support and a model for her protegé.

One of the remaining dangers for David lies in his infatuation with Steerforth. At the beginning of David's adult life Steerforth and Traddles re-appear. David's reactions are still those of his early school days and much of the remainder of the novel is punctuated with the gradual shift from tolerance to admiration in David's

response to Traddles. His admiration for Steerforth is necessarily curtailed, but never his love. Here, too, Miss Betsey is David's unwitting mentor for her own loyalty to her husband continues to his death, as does her chivalrous protection of Mr. Wickfield. That this is not meant to be a lesson in sentimentality or in the nobility of sacrifice for its own sake is shown through David's visit to Steerforth's home just after their acquaintance is renewed in London. David meets Steerforth's mother and Rosa Dartle. Miss Dartle inquires about Steerforth's pet name for him, Daisy:

"But really, Mr. Copperfield," she asked, "is it a nick-name? And why does he give it to you? Is it - eh? - because he thinks you young and innocent?" (CD, 180)

Then:

"He thinks you young and innocent; and so you are his friend? Well, that's quite delightful!"

When the young men go up to bed David notices the comfort of Steerforth's room, completed by a portrait of Mrs. Steerforth, watching over her darling as he sleeps. David's room contains a portrait of Rosa Dartle, with, however, the scar missing:

The painter hadn't made the scar, but I made it; and there it was, coming and going: now confined to the upper lip as I had seen it at dinner, and now showing the whole extent of the wound inflicted by the hammer, as I had seen it when she was passionate.

I wondered peevisly why they couldn't put her anywhere else instead of quartering her on me. To get rid of her, I undressed quickly, extinguished my light, and went to bed. But, as I fell asleep, I could not forget that she was still there looking. "Is it really, though? I want to know;" and when I awoke in the night, I found that I was uneasily asking all sorts of people in my dreams whether it really was or not - without knowing what I meant. (CD, 180)

David knows, if only semi-consciously, that Steerforth is evil, but continues with him just the same. That David is still young and innocent in his conscious relations with Steerforth is indicated two chapters later, when Steerforth makes his comment about a steadfast

and judicious father, and Dickens's running title is "I find Steerforth unintelligible" (CD, 195). In spite of his knowledge of Rosa Dartle, the knowledge that led him to ask "whether it was or not" of all sorts of people in his dreams, David's loyalty to the possibilities of Steerforth's nature persists. The reader may hope that David, like his aunt, may take responsibility for his mistaken attachments, but the question is not entirely resolved.

The problem of evil in David Copperfield is centred around Steerforth and Uriah Heep, toward both of whom David has strong emotional reactions. Both represent poles of possibility for him. We are not allowed to forget Steerforth's evil nature, a passionate, undisciplined heart, because Rosa Dartle is there to remind us of it. She is kept in view from the time David meets Steerforth again, through her wild outburst of recrimination against Emily, to her frenzied flaying of Mrs. Steerforth after Steerforth's death. Her undisciplined heart might well have been a match for Steerforth's since she longs to be his victim. If Steerforth's Byronic beauty exemplifies the charm of evil, Uriah's insinuating malevolence points to its insidiousness. After Steerforth's death Uriah becomes more prominent, in fact tends to take Steerforth's place as David's shadow self. He threatens to destroy David's adult love as Steerforth has his childish one. Very shortly after David tells Uriah of his engagement to Dora, they talk of Agnes and Uriah says that he has plucked an "unripe pear" that will ripen. Agnes would have been ripe for David had he been mature enough himself to pluck her. This is followed shortly afterwards by the curious scene in which David actually strikes Uriah: "The whole of his lank cheek was invitingly before me, and I struck it with my open hand with that force that my fingers tingled as if I had burnt them" (CD, 376). David's blow is struck as much for himself as for Dr. Strong ("I have been a poor dreamer, in one way or other, all my life" (CD, 376). David, too,

might have become Dr. Strong, and Dr. Strong's treatment of Annie becomes a model for him to follow. Uriah forces David out of dreaming. The confrontation between them, "as we stood front to front", is much less dramatic than Pip's confrontation with Orlick in Great Expectations, as is appropriate to the realism of the pseudo-memoir, but it is a necessary stage in David's growth nonetheless.

The problem of evil is one of the ambiguities that is evaded rather than resolved in this novel. David does not have to live with his mistaken attachment; Steerforth dies; Agnes waits for him; Aunt Betsey's money re-appears. But at least the pervasive presence of evil, and the capacity for evil in oneself, is recognized and kept before us.

The roles of Dora and Agnes in the Bildungsroman need little elaboration. They are important only in relation to the hero's development and their characterization is properly limited. The first step in David's personal history occurs when he leaves Yarmouth to return to his changed home. When he retreats to his room at the Rookery, isolated now from his mother's, after the first evening in Mr. Murdstone's company, David cries for the warmth of little Em'ly's love. When he is alone in London and already somewhat under the influence of his "bad angel", Steerforth, David meets another captivating child to give his ardent heart to. Both are pretty, pampered orphans; neither is able to accept the limitations of her surroundings; both acquire a degree of self-sacrificing nobility, however unrealistic, in the face of disaster.

Earlier I have suggested that Dora is to be seen as another version of Emily, the childhood sweetheart, but that Clara Copperfield has a greater affinity with Agnes than with either of these. This identification is re-inforced by David's associations of the house in Canterbury with Blunderstone Rookery, a haven of order and security that grows dear through its daily ceremonies. Agnes is always seen with her matronly bunch of keys; in the earliest section

of the novel Dickens makes a point of Clara's having been deprived of her keys by Jane Murdstone. Agnes's attachment to David is a maternal one; she becomes his "good angel", a role Mrs. Copperfield is prevented, by Mr. Murdstone, from fulfilling. Agnes is, I would suggest, as much like Clara as Dora is, and in moving from Dora to Agnes David is moving from a superficial aspect of his mother to an essential one. Agnes is tiresome because she is not playful; this does not necessarily make her sexless, just not much fun. But her "earnestness of affection" is seen as providing the steadying influence David needs. He who is susceptible to bad angels, needs proportionately more strength in his wife than does Traddles, who provides his own strength. The women's temperaments in the novel may be seen on a graduated scale ranging from those who are outcasts, destroyed by passion, Martha and Rosa Dartle, through the attractive but equally destructible Emily, to Dora, through Clara Copperfield to Agnes. Peggotty, the other person in his childhood whom David loves and to whom he switches his devotion, is a comic Agnes; her Andromache quality is shared by Mrs. Micawber whose "I never will desert Mr. Micawber" expresses just the quality of commitment that Agnes and Peggotty show, but that Clara Copperfield does not quite manage. Both are married to men who need them. Dickens's portrayal of "the real heroine" is thus, I would argue, a carefully thought-out assessment of the hero's individual needs, rather than a sop to Victorian convention. David is the hero of a Bildungsroman, not of a romance or a melodrama, and critical response has at least demonstrated that the woman he marries in the achievement of his quest is a special taste. The mistake, perhaps, has been to regard the reunion with Agnes as itself the peak of David's achievement, and critics have been disappointed in what David gets for his struggles. But if Agnes is recognized as merely the final necessary step to David's re-entry into the orderly and loved domesticity he had lost as a child she becomes less trying. The ideal of the domestic heaven is so common-

place and so much a stereotype of Victorian fiction that we must remember for how much of their lives Dickens's heroes were estranged from such a heaven, and how unattainable it so often seemed to Dickens himself, to invest this prize with some of the value that would make it a fitting accomplishment for David to achieve. The "disciplined heart" becomes prominent only in the last quarter of the novel; it is what the heart seeks and achieves, through the discipline of learning from its mistakes, that is the informing idea from beginning to end.

Tommy Traddles gains wisdom and position through patience, kindness, and voracious reading of the law, but David has been shown to be a different kind of person. He needs to regain the lost innocence of childhood, a reassurance that will blot out his too-early exposure to a world to which he could not yet accommodate himself. Agnes, we note, is always associated with light from a stained-glass window, suggesting church, and some sacred memory in the distant past. Her name means chastity, and the Greek from which the name is derived also bears the meaning of a sacred place. David's personal history and experiences, his idealizing sensibility, and his accommodation to the world through the imagination may require just such a haven. That Dickens was perfectly well aware of a certain glossing over in the matter of his saintly heroines we know from his letter to Forster from Boulogne:

...I have always a fine feeling of the honest state into which we have got, when some smooth gentleman says to me or someone else when I am by, how odd it is that the hero of an English book is always uninteresting - too good - not natural, etc. I am continually hearing this of Scott from English people here, who pass their lives with Balzac & Sand. But O my smooth friend, what a shining imposter you must think yourself and what an ass you must think me, when you suppose that by putting a brazen face upon it you can blot out of my knowledge the fact that this same unnatural young gentleman (if to be decent is to be necessarily unnatural), whom you meet in those other books and in mine, must be presented to you in that unnatural

aspect by reason of your morality, and is not to have, I will not say any of the indecencies you like, but not even any of the experiences, traits, perplexities, and confusions inseparable from the making of all men!... 48

It is to his own society that the hero of the Bildungsroman learns to accommodate himself.

The characters in David Copperfield serve a variety of purposes. The most important people are those who touch David most deeply. These are his mother and his friends and lovers, the centre of his affective life. They provide the experience of the memories that the reflecting narrator explores in his search for the process of his own becoming. Some, such as Peggotty and Mr. Dick, are emotional markers who help to keep David on course, offering reassurance and practical help. Others, the Murdstones for example, are objects that demonstrate the hero's growth. In the beginning they are huge, black, wicked, murderous. When Aunt Betsey interviews them they are frightening to David, but less monstrous because Miss Trotwood can control them. When Miss Murdstone is Dora's guardian she almost destroys David's happiness for the second time, until the chance of Mr. Spenlow's death saves him so that he can have his own opportunity for self-knowledge. Seeing them at Doctors' Commons, David is beyond their power, and they are merely very unpleasant people who have harmed him. But when Mr. Chillip reports their devilish behaviour, just after David's return from the continent, he can see them as wicked people, doing to someone else exactly what Miss Betsey had described their doing to his mother, and this gives David the perspective he needs to assess his mother, not as a Dora but as an Agnes. The threat of Uriah that had hung over Agnes is a parallel to the Murdstone-Clara story, and the restoration of an adult perspective on his childhood persecutors is perhaps the final liberation David needs before his return to Canterbury. Mr. Chillip's facilitating role is illustrated in this incident and he also helps to fill out the picture of the bourgeois world, which will be mentioned later. Similarly Mr. Omer, gasping for breath among the

coffins, not only provides the novel's world with the dimensions of his trade, and supplies both place of employment and a source of information for Em'ly, but he provides the reader with a kind of measuring stick of David's growing maturity. We first meet Mr. Omer as one with whom the small, bereft David could feel "no community of nature" and finally, ironically, as one of David's readers, not imperceptive or unkind, or without a viable life of his own. Mr. Chillip, Barkis, and Mr. Omer happen also to be linked with birth, marriage and death and thus to epitomize for David the climaxes of life in their very ordinary persons.

These characters, with others such as Peggotty, provide David with a felt dimension of time by the repetitiveness of their actions. With Peggotty this function is extended by the associations her few beloved possessions arouse. Peggotty's picture of St. Paul's keeps David's childhood before us; the Crocodile Book, which first appeared with the Murdstones and which shared space in David's room at Yarmouth with Fox's Book of Martyrs, is, in the final pages, being read to David's children. Each generation must face its own crocodiles, and David can measure his own growth as he sees his children, in their turn, storing up memories of Peggotty, and St. Paul's.

At the same time that it chronicles the hero's growth, the Bildungsroman must reflect society, and David Copperfield does this to some extent. It is clearly a middle-class story; the range of characters extends merely to the adjoining classes, the self-sufficient fisher-folk of Yarmouth who are a far cry from the industrial poor of the cities, Traddles and Micawber, the genteel and the not-so-genteel poor, and a wealthy class that has close associations with business and is mentioned only briefly. Crime makes its appearance in the middle-class form of embezzlement; everyone goes to school; no scenes depict an idle aristocracy taking its unproductive pleasures. David's is a bourgeois world whose greatest external demand is that David earn his living rather sooner, and with less support than he

might, ideally, have expected. We have noted that it was important for David's occupation of proctor to be comfortable and gentlemanly, but not for it to be socially useful or intellectually satisfying. David is, therefore, a typical bourgeois young man, in accordance with Lukács observation that:

...the hero's central position...is merely accidental: the hero is picked out of an unlimited number of men who share his aspirations, and is placed at the centre of the narrative only because his seeking and finding reveal the world's totality most clearly. 49

It may be argued that David's final occupation is unique, rather than typical, but the fiction is maintained that these pages are for his eyes alone, and any man might survey his life in this way. As for his love affairs, most young men chase after wax dolls and many somewhat older young men wish that they could choose and chase again. David's mistake is not unlike Dorothea Brooke's, nor the one Jane Eyre avoided when she rejected St. John Rivers, nor that of many other heroes and heroines of the mid-nineteenth century, and after, whose generosity of spirit blinds them to the impoverishment of the recipients of their affection. David does not know himself, and even if he did this would do him little good if he did not also know the world. If this novel is, in part, a study of Victorian marriage conventions these are part of the larger story of the romantic sensibility's necessary accommodation to the real world of its society. When David realizes and accepts his aunt's loss of money and is prepared to take the responsibility himself to be equally ardently poor, his reconciliation with the world depends on his having a beloved who can be realistic and determined. David's dream of the forests of difficulty and the guitar case captures the incompatibility not merely of mind and temperament but of fantasy, admittedly shaped to some extent by the conventions and stereotypes of the age, and reality.

This conflict is represented in a number of other characters whose

parallel with the hero points up the final success of the hero's education. Steerforth's arrogant, ardent, cruel nature is clearly portrayed at school. It is inevitable that Emily, who wants to be a lady, who has no fear of the sea, should be fatally attracted to him. It is equally inevitable that Emily cannot be attracted to Ham, whose excessive devotion is as errant and damaging to her as David's to Dora. Pretty Emily is no more suited to be Ham's wife than Dora is to manage the home of any man who has his way to make. Steerforth's limitations as a lover are shown to be more than social by the figure of Rosa Dartle who counteracts Mrs. Steerforth's adoring pride in her son by bearing witness, in her face, to the brutality of his passion. Rosa's irony and bitterness throughout the novel remind the reader of the effects of love misused, and provide a corrective reflecting surface that keeps David's attractive idol always before us as potential villain. Her counterpart, Martha, equally ruined, also has no family to protect her. Martha's adoration of Emily is like David's continued love for Steerforth; beginning in gratitude, this is an ideal love that admires its object for the potentialities that raise it out of the average and the ordinary. Martha is more than the author's gratuitous indulgence in one of the social problems of the time, described, with rather inappropriate rhythm, by Hood:

Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none! 50

As Lukács points out:

The world of such a novel in itself and for itself is by no means free from danger. In order to demonstrate the risk which everyone runs and which can be escaped by individual salvation but not by a-prioristic redemption, many characters have to perish because of their inability to adapt themselves, whilst others fade away because of their precipitous and unconditional surrender in the face of reality. Ways towards individual salvation do exist however, and a whole community of men is seen to arrive successfully at the end of them, helping one another, as well as occasionally falling into error during the process.

And what has become a reality for many must be at least potentially accessible to all. 51

The accessibility of survival for these women depends on the devotion and support of others. Further, the presence of Martha underlines the contrast with the novel's Mary.

One who "arrives successfully" and who does not suffer from the romantic sensibility is Traddles. With less than David to begin with, he makes more of what he has. David's comment, in the early stages of his affair with Dora, that Sophy was no doubt quite a good sort of girl for someone like Traddles, adds a dimension of pathos to the later scenes in which Traddles is seen to be ideally happy with his Sophy while David feels that he has missed his own chance for happiness. Tired as we may become of "the dearest girl in the world, one of nine down in Devonshire", these nervously repetitive references are almost balanced by Traddles's perceptive comment, that it is remarkable what meanness some people can be capable of. This effectively connects the later Traddles not only with the plot, but with the jolly victim in the tight blue suit obsessively drawing skeletons for consolation. Both Steerforth and Traddles are portrayed in the round from the first so that the reader sees what David would like to be, and the David that he must try to become. Steerforth at school, taking charge of David's pocket money, keeping the younger boy up late telling stories of romantic adventure, encouraging that fateful tendency to dreaminess, Steerforth at Yarmouth charming the Peggottys and, with his stories and songs, calling forth Mr. Peggotty's singing of "When the Stormy Winds Do Blow", Steerforth at home between his mother and Rosa Dartle, Steerforth getting "Daisy" drunk, and Steerforth's final revealing outburst at the end of Chapter 21, "Daisy, I believe you are in earnest, and are good. I wish we all were!" all add up to a self-conscious character, aware of its own tragedy. Steerforth perishes, in part, to accommodate David's growth, but it is important for Traddles to survive so that

David can translate Traddles's physical discipline into emotional terms. Traddles's sturdy good sense is apparent, even at school. David's role in the famous scene between Steerforth and Mr. Mell nicely captures his typicality when contrasted with his two companions. He is not the bully: there is only one of those; he is not the sturdy defender of the underdog; there are few enough of those; like most of us he is the chagrined on-looker, sorry, but not brave enough to speak up. Mr. Mell's sensitive gesture of absolution typifies the benign and protective world that allows David to grow and to achieve the mature reconciliation with the structures of society that Dickens here portrays. The world with which Pip makes his peace in the first ending of Great Expectations is much less benign. There, Joe's gesture of absolution does not release Pip from his guilt but intensifies it. Only the discovery that Joe has married Biddy and has achieved the happiness he deserves, and that Pip had wanted for himself, relieves Pip of the nagging consciousness of his meanness.

That so many of these characters have become household words is not, I would suggest, entirely owing to the continuing popularity of this much-loved book. Many are representative of their types and roles so that readers continue to encounter people for whom the characters of Copperfield are prototypes. And they are prototypes because the reader feels he has experienced them. We would scarcely know David if we met him on the street, but we remember David's experiences with the hero's own inwardness as he reflects on them. Some part of this achievement lies in the sublimation of plot to story, some to the various settings, so fully realized that they are actually felt, and a good deal more to the mode of narration, which is itself a subject for investigation.

If Huxley is right in his comment that "the story line of a good autobiographical Waverly^(sic) looks like the criss-crossing of half a dozen broken switchbacks, each of them bristling with innumerable

targets to infinity", this would help to explain the relative inconspicuousness of the plot in David Copperfield. This is David's "personal history" and history, as Auden points out, is an interplay of Fate, Chance, and Choice.⁵² The interplay between these three helps to account for the "broken switchbacks" bristling with targets to infinity. Fate is responsible for David's parentage, for Mr. Murdstone's appearance in his life, and for Dora's death; chance governs several of the most important encounters in the novel: the re-appearance of Steerforth in London, the re-union with Traddles, and the meetings in Canterbury and elsewhere with the Micawbers; the hero's choice takes him to Dover and decides the ways in which these fated and chance events will be used.

Much of David's history depends on a few crucial actions and choices: he bites Mr. Murdstone and is sent away; he chooses Steerforth for his idol; he goes to Dover; he marries Dora; he fights Uriah; he marries Agnes. These choices affect others, too. David's self-deception in the matter of Steerforth, even in the presence of Rosa Dartle's scar, blinds him to the realization that Steerforth is not the friend to introduce into any man's home. His self-absorption during the Dora period keeps him from realizing how much Mr. Wickfield victimizes Agnes, and how far Uriah's evil plans have gone towards destroying the family to whom he should by now stand in the role of strong and reliable family friend. These wrong choices, in turn, arise from David's temperament, which he must come to know and learn to modify.

The actual plot of the novel is linear, and follows the pattern described by Buckley and quoted above on page 208 of this thesis. From the first sentence we suspect that this is not a story in which an omniscient narrator pulls the strings. There will be few twists of fate or manipulations of the gods to reverse the course of the action, undermine natural causality, and keep the reader on tenterhooks. Instead, the narrator looks back on his own life to observe

its patterns while reliving his experiences. This reconstitution of consciousness does not make for an exciting story so much as for an interesting one. The machinery leading to plot discovery is mainly confined to those who surround David: Steerforth's seduction of Emily, Uriah's defrauding of Wickfield, the question of Annie Strong's fidelity to the old doctor, and the mystery of Aunt Betsey's husband. These are all demonstrations of evil, and of evil in which unsuitability of mind and temper play an important part, but though they are all closely related to the themes of David's story, they are not essential to its development. They provide, instead, an adumbration of some of the "targets to infinity" in the possibilities of David's life which are always kept before us. At David's birth there are predictions; at each important point choices are dramatized. What will happen? Will I be beaten? No, sent to school. Which boys will continue Murdstone's sadistic treatment? Can one predict from the shapes of the letters they have carved what the boys will be like? Will my aunt keep me? "What is to be done with him?" What shall I do with my life? How shall I live with my child-wife? And so on. When a choice has been made, a phase of life completed, it is sometimes summed up in a retrospect. The first of these four distinctive passages recalls a typical scene at Blunderstone: "Let me remember how it used to be". In the next, Chapter 18, David recalls his school days. The third comes shortly after Dora's death, and the last in the final chapter. Each phase of life is thus recalled: childhood, youth, early married life, and maturity, as the narrator pauses before going on to a new stage of complexity and growth. Past and present are interwoven in the memory so that we are given a sense of a life that has been not only lived, but felt, and examined, and recalled.

For this reason much of the substance of this novel lies elsewhere than in its story. The hero's reflections and the richly-evoked settings that so powerfully affect him are as important here as characters or events might be in a novel in a different mode.

These settings serve two purposes. First, individual rooms and houses are the home of David's consciousness; they form much of the substance of his awareness and hence of the memory of his experiences. Further, setting, in the larger sense of historical and geographical location, defines the boundaries of the novel's world and provides signposts to it.

David's infant world, so convincingly described from the child's viewpoint that, as George Orwell says, it seems to have been written by a child,⁵³ includes the house, with Peggotty's kitchen and the long passage, and terrifying storeroom, and the two parlors, the church, with its high-backed pew and the window near it, and the green churchyard with its shady trees, and tombstones, and sheep. Then we see the outside of the house "with latticed bedroom windows standing open to let in the sweet-smelling air, and the ragged old rooks-nests still dangling in the elm-trees at the bottom of the front garden" (CD, 10). David's world is contained in these descriptions: domestic, comfortable, spacious, not without suggestions of evil, as in the dark storeroom, "a place to be run past at night", and death, in the quiet tombstones, but a world where quiet growth could take place, and so perceived even with the melancholy tone of time remembered upon it. There is a stillness of tall trees about it, both domesticated and made slightly forlorn by the empty rooks' nests, and hushed by the nearby church and the churchyard of grazing sheep. Particular as this setting is, it is also representative of middle-class English life. Almost as soon as David has become used to this world of Blunderstone Rookery, he pays a visit to Yarmouth where "we turned down lanes bestrewn with bits of chips and little hillocks of sand, and went past gas-works, rope-walks, boat-builders' yards, shipwrights' yards, ship-breakers' yards, caulkers' yards, riggers' lofts, smiths' forges, and a great litter of such places..." (CD, 18). Nothing could be more specific and less representative than Yarmouth and the Peggottys' home. The house and its contents are

described in detail: the brightly-coloured, portentous pictures of the sacrifice of Isaac and of Daniel in the lion's den, and "a little looking-glass, just the right height for me, nailed against the wall, and framed with oyster shells; a little bed, which there was just room enough to get into; and a nosegay of seaweed in a blue mug on the table" (CD, 18-19). The uniqueness of Yarmouth is both true to fact and a refreshing outdoor environment in a novel that takes place so much in the mind. Dickens went to see Yarmouth and described it to Forster as "...the strangest place in the wide world; one hundred and forty-six miles of hill-less marsh between it and London. More when we meet. I shall certainly try my hand at it..."⁵⁴ Like Dickens, David is charmed by the individuality of everything he sees. Yarmouth becomes a special part of his consciousness so that when he remembers "my old nurse" the world of Yarmouth and his memories of it accompany his recollection.

When David returns home he finds that he is an exile in his own house, dispossessed of his little room beside his mother's and moved to one with cracks in the ceiling and a "washing-stand...rickety on its three legs, and having a discontented something about it..." (CD, 26). He cries for little Em'ly, from whom he now feels he had been torn away "to come here where no one seemed to want me, or care about me, half as much as she did" (CD, 26).

This sense of being an exile comes back to David, at school, in London at Murdstone and Grinby's, and again, as a young man in his rooms at Mrs. Crupp's where, after invoking Robinson Crusoe again ("It was a wonderfully fine thing to have that lofty castle to myself, and to feel, when I shut my outer door, like Robinson Crusoe, when he had got into his fortifications, and pulled his ladder up after him" (CD, 216), he begins to feel lonely for Agnes in the evenings. His rooms are described only in the most general terms, and the inadequacy of the establishment is turned to comic uses. But where David does feel at home, at Aunt Betsey's cottage, at Mr. Wickfield's house, and, briefly, in the cottage he prepares for Dora, each house has its

particular atmosphere and charm. The sense of domestic order and comfort is enhanced by familiar objects that hold a special place in the owners' affections: Aunt Betsey's bird cage, Gyp's pagoda, Agnes's pretty, old-fashioned desk. Beloved objects in this novel become the bearers of memory. Miss Betsey's bird-cage, transported to her tiny rooms in London, seems to bring the cottage at Dover with it; Peggotty's work box, with the sliding top and the picture of St. Paul's, recreates David's whole childhood world of The Rookery; Traddles cherishes Sophy's table and lampstand and rescues them from Micawber's improvidence as emblems of his love for Sophy and the domestic happiness this will bring.

Each of David's good homes is a sanctuary for the domestic affections. After his first periods of exile he is able to grow and develop in his substitute homes, at Aunt Betsey's, at the Wickfield's, and at Peggotty's. None of these, however, except David's final home with Agnes quite recreates the perfections of his first childhood home because he is a visitor there. The house David prepares for Dora is perfect, but the housekeeping is so faulty as to produce the comic disorder of the dinner for Traddles. And we note that Aunt Betsey is established in the next cottage; David still needs his mentor. Once David and Agnes are successfully established, with children playing by the fire and David writing far into the night, there is a final comparison with Traddles's household that suggests the distinctiveness of each one's accommodation to society. Traddles's happy domesticity is quite different from David's. He and Sophy are squeezed into the third floor, as Traddles was once squeezed into his too-tight suit, but it is to make room for a horde of loving relatives. The final description of him, sitting at the foot of his table, like a Patriarch, with Sophy beaming at him "across a cheerful space that is certainly not glittering with Britannia metal", is a sketch of the successful practical man. David's world is one of private affection, memory, and imagination, and the glowing fire and the books and objects from his own childhood are an appropriate setting for it.

Though much of the novel takes place in London there is none of the nightmare quality of Oliver Twist about Copperfield. Indeed, there is little of the city at all. St. Paul's, which so often reflects the observer's moods in Dickens's novels, appears only on the lid of Peggotty's work box, inviolate from the changes of time. When David returns from Switzerland he half expects "to find St. Paul's Cathedral looking older" (CD, 498). But his gaze is inward, and he does not challenge the picture, dear for its associations, by seeing the real thing. Even the set piece of the storm scene, deplored by the Athenaeum reviewer,⁵⁵ was admired by Ruskin for the accuracy and delicacy of its observation.⁵⁶

Setting in the larger sense of the historical and geographical definition of the novel's world has a special place in the Bildungsroman for it classifies the ranks and professions, the hierarchy where the hero must find his place. In this novel the hero's place is in the middle-class world more or less circumscribed by education and the law. The effect of the hero's position in society on his character and temperament was perceptively outlined by an early reviewer:

Despite their descents into the lowest class, and their occasional flights into the less familiar ground of fashion, it is the air and breath of middle-class respectability which fills the books of Mr. Dickens. His heroes are not the young men of clubs and colleges - not the audacious youngsters of Eton, nor the "awful swells" in whose steps they follow. Home-bred and sensitive, much impressed by feminine influences, swayed by the motives, the regards, and the laws which were absolute in their childhood, Mr. Dickens' heroes are all young for a necessity. Their courage is of the order of courage which belongs to women. They are spotless in their thoughts, their intentions, and wishes.

And of David Copperfield in particular, "in the very heart and soul of him this young man is respectable". The reviewer continues:

...we cannot do justice to Mr. Dickens without recognizing this, his first and greatest claim to our regard, as the historian of a class - the literary interpreter of those

intelligent, sensible, warm-hearted households, which are the strength of our country, and occupy the wide middle ground between the rich and the poor. 57

Within its generally decorous middle-class range the novel presents a variety of occupations and institutions whose purpose may not be apparent until one reads the novel with the genre in mind. There is, first, a carefully differentiated social hierarchy that extends from the Peggottys at one end to Mrs. Steerforth at the other. There are small tradesmen, such as Mr. Omer, and the more ambitious firm of Murdstone and Grinby. Several of the major institutions of society are well-represented. There is a bad school, Creakle's, with a good master, Mr. Mell, and a good school, Dr. Strong's. And lurking in the background, a worse school still where Uriah Heep has learned that humility pays:

"But how little you think of the rightful umbleness of a person in my station, Master Copperfield! Father and me was both brought up at a foundations school for boys; and mother, she was likewise brought up at a public, sort of charitable, establishment. They taught us all a deal of umbleness - not much else that I know of, from morning to night. We was to be umble to this person, and umble to that; and to pull off our caps here, and to make bows there; and always to know our place, and abase ourselves before our betters. And we had such a lot of betters! Father got the monitor-medal by being umble. So did I. Father got made a sexton by being umble. He had the character, among the gentlefolks, of being such a well-behaved man, that they were determined to bring him in. 'Be umble, Uriah,' says father to me, 'and you'll get on. It was what was always being dinned into you and me at school; it's what goes down best. 'Be umble,' says father, 'and you'll do!' And really it ain't done bad!"(CD, 349)

David's careful education, we note, makes him fit for nothing in particular, except for a kind of law clerk and to act as Dr. Strong's secretary in the unrealizable project of the Dictionary. Traddles, with the background of Creakle's school and much determination and hard work is able to become an honest success.

The law is particularly clearly defined here, in part because of David's chosen occupation of proctor and Traddles's as lawyer.

Doctors' Commons is criticized throughout. Spenlow and Jorkins appear to work at cross-purposes, but in fact work together to confound the client; Mr. Spenlow leaves no will, and his financial affairs are not greatly superior to those of Micawber, in spite of his gracious surroundings. The firm of Wickfield, Heep, and Micawber scarcely inspires confidence, and then there is Creakle's position as Magistrate. When David asks how Creakle can possibly have become a Middlesex Magistrate, Traddles replies:

"Oh dear me!"... "It would be very difficult to answer that question. Perhaps he voted for somebody, or lent money to somebody, or bought something of somebody, or otherwise obliged somebody, or jobbed for somebody, who knew somebody who got the lieutenant of the county to nominate him for the commission." (CD, 516)

Creakle's surprising position as magistrate enables him to offer to show David a model prison, and the reader is treated not only to the sight of Uriah Heep and Littimer as unctuous reformed prisoners, but to a demonstration of the follies of this particular branch of the legal hierarchy. They illustrate some of Carlyle's complaints, expressed in the second of the Latter-Day Pamphlets of some months before.⁵⁸ Even if Creakle were, as A.O.J. Cockshut suggests, inconsistent, the institutions of David's society, and Dickens's satiric attitude to them, is not.⁵⁹

In comparison with Traddles, David remains something of an innocent about the ways of the world to the end. Though he is shrewd enough to warn Traddles against lending Micawber his name, he continues to have to adjust his own idealism to reality. When he returns from Switzerland David expresses half-comic despair over England and the entrenched values he finds there. The waiter at the inn has not only not heard of the rising young lawyer, Mr. Traddles, but gives all his attention to an elderly Conveyancer, said to be worth a mint of money, who is reported to be leaving everything to his laundress's daughter. England and the law seem more than ever difficult to take by storm. A visit to Traddles and Sophy both cheers and saddens him, however,

and he quickly turns his attention to his first task, the resolution of his own problems, the necessary discipline of his own heart.

The question posed at the outset is whether David will be the hero of his own life. For much of his story it seems that he will not. He loses his favoured place at home, is sent to school in disgrace, chooses his protector unwisely, out of gratitude, does not take the commercial world of Murdstone and Grinby by storm, marries the wrong girl, lets his friends down, needs constant looking-after, and, indeed, almost to the end of the novel can scarcely command adequate service from the second waiter in the dining room of an inn. When there are tests, David does not pass them. In what, then, does his heroism consist? The answer is to be found in "these pages", and what these pages show is the heroic effort of recollection and comprehension that leaves us with David's consciousness recreated and held up to the light in a work of imagination, a work perhaps as generative in the novel as The Prelude was in poetry.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

1. Aldous Huxley, quoted by Laura Archera Huxley, This Timeless Moment (New York, 1968), p. 198.
2. Letters Nonsuch II, pp. 620-21, "Why is it, that as with poor David, a sense comes always crushing on me now, when I fall into low spirits, as of one happiness I have missed in life, and one friend and companion I have never made?"
3. The Dickens Critics, ed. George H. Ford and Lauriat Lane Jr. (Ithaca, 1961), p. 350.
4. See Robert M. Scholes, Structuralism in Literature (New Haven, 1974), p. 32.

"For clarification I wish to call my theory of ideal types a theory of modes, using the term genre in the narrower sense for the study of individual works in their relationship to specific, historically identifiable traditions".
4. Susanne Howe, Wilhelm Meister and His English Kinsmen (New York, 1930), p. 14.
6. The German Bildungsroman from Wieland to Hesse (Princeton, 1978), p. 14.
7. Season of Youth (Harvard, 1974), p. 37.
8. "The Undisciplined Heart of David Copperfield", NCF 9 (1954): 81-107.
9. Buckley, p. 17.
10. Georg Lukács, The Theory of the Novel, translated from the German by Anna Bostock (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), pp. 132-143.
11. See above, note 6.
12. Swales, p. 23. Swales draws on Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik, ed. F. Bassenge (Berlin, 1955), p. 983.
13. Hamburger Ausgabe, VIII, p. 559. Quoted by Swales, p. 27.
14. Swales, p. 28.
15. "Die Kunst des Romans", in Schriften und Reden zur Literatur, Kunst, und Philosophie, ed. H. Burgin, II (Frankfurt, 1968), p. 357. Quoted by Swales, p. 23.
16. Ley, pp. 23-36.
17. Ley, pp. 54-58, fn. 69.
18. Dickens the Novelist (Norman, 1967), pp. 318-19.

19. Lukács, p. 132.
20. Lukács, p. 133.
21. Ley, p. 555.
22. This preface repeats that of the first edition, with minor changes in tense. It omits the phrase "whom I love" after "reader", and substitutes the paragraph naming David Copperfield as his favourite child for one looking forward to the publication of another book.
23. "Mr. Micawber and the Redefinition of Experience", The Dickensian 63 (1967): 100-110.
24. Ley, p. 5.
25. John E. Butt and Kathleen Tillotson, Dickens at Work (London, 1957), p. 115.
26. Ibid., pp. 117-173.
27. Novels of the Eighteen-Forties (Oxford, 1954), p. 260.
28. Design and Truth in Autobiography (London, 1960), pp. 36-49.
29. Ibid., p. 52.
30. Novels of the Eighteen-Forties, p. 131.
31. Wayne C. Shumaker, English Autobiography: Its Emergence, Materials and Form (Berkeley, 1954), p. 79.
32. Ibid., p. 79.
33. Ibid., p. 76.
34. Ley, pp. 522-23.
35. Howe, p. 3.
36. F.R. and Q.D. Leavis, Dickens the Novelist (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 81.
37. Ley, p. 537.
38. Monod, p. 288.
39. Ley, p. 525.
40. Leavis, p. 136.
41. See, for example, John Jones, "David Copperfield" in Dickens and the Twentieth Century, ed. John Gross and Gabriel Pearson (Toronto, 1962), p. 136.
42. Lukács, pp. 132-33.
43. Herbert George Wells, Experiment in Autobiography: Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain (New York, 1934), p. 12.

44. Leavis, ch. 2, "Dickens and Tolstoy: The Case for a Serious View of David Copperfield", pp. 60-122.
45. Swales, p. 73.
46. John Ruskin, "Unto this Last", Vol. 17, The Works of John Ruskin, ed. E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London, 1903-12), p. 90.
47. Swales, p. 17.
48. Letters II Nonesuch, p. 797.
49. Lukács, p. 134.
50. Thomas Hood, "The Bridge of Sighs", Poems, 2 v. (London, 1846), v. 1, p. 66.
51. Lukács, p. 135.
52. W.H. Auden, "The Quest Hero", Perspectives in Contemporary Criticism, ed. Sheldon Norman Grebstein (New York, Evanston and London, 1968), pp. 370-381. First published in the Texas Quarterly (1961).
53. The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol. I, ed. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (Harmondsworth, 1970), p. 465.
54. Letters II Nonesuch, p. 141.
55. Athenaeum, 1204 (1850): 121.
56. Ruskin, Vol. III, p. 570.
57. Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (1855): 451-52.
58. Thomas Carlyle, Latter-Day Pamphlets (London, no date), pp. 41-73. Pamphlet No. II is dated 1st March, 1850. The parallel between the two passages was noted in The Eclectic Magazine, 22 (February, 1851): 247-258.
59. A.O.J. Cockshut, The Imagination of Charles Dickens (New York, 1961), p. 125.

CHAPTER V THE BILDUNGSROMAN AS FAIRY TALE

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

The world's a lab'rinth, whose enfractuious ways
Are all compos'd of rubs and crook'd

meanders:

No resting here; he's hurry'd back that stays
A thought; and he that goes unguided

wanders:

Her way is dark, her path untrod, unev'n;
So hard's the way from earth, so hard's the
way to heav'n!¹

Great Expectations is usually described as a Bildungsroman² because it tells the story of Pip's moral growth. The great normative books in that mode, David Copperfield, The Mill on the Floss, Wilhelm Meister, Sons and Lovers, are memoirs whose linear development traces the life-experiences or the sentimental education of their heroes. Great Expectations differs from these because its plot accomplishes the hero's regeneration by a twist of fate. I would argue that this plot and its characters are those of a fairy tale and that Great Expectations is, therefore, a Bildungsroman whose meaning is expressed by the externalization of inner truth through fantasy.

"Trifles make the sum of life" David Copperfield says, summing up the loving elaboration of detail in character and setting, and the typical events of the plot, that constitute the method of his memoir. This reflection, and its tone, throw into sharp relief the very different method of Great Expectations. The two novels are so often coupled as Bildungsromane because both are written in the first person. If we try to think of Great Expectations in David's way, however, as the slow accretion of familiar things coloured by the changing sensibility of the perceiving subject, the extremes and violent dis-

locations of the later tale flash before us; there is a dramatic quality about Great Expectations that implies differences in plot, characters and setting in the two works. More than that, Great Expectations has the dual nature that makes its choice of endings possible. The characteristics of fairy-tale romance are often noticed in current criticism of Great Expectations; the fact that this fairy-tale plot adumbrates a novel of social and psychological realism sometimes receives less attention, and that both modes are carefully interwoven is an observation that has scarcely been tested.

It is almost an axiom of Dickens criticism that Great Expectations is Dickens's best-constructed novel. Critics whose methods and interpretations are as far apart as the shores of the ocean that often divides them are at least agreed as to this novel's economy and control. Few of these critics, however, and there have been so many that the editor of Nineteenth Century Fiction recently called for something like a moratorium on explications of Great Expectations,³ have ventured beyond these summary descriptive words to deal with the realistic and the romantic aspects of the novel, and with the relations between them. The critical question remains, what is the structure of Great Expectations and why is it felt to be so satisfying? The answer must take account of both strands in the novel and with the way they are worked together.

I have suggested in earlier chapters that a novel's form is affected, if not determined, by the author's narrative stance. For Great Expectations that stance is clearly documented in three letters to Forster of September and October, 1860. Late in September Dickens describes the germ of the novel:

For a little piece I have been writing - or am writing; for I hope to finish it to-day - such a very fine, new, and grotesque idea has opened up before me, that I begin to doubt whether I had not better cancel the little paper, and reserve the notion for a new book. You shall judge as soon as I get it printed. But it so opens out before me

that I can see the whole of a serial revolving on it, in a most singular and comic manner... 4

The "little piece" was one of the essays for The Uncommercial Traveller which Dickens had been writing during 1860 and 1861. What is interesting in this first reference is the spontaneity of the conception. For his preceding book, A Tale of Two Cities, Dickens had prepared for twelve months and had, during the writing, allowed himself to read no books that did not have the air of the time on them. The novel that followed Great Expectations, Our Mutual Friend, was a strain from the first. Dickens struggled for twelve months before finding a workable idea, and had then to push himself hard over the first few numbers. Great Expectations, in contrast, gathered momentum almost at once. A second letter, of October 4, begins, "Last week, I got to work on a new story..." and ends, "I must make the most I can of the book. When I come down, I will bring you the first two or three weekly parts. The name is Great Expectations. I think a good name?"⁵

Several points from these two letters are a guide, in the absence of a Preface to Great Expectations, to Dickens's narrative stance. First, "such a fine, new and grotesque idea" suggests something of the wonderful, as opposed to the everyday, and thus places the book in the romance tradition recognized by a contemporary reviewer.⁶ Second, there are no discussions of the name of the hero, or of the exact title, no consultations with Forster beforehand, no long secret gestation, as with Oliver Twist, but, as with David Copperfield and The Old Curiosity Shop,⁷ a novel growing naturally out of work already in hand. The title is a departure from that of the other single-hero novels in being clearly a theme title, and some of Dickens's assurance may be accounted for by the fact that two other young gentlemen of great expectations, Dick Swiveller and Martin Chuzzlewit, had provided him with a paradigm for the characteristic change of heart that had made these callow heroes worthy of their

respective inheritances.

The third letter, written in the same month as the one last quoted, continues:

...The book will be written in the first person throughout, and during these first three weekly numbers you will find the hero to be a boy-child, like David. Then he will be an apprentice. You will not have to complain of the want of humour as in the Tale of Two Cities. I have made the opening, I hope, in its general effect exceedingly droll. I have put a child and a good-natured foolish man, in relations that seem to me very funny. Of course I have got in the pivot on which the story will turn too - and which indeed, as you remember, was the grotesque tragi-comic conception that first encouraged me. To be quite sure I had fallen into no unconscious repetitions, I read David Copperfield again the other day, and was affected by it to a degree you would hardly believe... 8

We note here the reference to the "grotesque tragi-comic conception" and the important identification of Great Expectations as a companion piece, in the same mode, to David Copperfield. The "grotesque tragi-comic conception" is surely Magwich, and with Magwich and "a boy-child like David" who becomes an apprentice, we have the two strains in the novel, the fantastic and the realistic. These strains we have elsewhere (pp. 25-26) designated romance and novel.

To repeat the distinction in nineteenth-century terms, one might quote Scott's "Essay on Romance" written for the Encyclopedia Britannica in 1823. In the first paragraph of the essay Scott criticizes Johnson's definitions of romance and novel and provides his own:

We would be rather inclined to describe a Romance as "a fictitious narrative in prose or verse; the interest of which turns upon marvellous and uncommon incidents;" being thus opposed to the kindred term, Novel, which Johnson has described as a "smooth tale, generally of love;" but which we would rather define as "a fictitious narrative, differing from the romance, because the events are accommodated to the ordinary train of human events, and the modern state of society." 9

It is worth making this distinction again, and in contemporary terms, since a number of critics have drawn attention to the fairy-tale

elements in Great Expectations. Others concentrate on it as a social document, but there has been no attempt to observe the combination of the two. Harry Stone's influential article, "Fire, Hand and Gate", is the most thorough treatment of the book as "inverted fairy tale";¹⁰ Dorothy Van Ghent refers to "a finely lucid atmosphere of fairy tale";¹¹ Walther Killy devotes a chapter to "Great Expectations, the Novel as Fairy Tale";¹² Paul Pickrel says "the story is, then, a fairy-tale...";¹³ Michael Kotzin traces fairy-tale influence in this and other Dickens novels.¹⁴ Thus when Mrs. Leavis speaks of "the critics who reduce this novel to a matter of fairy godmothers and princesses" she sums up a whole cluster of criticisms.¹⁵ Fairy tales, this list seems to suggest, are everywhere in Dickens, but especially in this novel.

The word "reduce" in Mrs. Leavis's comment indicates that she, at least, deplures such a reading, and many critics' discussions of the book concentrates on a reading heavily weighted on the side of the novel of development. Humphry House's "snob's progress" discusses Pip's cultural limitations,¹⁶ G. Robert Stange sees it as "a moral fable; the story of a young man's development from the moment of his first self-awareness, to that of his mature acceptance of the human condition";¹⁷ R.G. Baldwin, who scrutinizes Pip's moral development, claims that "scarcely a page of this book fails to yield something about the formation of Pip's character, or at any rate remind us that the shaping of character is its subject".¹⁸ Perhaps most interestingly for this thesis, John H. Hagan Jr., who begins his study of "Structural Patterns in Great Expectations" with the comment that "It is evident at first glance that Great Expectations falls into the familiar genre of the Bildungsroman..."¹⁹ seeks to demonstrate that the structural soundness comes from patterned repetition. Helpful as this careful article is, it does not do justice to the fairy-tale elements in the novel. In the section in which Hagan traces a pattern of paired scenes to show that Dickens uses the

pairing as a device to measure Pip's growth, he omits a scene or so in each sequence. When the extra scenes are examined in conjunction with the ones Hagan discusses, the more complex pattern of Bildungsroman interwoven with fairy tale emerges.

In this chapter I shall attempt to show how the Bildungsroman uses the fairy tale. First, however, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of the term "fairy tale", and to discuss the relation of fairy tale to romance. The term "fantasy" also needs to be defined so that there is no danger of the reader's considering it a reduction of more respectable realistic experience. There will be, as in the chapter on David Copperfield, a testing of Great Expectations against Lukács typology of the Bildungsroman, followed by a discussion of the insights the approach through mode yields for this much-discussed novel. These include, first, more precise designation of the fairy-tale roles than has previously appeared. Paul Pickrel, for instance, says that it is "...a fairy tale with a terrible ogre, Magwitch, a wildly eccentric fairy godmother, an exquisite princess, and a sudden magical transformation."²⁰ These designations are usual, but they do not accord with the roles or functions described in the standard typology of fairy tales, Vladimir Propp's Morphology of the Folktale.²¹ Further, Orlick acquires definition and credibility when seen as a figure in a typical romance pattern, and his function in Pip's life can be defined in literary, rather than psychiatric terms. When Wemmick is seen as one of the mentor figures germane to the Bildungsroman he, too, becomes functional rather than decorative. Finally, if we can see where the fairy tale comes to an end in Great Expectations we can then assess the relative merits of the two endings on a somewhat more objective basis than is usual. As in earlier chapters, plot, characters, and setting are examined in the light of the underlying modes, concluding with a comment on the pertinence of these modes to the two endings.

The distinction between novel and romance, essential to the

first chapter of this thesis, is equally important here. In spite of the widespread use of this distinction from Johnson's time²² through Scott,²³ Hawthorne,²⁴ and James²⁵ to Frye,²⁶ the term is not always clearly understood. Mrs. Leavis, for example, observes that:

The highly stylized settings and the schematic technique of The Scarlet Letter seem to have an affinity in the very deliberately selected simple settings of Great Expectations, as well as in its salvationist outcome and its exploration of the effects of guilt. 27

Mrs. Leavis's evidence for the influence of Hawthorne on Dickens is internal; it is introduced rather lamely in the text preceding the above note:

Dickens like most great novelists was quick to pick up ideas and make them his own (not, in his case, at the conscious level probably) and we may note here substantial evidence for his expressed admiration for the opening scenes of Hawthorne's allegorical masterpiece The Scarlet Letter. 28

The evidence for Dickens's expressed admiration is not given. Further, this similarity between the two works is not really surprising; and scarcely in need of documentation, since both are romances, though The Scarlet Letter may be a more self-conscious one. Great Expectations was recognized as a romance by one of its earliest reviewers and the context in which the term occurs suggests that the word is used knowledgeably.²⁹ I would argue that part of the power of Great Expectations, and part of its much-admired economy of form, lies in the particular skill of the combination of the two elements.

The familiar characteristics of romance include wild and remote settings, and a plot governed, in the end, by the dominating passion of one or more of the characters, people who become the agents of passion that is often both inescapable and hopeless. Romances are linear and frequently follow the pattern of a quest. Just as the short story of social analysis is the short form of the novel, so the tale is the short form of the romance. There are several different kinds of tales but fairy tales make up a recognizable group.

As allegory is a special mode with definite patterns and characteristics within the category of romance, so the fairy tale has certain patterns and characteristics that distinguish it from other forms of romance. The experienced reader has a general notion of these characteristics, but the prodigality with which the label "fairy tale" has been affixed to several of Dickens's works makes it necessary, for the purposes of this thesis, to find as precise a definition as possible of it.

Fortunately, the fairy tale has been studied for just this purpose. Vladimir Propp's Morphology of the Folktale, first published in Russia in 1928, is misleadingly titled, for it is a study of the essential structure of a special type of folk-tale, the fairy tale.³⁰ In this work Propp's aim, according to his first translator,

...was a description of the fairy tale per se. In his analysis he departs from the smallest narrative units, the motifs; he defines the motifs in terms of their function, that is, in terms of what the dramatis personae do, independently of by whom and in what way the function is fulfilled. He states the number of these functions obligatory for the fairy tale and classifies them according to their significance and position in the course of the narrative. Their sequence is finally the basis of his typology within the genre. He abstracts the compositional pattern that underlies the structure of the fairy tale as a whole and formulates its compositional laws by way of structural signs. 31

Propp provides, thus, a typology against which to test a given story to see whether it may, strictly, be called a fairy tale. Propp's designation of roles and functions places some of the characters in a slightly different light. Taylor Stoehr, for instance, is scornful of Herbert's ineffectuality.³² But when Herbert is seen in Propp's terms, as the hero's friend, charged with the task of accomplishing the hero's transfiguration, we see how strongly Herbert performs in that role. At the same time Herbert's vague aspirations and ineffectual pursuit of them, in company with his natural gentlemanliness and kindness, make him a foil to Pip. Since Herbert is also an extension of his father as one of Pip's mentors, an essential role

in the typology of the Bildungsroman, we see how neatly Dickens has combined the two modes. The mentor in one mode and the friend who brings about the transfiguration in the other are, as it were, back to back like Siamese twins, the one dealing with outer change and the other with inner. Naturally this is not to suggest that Dickens wrote with Propp or anything like him in mind, any more than Sophocles wrote to the formulaic prescription of some forgotten Aristotle. The typology is extrapolated from existing texts and I am using it to test the validity of a critical statement that is frequently made.

In spite of the great number and variety of characters in the tales he analyzed, Propp found that the number of functions of these characters was surprisingly small, and he comments, "This explains the two-fold quality of a folk-tale: it is amazingly multiform, picturesque and colourful, and, to no less a degree, remarkably re-current". So recurrent, indeed, that Propp arrived at the basic thesis that "all fairy tales are of one type in regard to their structure".³³

Propp's dramatis personae include villain, donor, helper, princess and her father, dispatcher, hero and false hero. He points out that these characters have "spheres of action" corresponding to their roles. Some of these, of course, are obvious: the sphere of action of the villain is villainy. He has a fight or other forms of struggle with the hero, and pursues him. The sphere of action of the donor (provider) is the preparation for the transmission of a magical agent and the provision of the hero with a magical agent. The helper is responsible for "the spatial transference of the hero, liquidation of misfortune or lack, rescue from pursuit, the solution of difficult tasks, and the transfiguration of the hero".³⁴ The princess or sought-for person and her father cover a range of action from the assignment of difficult tasks, through branding, exposure, recognition, punishment of a second villain, to marriage. "The princess and her father cannot be exactly delineated from each other according to functions. Most often it is the father who assigns

difficult tasks due to hostile feeling toward the suitor. He also frequently punishes (or orders punished) the false hero".³⁵ The dispatcher dispatches, i.e. approaches the hero with a request or a command. The hero, if he is a seeker-hero, departs on a search, reacts to the demands of the donor, and participates in a wedding. The false hero also departs on a search and responds to the donor and presents unfounded claims. According to Propp "the sequence of functions is always identical".³⁶ He explains that not all tales give evidence of all functions, but that "the absence of certain functions does not change the order of the rest".³⁷

The functions of the dramatis personae and their sequence in the tale are the two central points of Propp's thesis. Since the sequence is schematic in Propp and he gives a number of possible variants under each of the functions, I have listed these in an Appendix, selecting for each function the appropriate matching incident from Great Expectations. This Appendix may be used as a point of reference so that the reader may satisfy himself that none of the other single-hero novels, at least, fits the pattern as Great Expectations does.

My reading of Great Expectations as a fairy tale begins with the assignation of fairy-tale roles. Compeyson is the villain, but Propp makes provision for a single sphere of action to be distributed amongst several characters. Thus, later in the novel both Orlick and Bentley Drummle do Compeyson's bad work for him. In the early part of the story Miss Havisham, whose desire for vengeance is a direct result of Compeyson's wickedness, may be seen as doing some of the villain's work, just as Estella does some of Miss Havisham's work. Magwitch is the donor of the magical agent, and Herbert the hero's helper. The dispatcher who makes the connection between donor and hero, and who selects the hero's friend, is Jaggers. Pip, of course, is the hero, a seeker-hero, rather than a victim. Estella must be the princess, and the "father" of the princess, who sends

the hero out on impossible tasks in order to be worthy of the princess, is Miss Havisham. Miss Havisham has the requisite hostile feelings towards the suitor because he is male; she works through Estella, who makes Pip aware of the things he lacks. The fact that Magwich, who is the real father of the princess, is the one who defines the difficult task, to become a gentleman, as well as providing the magical agent (money) that appears to enable him to accomplish it, and that Magwich has suffered from Compeyson as much as Miss Havisham has, simply doubles the reader's pleasure by providing an extra and ironical layer of complexity. The designation of the "false hero" is puzzling. Orlick, at times, seems to fill this role as he shadows Pip to Satis House and to London, and to share it with Bentley Drummle who marries the princess. It is appropriate for the false hero to do the villain's work, as this threatens the hero.

The "plot", which is what Propp's sequence of functions describes, begins after the introduction of the hero and the enumeration of the members of his family. It is essential, according to Propp, that one of the members of a family be absent from home, and Propp lists the death of parents as an intensified form of absence. The action is begun when the hero disobeys a prohibition, that is when Pip steals for the convict. The fact that he takes a pork pie and brandy instead of just bread and tea makes his theft real. At this point the villain appears to disturb the peace of a happy family or to cause some form of damage. We recall that it is just after Pip has stolen the food and the file that he meets Compeyson. Though Compeyson then disappears from the story for a time his work is done by Miss Havisham. Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe, both harmful characters, send Pip to Miss Havisham. There Miss Havisham observes Pip's attraction and misery before Estella; she appears fond of Pip and gives him the impression, strengthened by Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe, that she takes special interest in him. This is all preparatory action. It makes Pip feel guilty and fosters his sense of being different from his home. In

Propp's words, "an insufficiency then is provoked, a lack is realized". Pip is in love with Estella; he wants to be a gentleman. He tells Biddy, and "almost as if by magic" Jaggers appears with Magwitch's offer. Pip accepts Magwitch's terms and leaves home. At this point in Propp the donor appears and tests the hero. Dickens has displaced these two to the beginning in order to get in the pivot "on which the story will turn" and the audience-catching opening. Such displacement is permissible within Propp's scheme. Though Pip meets his donor and passes the familiar fairy-tale test of a good heart in the first three chapters, it is not until he has agreed to the donor's terms that the magical agent, money, is put into his hands. In London Pip meets Herbert, who begins the long transformation that takes up the second or London section of the book. Eventually Estella comes to London and Bentley Drummle becomes Pip's successful rival. When Pip journeys to Satis House and learns this and talks to Estella and Miss Havisham, he realizes that he has lost Estella. Miss Havisham's begging for forgiveness is a sign of her defeat. Even though Pip has become, on the surface, a gentleman, he does not win the princess. As a kind of epilogue to the story we have Orlick's pursuit and capture of Pip and Pip's rescue by Herbert and Trabb's boy. This whole episode has seemed strange to many readers from the first, but Propp lists three essential functions after the hero's initial misfortune or lack is liquidated: the hero's return, his pursuit, and his rescue. These form a kind of coda to the action, and one realizes how often in fairy tales the hero faces that one last trick or test before his troubles are over. Propp comments here:

A great many tales end on the note of rescue from pursuit. The hero arrives home and then, if he has obtained a girl, marries her, etc. Nevertheless, this is far from always being the case. A tale may have another misfortune in store for the hero: a villain may appear once again, may seize whatever Ivan (the hero) has obtained, may kill Ivan, etc. In a word, an initial villainy is repeated, sometimes in the same form as in the beginning, and sometimes in other forms which are new for a given tale. With this a new story commences. 38

It might be possible to pursue Great Expectations through Propp's remaining nine terms, that is, through the abortive attempt to rescue Magwich. It is only after Magwich's capture that Pip loses his money. But, since he has already lost the princess and the illusory status for which he wanted the money, his loss of it is not vital. To treat the remainder of the novel, after Pip's rescue from Orlick, as a repetition of the initial villainy would be to ignore the other signs that the fairy-tale mode is displaced by that of the Bildungsroman in the final section. Further, to see the remainder of the novel as an example of the final fairy-tale trial of the hero would require either a distortion of the story or a shift of roles. Magwich would have to be seen as hero, a victim-hero defeated in direct conflict with his villain, Compeyson. Pip would be the hero's helper whose loyal and compassionate offices bring about the hero's transfiguration from desperate law-breaker to dignified recipient of England's justice.

I would argue, instead, that the final movement of the novel is realistic rather than romantic. Pip's mistaken fairy-tale quest for Estella has prepared him for the final accommodation of the Bildungsroman hero. After his rescue from Orlick, purged of his guilt and shame, Pip is able to see Newgate as a place where some of his fellow-men live. One at least of these has proved himself a truer friend to Pip than Pip has been to Joe. Pip accomplishes the crucial stage of growth into the great expectations of a good Christian man when he "suffereth long and is kind" to his benefactor in prison. This achievement is underlined in the emotional climax of the novel when Pip says, "You had a child once, whom you loved and lost....She lived and found powerful friends. She is living now. She is a lady and very beautiful. And I love her!" (CD, 266) Estella is not a real princess, but the loving impulse that gives her back to her father proves that Pip has become a real prince. He is not yet free of the sin of pride, however, as his final comment on Magwich shows: "O Lord, be merciful to him a sinner!" (CD, 266) If we see that the fairy-

tale section of the novel ends with Pip's return to London after the rescue from Orlick, the outline of the fairy tale in Great Expectations is clear. The congruence both of functions and of sequence of functions with those of Propp's typology is very close, and always within the limits of Propp's variables.

When Propp's analysis is applied to the part of the novel that follows the typical fairy-tale pattern it yields interesting insights. First, the designation of Magwitch as "donor" clarifies his role. It is usual to see Magwitch as the grotesque ogre, the witch figure,³⁹ as indeed he is, but what is more important is to see that this ogre performs the vital function of the magic donor. This role or function, to use Propp's word, is absent from the other Dickens novels that have been described as fairy tales.⁴⁰ The Cheeryble Brothers in Nicholas Nickleby are perhaps the closest candidates and they do not qualify because they do not move outside the realm of recognizable reality. They give Nicholas a job, without testing his good heart, because he is an upright, well-spoken young gentleman such as they need for their firm. Similarly, Mr. Brownlow rescues Oliver but does not provide him with magic shoes, or any other agent of transformation, until the very end of the story when he arranges for Oliver to be given back the birthright that has been his all along. There is an ogre in The Old Curiosity Shop but no magic donor, except Dick Swiveller's aunt. Dick's life-crisis illness that causes his change of heart and his transformation of the little marchioness into his princess is not the central line of the book. We might say that The Old Curiosity Shop has fairy-tale elements. David Copperfield, adopted by Aunt Betsey and decently clothed and educated, seems to be magically rescued from the ogre and the wicked stepmother, but again there is no magic donor since Miss Betsey's offices are no more than those of a kindly parent and mentor. Christopher Mulvey's article on "The Folk-Story Structure of David Copperfield" does nothing to change this view since the basis of its argument is no

more specific than that "the novel suggests folk stories and these folk stories invoke myths".⁴¹ The conclusion, that "In our dreams, we are all heroes and so in this autobiographical novel the ordinary process of growing up becomes, through mythological projection, extraordinary, universal, and heroic", does not invite serious rebuttal.⁴²

Propp's list of dramatis personae begins with the villain and we are faced at once with the difficulty of identifying him in Great Expectations. First, the villain will not be prominent here, in accordance with Propp's proviso that "In those tales in which no villainy is present, the function (a lack) serves as its counterpart". In other words, Pip's awareness of his lack of status and money, which initiates the quest, is the villain who starts the action. We must say, I think, that the ultimate villain is Compeyson and that his ultimate victim is Magw^tich. But these two disappear early in the novel and each continues his work or role through surrogates, Orlick and Pip. (This, too, has Propp's sanction since one of the possibilities he notes is that "a single sphere of action is distributed among several characters".) Pip, however, is not a victim, as Magw^tich is, but a seeker-hero. According to Propp, where the hero is a seeker-hero, rather than a victim-hero, the fight between hero and villain is relatively unimportant in the story, whereas with victim-heroes that fight is a climax. Here we have the initial fight between Magw^tich and Compeyson, repeated on the river near the end, in which the victim-hero is defeated, and the fight between Pip and Orlick at the lime-kiln in which the seeker-hero is victorious. Further, through Compeyson Miss Havisham is a kind of villain as, through her, is Estella. The game of cards Pip and Estella play, *Beggar My Neighbour*, is both a metaphor for their relationship and a social representation of the battle between hero and villain.

Fortunately Propp allows, conversely, for one character to be involved in several spheres of action, for Miss Havisham's main role

is not that of witch or bad fairy in disguise, but of the princess's father. It is she who, through Estella, assigns to Pip the task of becoming a gentleman; she makes Pip aware of this need and thus sends him on his quest. It is, of course, the princess's real father who specifies the task as that of becoming a gentleman. Other constituents of the spheres of action of the princess and her father are exposure, recognition, and branding. Exposure occurs in the meeting between Miss Havisham and Pip and Estella, where Pip tells of his love and Estella replies that she is to marry Bentley, the false hero, indicating that he is less worthy than Pip. (Ch 44). Earlier, (Ch. 39) Magw^tich's return is a scene of recognition ("You've grow'd up a game one!"), and later, (Ch. 49), Miss Havisham recognizes and endorses Pip's kindness to Herbert. This happens just before Pip is branded by his burns as he attempts to save Miss Havisham. As princess Estella is an ice maiden who marries Drummle, an associate of the villain's surrogate. We note here another hero-villain fight in the half-comic, stylized battling for position before the fire that Pip and Drummle engage in just before Pip sees Orlick and suspects that Orlick, the villain's surrogate, and Drummle are in league, and he learns that Estella is to marry Drummle.

The dispatcher is responsible for approaching the hero with a request or command, and this is clearly Jagers's role. Indeed this term suits Jagers well: he dispatches Estella to Miss Havisham, Pip to London, Orlick from Satis House, and his clients to their fates. His function is to make connections and he is, of course, the connecting link between the two stories of Magw^tich and Miss Havisham.

The helper, Herbert, is responsible for liquidating the hero's misfortune or lack, that is for teaching Pip how a gentleman behaves, rescuing the hero from pursuit, which he does at the lime kiln, the solution of difficult tasks - what to do with Magw^tich, and the transfiguration of the hero. Perhaps this last is performed by Herbert passively for Pip remarks that the one good thing he has done with his

money is to help Herbert. Herbert also articulates Pip's moral dilemma and states firmly that Magw^tich's safety is Pip's responsibility.

There remains the role of the false hero whose special function is to present unfounded claims to be the hero. We might regard Bentley Drummle as the false hero. Like Pip he is acquiring education suitable for a gentleman at Matthew Pocket's establishment. Like Pip he rows, belongs to the Finches of the Grove, and courts Estella. Though he wins Estella she does not love him and he treats her villainously. We are aware, of course, that in an ordinary reading of the novel Bentley represents the empty ideal Pip is striving for, without the sensitivity, the moral nature, the good heart, that make Pip the hero. Drummle is another version of Compeyson, privileged and naturally vicious. His presence clarifies the courage and goodness in Pip's decisions not to jilt Magw^tich and to help, rather than cheat, Herbert.

That this fairy-tale structure with its characteristic modes should appear in the Bildungsroman is not surprising. Lionel Trilling, in his essay "The Princess Casamassima", nicely captures the combination of realism and romance often found in the story of The Young Man from the Provinces. Trilling traces the roots of the story back to the story of Parsifal, in which everything is a test and the hero is uncertain what to do:

Thus equipped with poverty, pride, and intelligence, the Young Man from the Provinces stands outside life and seeks to enter. This modern hero is connected with the tales of the folk. Usually his motive is the legendary one of setting out to seek his fortune, which is what the folk-tale says when it means the hero is seeking himself. He is really the third and youngest son of the woodcutter, the one to whom all our sympathies go, the gentle and misunderstood one, the bravest of all. He is likely to be in some doubt about his parentage; his father the woodcutter is not really his father. 43

"The story", Trilling continues, "is a strange one for it has its roots both in legend and in the very heart of modern actuality."

Trilling's point is that the novels he is discussing, of which Great Expectations is one, tell us about nineteenth-century society because the hero's trials in coming to terms with that society are there detailed for us so precisely. In The Uses of Enchantment, an analysis of a number of well-known fairy tales, Bruno Bettelheim begins with the other side of the coin. He observes that all fairy tales are Bildungsromane:

Fairy stories do not pretend to describe the world as it is, nor do they advise what one ought to do....The content of the chosen tale usually has nothing to do with the patient's external life, but much to do with his inner problems which seem incomprehensible and hence unsolvable. 44

The fairy tale that tells of the acquisition of wealth, status, and marriage to the princess is a metaphor for the development of strength, dominance over the parent, and a satisfying relationship with a beloved adult. The hero who goes off to seek his fortune, or who is sent on a journey by the old king, the father of the princess, to perform difficult tasks, is being sent to find and prove himself. Pip's fantasies are universal and have everything to do with inner truth. ("My dream was out; my wild fancy was surpassed by sober reality" (CD, 80).) Once Pip acquires enough self-knowledge and has faced his hopeless and harmful infatuation with Estella, has forgiven Miss Havisham and faced his own guilt, in the person of Orlick, he is ready for the final tests of a good Christian man. He accepts these when he plans and executes Magw^tich's attempt to escape and when he accepts the consequences of that failure. His illness, Joe's forgiving treatment, and Pip's acceptance of it, are the final steps in Pip's reconciliation with his own past and the preparation for his sadder and wiser attempt to live his life as a modest and responsible gentleman. The fairy-tale part of the novel ends, according to this reading, with Pip's rescue from Orlick. "The hero comes home" morally strong and free to love. There are no more fantasies. His mentor, Wemmick, instructs him in his role, and the final section of

the novel is in the realistic mode of the Bildungsroman, though still enhanced by the richness of the fairy tale that has accompanied Pip's story up to this point.

Before leaving the fairy-tale part of the novel we must look further at the central romance pattern of the quest which is present in the fairy tale, the short form of the romance, as the hero's journey to seek his fortune or to accomplish his assigned tasks. As both Trilling and Bettelheim point out, the journey towards adulthood in the Bildungsroman is the same journey for which the fairy tale is a metaphor. All fairy tales may be Bildungsromane, as Bettelheim says, but not all Bildungsromane are fairy tales. In Great Expectations, however, the journey to adulthood is demonstrated by means of a fairy-tale structure.

We have already seen, from Propp's typology, that Pip is a seeker-hero, his motivation triggered by the awareness of a need or lack. Propp points out that either the princess or her father assigns the hero's tasks. In Great Expectations Estella's contempt plants the desire for the goal that her real but unknown father assigns to Pip as a task, to become a gentleman. This is to make him worthy of the girl created by Compeyson's treachery, also the source of Magwitch's ambition. We note here the importance of both ambition and revenge as instigating factors.

Pip makes two journeys, to Satis House and to London. The journey to Satis House is an inner journey, the source and substance of Pip's "wild fancy", and the journey to London the outer journey that counters it with sober reality in the action of the novel. Observation of the pattern of these journeys may account for certain details in the novel, often noted in essays on its imagery, and throw some light on the much-criticized episode of Pip's meeting with Orlick in the sluice house. Further, to note the pattern of the "dark journey" is to clarify the stages of Pip's growth.

It is not difficult to see that the passage from innocence to

experience, from the simple domestic life of the forge and the Old Battery, to Cobbett's "infernal wen" and Newgate, is a "dark" journey and this has already been noted.⁴⁵ To see Satis House as part of another kind of dark journey, or another phase of the same one, may require explication.

The prototype of dark journeys in literature is to be found in the eleventh book of The Odyssey or in the sixth book of the Aeneid. In the account of Odysseus's visit to the underworld the hero meets uncompleted aspects of his former self: he meets his old mother who had died since his departure and to whom he has not said good-bye; the shade of Elpenor to whom he has not fulfilled the duty of proper burial; Achilles, whose anxiety about his son's bearing in battle reflects Odysseus's own concern for Telemachus; and Tiresias, from whom he seeks advice about getting safely home to Ithaca. The hero, in other words, is seeking himself and is hoping for guidance that will bring him home. Similarly Pip, having been sent to Satis House by those who hope it will be advantageous for him and them, finds there a kind of beauty and richness that meets a need in his sensitive nature. Whereas in London Pip has a series of mentors to guide him, at Satis House he has to depend on his feelings and on certain touchstones provided by his own environment, the village and the forge. The visit to Satis House marks the beginning of Pip's social awareness as the visit to the churchyard marked the beginning of his self-awareness. Estella, with her candle, leads him through the dark labyrinthine passages to Miss Havisham's ghastly room. He is made aware, through Estella's scorn, that there are things to be learned. ("He calls the knaves, Jacks, this boy!" CD, 34) When he returns home from his first visit there is no way for Pip to translate what he has seen and felt into the ordinary language of village life. He invents the black velvet coach and the cake on gold plates out of chivalrous feeling towards Miss Havisham, as images appropriate to these experiences. This exaggeration also conceals the pain of having been fed like a dog. Estella's treating him so shows Pip that he is to

Estella as Magw^lich is to him. His sense of guilt over his association with Magw^tich is intensified, is given public notice almost, by Estella's treatment.

However bewitched his heart, Pip's wits are about him and he is able to make his first objective observation of Pumblechook's phoniness through his knowledge of Miss Havisham. (Pumblechook says she is tall and dark.) Thus Pip's journey to Satis House changes his perspective. It helps him to know his world, and eventually himself, better, and he acquires the obsession with the beautiful but forbidden damsel that we recognize as typical of romance. He carries the perspective of his secret world over to his every-day environment. Through it he learns and grows, not necessarily in the right direction, and acquires a means of protecting himself from both the unpleasant and the salutary parts of his ordinary life. After this visit Pip's sympathies are set. From this time beauty and romance, sunsets, sails at sea, are all associated, almost perversely, with the desolate old manor house and its obsessed inhabitants.

Yet Pip has encounters at Satis House which are, or should be, instructive to him; it is appropriate that this should be, in the main, negative education. The Pockets consider him an intruder, Jaggers regards him as a specimen in a class of objects which are generally undesirable. Herbert, who treats him well, is perhaps closest to being some kind of mentor. When they fight Herbert plays by the rules, elaborate and inappropriate though they be, and even when he is defeated Herbert feels he has won. Pip, who wins the battle, loses the war; all he gains from his prowess is an intensified sense of guilt. Satis House, then, offers Pip a kind of education. It intensifies his questioning of who he is and of his place in society. He returns to his apprenticeship dissatisfied with the narrow society of the village and with his place in it.

Entry into his apprenticeship marks the end, for the moment, of Pip's visits to Satis House and he feels imprisoned in a role that

does not accord with his inner needs. Then the downward curve of the journey to Satis House branches off, when he is most aware of his unhappy position, into the journey to London that forms the mid-section or second phase of Pip's great expectations. Pip's first point of reference in London is Jaggers's office, "next thing to Newgate", as Wemmick later remarks. Fetched to Little Britain in an ancient coach "like a straw yard" and "a rag shop" (CD, 93), Pip is delivered over to the inscrutable Wemmick who guards the inner sanctum. The sharp contrast between Pip's expectations and the reality of London, "ugly, crooked, narrow, and dirty" (CD, 93), provides the break in the continuity of identity which, according to Frye, is the structural core of romance, and provides notice that this is the entrance to a downward journey.⁴⁶ Pip enters Jaggers's office only after Wemmick has evicted an intrusive bit of recalcitrant humanity, one-eyed, possessed of feelings, and slow to grasp the dissimulation of the law. This is not the place for feelings. Pip is immediately in a dismal underground world, lighted by a skylight "eccentrically patched, like a broken head, and the distorted adjoining houses looking as if they had twisted themselves to peep down at me through it" (CD, 94). There are "two dreadful casts on a shelf, of faces peculiarly swollen, and twitchy about the nose" (CD, 94). These casts reappear and later play bo-peep with Pip. Oppressed by the atmosphere, Pip wishes to go out for air and Wemmick directs him to Smithfield where the "filth and fat and blood and foam" of "the shameful place" (CD, 94) seem to stick to him. Notice in the word "shameful" a tone of moral horror more appropriate to Pip's sense of guilt than to the physical revulsion naturally produced by a cattle market. The dome of St. Paul's, which in Martin Chuzzlewit serves as referent for the ideal, becomes "the great black dome of St. Paul's bulging at me from behind a grim stone building", Newgate. An obliging functionary shows Pip the gallows and the Debtor's Door before Pip makes his way back to Wemmick. This time Pip turns a

different way, coming out into Bartholomew Close where the representatives of the condemned hang on Jaggers's coat tails. This first day in London is the first stage of the downward London journey.

Its centre occurs just past the middle of the novel, in Pip's visit to Newgate with Wemmick. By this time Wemmick has emerged as Pip's mentor so that his conversation with Pip has some significance:

"Did your client commit the robbery?" I asked.

"Bless your soul and body, no," answered Wemmick, very drily. "But he is accused of it. So might you or I be. Either of us might be accused of it, you know."

"Only neither of us is," I remarked. (CD, 150)

This marks the nadir of Pip's delusion.

After Magw^{ic}h's return, which brings all that Newgate stands for closer than ever to Pip, Pip follows Estella to Satis House (Ch. 43). In this painful confrontation the outer reality of Pip's association with crime is brought up against the false dream he has cherished of being the conquering hero of the fairy tale. Miss Havisham tells him, "You made your own snares. I never made them" (CD, 207). This is an important moment of self-awareness for Pip, and the scene that follows, the painful profession of love for Estella, marks the beginning of Pip's re-entry into the adult world where he must learn to live with self-knowledge and sober reality instead of great expectations. But before he can complete his journey Pip has more to learn. Returning to London, Pip realizes that Molly is Estella's mother, and confirms this during his final visit to Miss Havisham at Satis House. Crime is interwoven with Pip's inner fantasy. During this visit Pip says that he forgives Miss Havisham, the fire that consumes so much of the material of his secret dreams takes place and, just after the figure of Miss Havisham appears hanging from the beams of the old brewerey to suggest that his forgiveness is not perfect, Pip does act the hero, in fact, by trying to save Miss Havisham from the flames. His earlier, social, shame has been expunged. Back in London Pip learns that Magw^{ic}h is Estella's father; his private fantasy has received the

sternest blow from reality. The dark London journey is inextricably connected with his inner journey. He returns to the marshes to his assignation with Orlick. What remains is for Pip to come to terms with "all this taint of prison and crime" (CD, 152) that has haunted him since his first meeting with the convict.

The meeting with Orlick brings us back to Propp's list of functions. After the initial misfortune or lack is liquidated and the hero returns (home) the final two functions are "the hero is pursued" and "the hero is rescued from pursuit". That is, after Pip has become a gentleman and has gone down to the village, not to the forge, where he hears about his ingratitude to Pumblechook from the waiter, comes the episode of Orlick's tricking Pip to the sluice-house and his rescue by Herbert and Trabb's boy.

This incident has been the source of much critical comment. Mrs. Leavis sees the struggle between Pip and Orlick as a Bunyan-like allegorical contest, closely paralleling the fight with Apollyon, which Dickens's readers would certainly recognize.⁴⁷ Bunyan, too, is describing a voyage to the town of Mansoul, but one contemporary reader, perhaps too literate and too literal for such suggestive messages, did not seize the allegorical point. Mrs. Oliphant writes:

...There is a sensational episode of a still heavier description, for the introduction of which we are totally unable to discover any motive, except that of filling a few additional pages - unless, perhaps, it might be a desperate expedient on the part of the author to rouse his own languid interest in the conduct of the piece. Otherwise, why should Pip be seduced into the clutches of the senseless brute Orlick, and made to endure all the agonies of death for nothing, is a mystery quite beyond our powers of guessing. 48

Many critics have shared Mrs. Oliphant's bewilderment and distaste for the incident. Yet Dickens gave this episode major status in his notes for the resolution of Great Expectations. Thus:

Miss Havisham and Pip, and the money for Herbert. So Herbert made a partner in Clarriker's Compeyson. How brought in? /First Discovery/ Estella. Magwich's daughter. /Second Discovery/ Orlick and Pip's entrapment, and escape /Third Discovery/ - To the flight, (etc.) 49

To see the Orlick-sluice-house incident as the final stage of the journey from self-deception to self-knowledge, begun at Satis House, would at least take care of a section of the novel that has proved persistently gritty in the critical eye. According to Frye, "the only companion who accompanies us to the end of the descent is the demonic accuser, who takes the form of the accusing memory."⁵⁰ This perfectly describes Orlick's relation to Pip during this incident.

The critic who comes closest to justifying the scene with Orlick is Taylor Stoehr:

Having faced the violence, which constitutes his punishment for his crimes - comparable to the punishments of Mrs. Joe and Miss Havisham, and later of Magwich himself - Pip is freed from the third of his problems. His sense of guilt, which has been a major theme throughout the novel, is at last dispelled, and he is now able to love Magwich without fear of the taint of evil and crime that haunted him before. In accepting the violent punishment, he also accepts the guilt he has been avoiding, and becomes like Magwich a fugitive from society. 51

While this is a more sophisticated psychological explanation than other critics have attempted, it seems unnecessarily devious. I should put it more simply: Pip faces his almost innocent implication in Magwich's escape and the guilt associated with his sister's death. Walking towards Orlick Pip walked away from the Hulks. The nameless sense of evil that had pursued him as a child, the "taint of prison and crime" he had felt in London, are faced in his battle with Orlick, his Apollyon. Surely the two feelings that hold Pip back from growth, from self-respect, and hence from Christian charity are his own shame and guilt. Pip's guilt has been much discussed;⁵² Mrs. Leavis, for instance, invokes both shame and guilt implicitly, but

does not distinguish between them.⁵³ Shame has to do with what others think of us, our external selves; guilt is what we know or feel ourselves to have done wrong. While the presence of either one may predispose us to the other, they are separable. Pip's experience at Satis House has everything to do with shame but little to do with guilt. He is ashamed of his coarseness, of his home, and of his class. The final confrontation with Estella, during which Pip realizes that she is Molly's daughter, shows him that her birth is inferior to his own. Miss Havisham's confession shows him someone who has more to be ashamed of than he has. In these final sessions with Estella and with Miss Havisham Pip sheds the shame he has been made to feel for his status as blacksmith's stepson. He must also face the guilt that has festered since his sister's death. Orlick's trap makes this self-awareness possible; indeed, feelings of guilt may partly explain Pip's ridiculous willingness to go to the meeting at all. Orlick's badgering may then be seen as a trial in which Pip is on the dock. When Pip has reduced the phantoms that have haunted him to their not very vicious size he is purged. Conveniently saved to express his new-found self, Pip returns to London knowing what he must do. After Magwitch has been taken Pip says to him, "Please God, I will be as true to you as you have been to me!" (CD, 259) This is the resolve of the penitent who has faced himself and knows that, once before, he had not been true. Even if the novel is read as a "snob's progress" with the argument that Pip softens towards Magwitch because he is going to die, there is no way around the fact that Pip does behave honourably towards Magwitch and that he has learned, through confronting his own mistakes and failures in the past, to do so.

Pip's emergence from the final stages of his dark interior journey makes it possible for him to complete the final stage of his involvement with the criminal core of London society. The Newgate Pip saw with fascinated horror on his arrival, and with a sense of its total inapplicability to himself midway through his quest, is very

different after Magwich's capture. Now he has learned to love one of the condemned and he is always waiting at the gate to make the most of Magwich's time. At Magwich's trial Pip is no less on trial. Pip transcends the lower-world judgement on Magwich by asking for mercy for him and by spontaneously bestowing on him the blessing that will make Magwich's death happy: "You had a child once...and I love her" (CD, 266).

But while Magwich, who lives mainly in the fairy-tale part of the novel, can have his story conclude with an appropriate fairy-tale ending, Pip must return to the social world where his educated heart will help him to come to terms with the external realities of his private past and his social present. Pip's fever and delirium signal another break in consciousness as he connects his present, wiser self with little Pip again. Joe is no demonic accuser but his loving presence, his paying of Pip's debts, and his self-less service are a mute accusation, echoing Orlick's demonic accusations at the end of Pip's private underworld journey. The contrast between Joe and Orlick shows Pip the nature of his real sins; now he can compare these with the distorted childish guilt for the sins of thought that Orlick had taunted him with at the end of his internal underworld journey. The internal journey had taken him from Satis House to the lime-kiln on the marshes before releasing him to the real world of experience. There he must complete his journey through the underworld of a society where "either of us might be accused..., you know."

It may be argued either that dark journeys are so prevalent, especially in romances, as to make their explication unnecessary, or, conversely, that if Pip's involvement with Satis House can be seen as a dark journey everything can. To the first objection I would reply that if the explication of even such a common pattern helps to define the stages of growth and to account for certain details in a novel as rich as this one it is worthy of comment. The second is best countered by Frye's summary of the characteristics of descent

themes.⁵⁴ According to Frye they have some, though never all, of the following features: they are introduced either by sleep or by such threshold images as forests; here we have the ruined garden of Satis House. They are characterized by growing alienation in which everything, including oneself, becomes an object. Clocks and watches are always present because time is experienced as duration only - and Miss Havisham's clocks are stopped so that she is deprived even of that orientation - and mirrors are needed to reassure the traveller of the existence of the self, which has become an object. Twins, Doppelgänger figures, shadows, and portraits serve the same function as the mirrors. There are, of course, caves and labyrinths and the figures tend to be distorted in size, either giants or dwarves. In the darkness and isolation there are frequently animal companions; Miss Havisham's house has spiders, mice and beetles, though they are scarcely companionable. Still, the fact that the mice do not eat the cake proves that we are in another world. Many romances end with a trial scene and a lower-world judgement; here Miss Havisham puts herself in the dock and utters her own condemnation as she begs Pip's forgiveness. Metamorphosis or some kind of cannibal feast often occurs; Miss Havisham has a vision of the relatives coming to consume her as she is laid out on the table where the bride-cake is, and she is actually laid out on the table after being all but consumed by the fire. Elsewhere Frye mentions too that games of cards and chance are characteristic of descent themes.⁵⁵ Estella's and Pip's games of Beggar My Neighbour, already clearly a metaphorical statement of their relationship, take their place in the larger pattern of Pip's fateful journey with his false guide. Estella's falseness lies not merely in her ice-maiden demeanour but in the values she holds. This is made clear in her comment to Pip that "What was fit company for you once, would be quite unfit company for you now" (CD, 137). Is Estella's "star", and the star-like candle that guides Pip through the labyrinth, Blake's star and thus false, deceitful, leading man to ruin, rather

than, as Annabel Endicott suggests, Sidney's?⁵⁶ We note in the Satis House descent theme a similar break in consciousness as the hero emerges. After his rescue Pip is almost delirious with the pain of his burned hands. Next morning he remarks that "From me, too, a veil seemed to be drawn, and I felt strong and well" (CD, 250).

If we apply the same test to the London journey we find the break in consciousness, the distorted vision in Jaggers's office, the Doppelgänger figures of the two masks, and the constant consultation of watches, which is the way Wemmick and Jaggers keep track of each other. Pip's tour of Newgate with Wemmick surely reminds the reader of Dante's tour of the underworld with Virgil. There is talk of companionable pigeons, and the cells and passages are cave-like. The final stages of this journey have Pip literally on the dock with Magwitch. It is a scene whose judgement, which condemns "two-and-thirty men and women" to death at once, confirms the identification of criminal London with something we describe metaphorically as hell. After the trial Pip has another illness, a break in consciousness, before he becomes "little Pip" (CD, 270) again.

The two dark journeys, to Satis House and to criminal London, have taken Pip through the stages that make him aware of his own nature, of his place in society, of the nature of that society, and, finally, of how he can live within it.

This knowledge has a familiar ring. It is another version of Lukács's "reconciliation between interiority and reality" that we examined in the chapter on David Copperfield. Dickens's achievement in convincing us of Pip's moral growth and of his necessary adjustment to his society is remarkable, and particularly so when we look again at Lukács's typology of the Bildungsroman. He says:

Its theme is the reconciliation of the problematic individual, guided by his lived experience of the ideal, with concrete social reality....

The type of personality and the structure of the plot are determined by the necessary condition that a recon-

ciliation between interiority and reality, although problematic, is nevertheless possible; that it has to be sought in hard struggles and dangerous adventures, yet is ultimately possible to achieve. For this reason the interiority depicted in such a novel must also stand between the two previously analysed types: abstract idealism and the romanticism of disillusionment....The content and goal of the ideal which animates the personality and determines his actions is to find responses to the innermost demands of his soul in the structures of society. This means, at least as a postulate, that the inherent loneliness of the soul is surmounted; and this in turn presupposes the possibility of human and interior community among men, of understanding and common action in respect of the essential. Such community is not the result of people being naively and naturally rooted in a specific social structure, not of any natural solidarity of kinship (as in the ancient epics), nor is it a mystical experience of community, a sudden illumination which rejects the lonely individuality as something ephemeral, static and sinful; it is achieved by personalities, previously lonely and confined within their own selves, adapting and accustoming themselves to one another; it is the fruit of a rich and enriching resignation, the crowning of a process of education, a maturity attained by struggle and effort. 57

Pip's "interiority", the "innermost demands of his soul", are his obsession with Estella and his dream of being Miss Havisham's fairy prince, restoring her kingdom to order for Estella. What Pip must do, in terms of the novel of education, is to accommodate this dream to the demands of society in such a way that the demands of his soul are not completely dashed, but become part of the fabric of his growth. Had Pip married Estella and lived happily ever after at Satis House we should have had a fairy tale. The novel as we have it is, in contrast with most of Dickens's works, at pains to leave its young gentleman of great expectations earning an honest and modest living, suffering from the mistakes of his past, enjoying no more than "the fruit of a rich and enriching resignation" and, as I shall show, placing his hopes in the happier education of little Pip, the next generation.

In this fusion of "the ideal" with "concrete social reality"

the character of Pip is central. Obsessed, guilt-ridden, lucky, chosen, he is a typical hero of romance. But this quest-hero must, if he is to be the representative norm of Lukács's typology, make his trial-by-error way through the easy temptations of his society. Pip's obsessive love for Estella and his acute sense of shame and guilt clearly distinguish him from David Copperfield. David in love with Dora is obsessed enough, though comically, but that particular passion is clearly explained and thoroughly prepared for as a typical one. Its natural death is also convincingly displayed. But Pip is smitten in early childhood and we are led to feel that he never recovers. The tone of, "That poor dream, as I once used to call it, has all gone by, Biddy, all gone by" (CD, 279) suggests that it is only the impossibility of possessing Estella that has taken its right place in his mature sensibility; the memory of the intensity, if not the longing, remains.

Dickens first effectively combines the two aspects of Pip's character by opening the story with a fantastic incident when Pip is about seven years' old, old enough to understand the convict's threat to tear out his liver and eat it, but young and naive enough to believe in the ogreish possibility. For the reader, the opening chapters beautifully convey the inner and outer halves of a child's experience. We are told that Pip is morally timid and very sensitive and we are shown enough to have every reason to believe it. It has been suggested, in one of the best treatments of Great Expectations as a conventional story of moral development, that Pip's corruption is well under way before his first visit to Satis House:

The study of deterioration in moral fibre that Dickens gives us is characterized in the early stages by a series of wrong decisions and wrong impulses so fleeting and apparently trivial as to be 'wrong' almost imperceptibly or only in retrospect. The theft itself, for example, committed on orders from a convict who knows a 'secret way' of getting at boys, does not register on the reader as especially blameworthy. Perhaps Pip was, as he himself later says, cowardly in yielding to the convict's threats;

but while reading of his encounter with Magwitch, we never really consider that Pip--young, impressionable, insecure --could have acted other than he did. We are perhaps a shade less easy about the ready way in which he lets the convict take full responsibility for the theft, and about his failure to tell Joe what he has done. But only a shade. At this stage we certainly do not condemn Pip as he himself does in retrospect or perhaps as we will do in retrospect, when with the narrator we look back on his early history for the wrong roads taken. Then we will see, as the narrator does from his vantage point at the end of the story, that these early acts and omissions tended in a certain dangerous direction. We will see how significant was his introduction of deceit into a loving relationship, his shying away from responsibility, his adoption of a role in order to maintain a certain appearance in Joe's eyes, his self-deception. We will see that choices made were swinging him in the direction of moral decline. There was nothing inevitable about this; at the outset he may have been what we would now call a 'disturbed child', but he had as much potential for good in him as for bad. As a youngster he was capable of recognizing hypocrisy in those around him; he had a nice conscience, a delicate sensibility (note his sympathy for the hounded convicts), and a capacity for affection. But circumstances conspired to test him from the start; and, cumulatively, he failed the test even before his expectations were announced. 58.

And indeed, once this is detailed for us in a strictly moral framework, we see the moral cowardice clearly; yet it is still a "typical" moral cowardice and its seriousness is diminished by the terribly threatening events of Christmas day and the chase. Most small boys would be just as secretive. What is not typical is Pip's carrying out of the convict's orders, and his expressed feelings of compassion for Magwitch. This act, once we know its magic consequences, takes on the colour of a typical folk-tale test, the test of a good heart. By passing the test one becomes the hero, the recipient of the donor's gift and all that it may bring.

The most revealing question a reader can ask about a Bildungsroman is, what does the hero learn? In Great Expectations there are two kinds of answers. There is, first, the set of lessons contained in the ironical space between the adult narrator and the child whose

growing shadow gradually moves forward to merge with that of his own: "Quite an untaught genius, I made the discovery of the line of action for myself." (CD, 23), "All other swindlers upon earth are nothing to the self-swindlers...." (CD, 130), "I never had one hour's happiness in her society..." (CD, 174), "It was the only good thing I had done, and the only completed thing I had done, since I was first apprised of my great expectations" (CD, 240), "I only saw in him a much better man than I had been to Joe" (CD, 258), "...I was one day enlightened by the reflection, that perhaps the inaptitude had never been in him at all, but had been in me" (CD, 278). These lessons continue almost to the end of the story, but they are reported with increasing subtlety. When Magw^tich dies Pip says, "O Lord be merciful to him, a sinner!" (CD, 266). This is not, as is often suggested, an instance of Homer's nodding, but an indication to the reader that Pip's education in self-awareness is not yet complete; his condition lies between that of the Pharisee and that of the publican. Not too long after this Pip's illness makes him aware of his sins towards Joe and he decides to make amends by marrying Biddy! The discovery that Joe and Biddy are being married and that he is no longer part of their world places the full burden for himself on Pip, the disappointed young man now so closely approaching the narrator's persona that the irony in the situation itself requires no ironical comment from narrator or author.

The second lesson is contained in the theme. There are many echoes of the great expectations theme in the novel, from Pumblechook's and Mrs. Joe's expectation that Miss Havisham will do something handsome for Pip, to Herbert's dreams of becoming a great capitalist by looking about him, Wopsle's storming of the London stage, and Mrs. Matthew Pocket's persistent disregard of the realistic present in her preference for the imaginary past. The prevalence of these expectations or ambitions leads us to consider the importance of ambition as a major theme. The realistic and the comic parts of the

novel usually dwell, either comically or satirically, on the connection of ambition with great expectations and their mundane or pathetic outcome. Even Jagers has had "poor dreams". In the Magwitch-Miss Havisham, or what we have called the fairy-tale part, ambition is a major theme, but much more emphasis is put on the roots of ambition in a desire for revenge as Magwitch's and Miss Havisham's stories are both made to depend on Compeyson's treachery. Pip's ambition, too, arises more from a desire to spite Estella than to win her over:

"Do you want to be a gentleman, to spite her or to gain her over?" Biddy quietly asked me, after a pause.

"I don't know," I moodily answered.

"Because, if it is to spite her," Biddy pursued, "I should think - but you know best -....she was not worth gaining over."

Exactly what I myself had thought, many times. Exactly what was perfectly manifest to me at the moment. (CD, 74)

These themes of revenge and ambition are carried not only by comic parody of the main action, but by the kind of literary and dramatic reference that Dickens uses here, as in Copperfield, thematically. William F. Axton has made the interesting observation that Wopsle is a parody of Pip, his middle-aged departure from the provinces to take London by storm and reform the drama no more appropriate to his native abilities than Pip's hubristic aim to become a gentleman and a prince fit to rescue the princess.⁵⁹ This is a little hard on Pip, who did receive external help in continuing "all those miserable hankerings after money and gentility", but it does justify Wopsle's existence in this well-made novel.

Wopsle's literary outbursts begin with a "most terrifically snarling passage from Richard the Third" as entertainment for the man with the two one-pound notes (CD, 44). When Pip "celebrates" the occasion of his being "bound" apprentice to Joe, "Mr. Wopsle gave us Collins's Ode, and threw his blood-stained sword in thunder down" (CD, 61). We are reminded of the earlier passage describing Mr. Wopsle's examination of the scholars in his great aunt's school:

What he did on those occasions was to turn up his cuffs, stick up his hair, and give us Mark Antony's oration over the body of Caesar. This was always followed by Collins's Ode on the Passions, wherein I particularly venerated Mr. Wopsle as Revenge, throwing his blood-stained sword in thunder down, and taking the War-denouncing trumpet with a withering look. It was not with me then, as it was in later life, when I fell into the society of the Passions, and compared them with Collins and Wopsle, rather to the disadvantage of both gentlemen. (CD, 25)

When Pip has paid his first call on Miss Havisham, against Joe's sound advice to "keep in sunders", and is loitering along the High Street thinking about what it would be like if he were a gentleman, he meets Wopsle carrying "The affecting tragedy of George Barnwell". At the end of the evening Pip learns that his sister has been murdered. When Joe comes to London to visit Pip he describes his evening at the theatre watching Wopsle in Hamlet:

"Which I meantersay, if the ghost of a man's own Father cannot be allowed to claim his attention, what can, Sir? Still more, when his mourning 'at is unfortunately made so small as that the weight of the black feathers brings it off, try to keep it on how you may." (CD, 127)

Since Joe is, as he speaks, struggling with his own hat which he holds "like a bird's nest with eggs in it" the application of Hamlet and ghosts of fathers to Pip is tempting.

When Wopsle is free to choose his own literary performances he has a certain range of themes: Mark Antony's "Caesar was ambitious" speech, the stanza on Revenge from Collins's "Ode", Richard III, a tragedy of ambition, Hamlet, a revenge tragedy in which the hero's father has been murdered by one who is over-ambitious, and George Barnwell, who is both ambitious and vengeful. It is worth considering, in spite of the number of decisively-expressed views that the theme of Great Expectations is guilt,⁵⁰ guilt and atonement,⁶¹ and money,⁶² that the themes may instead be ambition and revenge and that Wopsle's dramatic renderings keep these before the reader's eyes. Magwich and Miss Havisham both use the ambition of others, and both

warp their charges by the violence of their desire for revenge, with which they realize their own ambitions. The Pockets are studies in thwarted ambition, Jaggers in the horrors of ambition fulfilled. Joe and "not over-particular" Biddy represent the contentment that comes from a correct assessment of one's place and dignified acceptance of it. This is carefully shown in the scene between Pip and Biddy where Biddy corrects Pip's notion that he might have been able to help Joe advance if Joe had been brighter. After the fairy-tale part of the novel is over, that is when Pip returns to London after his ordeal with Orlick, the remainder of the novel is concerned with a proper disposition of Pip's life. It is possible that the fairy-tale part of the story mainly carries the revenge theme and the novel or Bildungsroman part the theme of ambition.

The hero, then, learns that Biddy's words are true, that ambition arising out of a desire for revenge is not only ignoble but wrong, hurtful, warping, dishonourable.

The critical reader will also wish to know how the hero learns these lessons. How is the turbulent, self-centred young man transformed into Magwitch's loving attendant, Herbert's reliable clerk, and little Pip's resigned but responsible mentor? In order to bring about this realistic ending to a novel that has carried so much of its message in the mode of fantasy Dickens must use the fantasy in such a way that it can be accommodated to reality. Pip's fantasy must be an agent of growth, and it is. Dickens's insight here is as impressive as his clinical observations elsewhere in the novels, so much admired by the distinguished neurosurgeon, Lord Brain.⁶³ For current theories about fantasy, as described by Jerome L. Singer, hold that "fantasy may serve to prepare the person for a greater mastery of the outside world through increased insight into his own psychic processes".⁶⁴ Further, "the development of fantasy behaviour or daydreaming [is] a cognitive skill, a capacity for gradual internalization of response and for attending to the ongoing 'reverberatory' behaviour of one's

brain....Fantasy play is thus an important feature in the development of children, a part of the continuous assimilation-accommodation pattern, as Piaget put it (1945)". This theory is mentioned here because it differs from the Freudian view, widely held until mid-century, that "unsatisfied wishes are the driving power behind fantasies".⁶⁵ As Singer says, "This view that the daydream is an outgrowth of an unsatisfied wish and is a defense against its direct manifestation pervades much psychoanalytic thinking".⁶⁶ Freud's view is that fantasy is an escape mechanism, valuable in directing action into harmless mental channels; Singer and others see it as an instrument of self-knowledge, and I would suggest that Dickens's use of fantasy in Great Expectations is not cathartic but cognitive. Miss Havisham and Estella together are bad anima for Pip, but he is saved from the damaging effects of bad anima figures by gradually coming to know that they are bad and that they have meant to destroy him.

Dickens uses day-dreaming, fantasy, the delirium of illness as methods for his characters to keep in touch with their inner selves and thus to have access to a constant process of testing and knowing. Far from retarding Pip's emotional growth, his obsession with Estella and all his dreams of the romantic and the picturesque extend the possibilities that life holds. His attempts to realize his fantasies force Pip to understand what he is by accepting what he is not. It is precisely his overreaching dreams, present in the first conversations with Biddy, that make Pip an unsatisfactory companion then and would have made him an unsatisfactory husband to her later. Given his nature Pip must, like Maggie Tulliver, like Dorothea Brooke in Middlemarch, try to accommodate it to the untendentious stuff of actual life. He, like Dorothea, must try to learn what everything costs. It is a hard lesson, and Pip is no Saint Theresa born out of his time. He is very much "the aspirant bourgeois",⁶⁷ born in and of his time, who must move beyond both his "naive and natural roots

in a specific social structure" and, in Lukács's phrase, "the mystical experience of community" with Magwitch that Pip experiences at the end of Magwitch's life, to a "maturity attained by struggle and effort".⁶⁸ Part of that struggle and effort consists in the relentless matching of dreams with reality, of false value with true. Estella's harsh lesson, that he is coarse and common, is a necessary beginning. The ideal Pip cherishes is punitive, as reason tells him; Estella is incapable of love. Pip's dreams of status and wealth are childish, and only by achieving them, after fantasizing that his wealth comes from a socially acceptable source, can he see how ignoble they are. (In fact he is not shown this. To the end we feel that Pip would have enjoyed the money if it had come from Miss Havisham, and this is a weakness of the novel.)

The contrapuntal movement back and forth from dream to reality gradually elicits and defines Pip's particular adjustment to his society. I have suggested that this cross-reference is made cogent by Dickens's perceptive use of fantasizing as an agent of his hero's self-discovery. The weaving together of reality and dream is thus a method as much dependent on psychological insight as on technical skill, and it is interesting that critical appreciation of Great Expectations has risen to its present pitch as recognition of both Dickens's skill and perception have grown.

If the reader asks what the hero of the Bildungsroman learns, and the critical reader how he learns it, then the critic must ask how the hero is shown to learn "to find responses to the innermost demands of his soul in the structures of society". One of the few to move beyond the position of critical reader and ask how Dickens has achieved this blend of the probable and the improbable is the German critic Walther Killy. In a volume of essays on novels in different modes Killy discusses Great Expectations as his example of the novel as fairy tale.⁶⁹ Killy suggests that the use of caricatured and grotesque characters helps to bridge the space between the real and the fairy-tale worlds. Maupassant, he points out, would never have

allowed such an improbability as Miss Havisham to mar the credibility of a story. Apart from the obvious fact that Maupassant is writing a completely different type of story, which is Killy's point, one must ask how these caricatures and grotesques in Great Expectations differ from all the others whose presence does not make fairy tales of the novels they inhabit. It would seem that Killy has it backwards in saying that through these grotesques Dickens is able to step from the probable world to the improbable. The customary pattern in Dickens is rather for the grotesques to soften and to acquire humanity, or, like Quilp, to move entirely in the demonic world. We soften towards Magw^tich, and even towards Miss Havisham, and the fairy-tale figure becomes human. Smike and Newman Noggs make their claims to compassion as fellow creatures long before the end of their novel also. It is surely in the function of the grotesques that their formal significance lies. Magw^tich lives in the fairy-tale world because he is the magic donor who looks like an ogre; Miss Havisham seems like the fairy godmother in disguise, but her function is that of the "father" of the princess, since Pip's awareness of his lack comes, through Estella, from her. On the other hand Smike is a grotesque, but he does not make a fairy tale of Nicholas Nickleby, nor does Mrs. Gamp's presence give Martin Chuzzlewit fairy-tale characteristics. Though some characters do function in both modes they are not, as Killy suggest, Magw^tich, Miss Havisham and Wemmick, but rather Joe, Herbert and Jaggers. The presence of grotesques is not, in itself, enough to account for the ease with which Dickens fuses his realistic and his fantastic worlds.

It is, however, partly through a skillful doubling of character function that Dickens does achieve this remarkable union. The major characters in Great Expectations may be divided, for purposes of discussion, into three groups: those who function mainly in the fairy tale, those who function in both modes, and those whose roles are

entirely in the Bildungsroman. While Magwitch^t and Miss Havisham are the chief fairy-tale characters it should be noted that Magwitch^t changes during the book, and that Miss Havisham softens to some approximation of humanity at the end. They step out of their fairy-tale roles as their motivation becomes clear, and show signs that they might function also in the world of the novel, where character is altered by circumstance. The most conspicuous characters to perform essential functions in both worlds are Joe, Herbert, Jaggers, and, of course, Pip himself. These, we note, actually visit Satis House. Finally, the characters important for the Bildungsroman are the hero, his father, and his mentors. Pip's mentors are Joe, Biddy, Matthew Pocket and Wemmick. Of these Biddy, Matthew Pocket, and Wemmick function only in the Bildungsroman. These do not visit Satis House.

Since the characters in Great Expectations have been as much discussed, almost, as Hamlet's hesitation I shall comment on them only in relation to their respective modes. Characterization in fairy tales has two hallmarks: first, there is polarity, with characters tending to be grouped in packages of "good" and "bad", and, second, fairy-tale characters represent types. Even a glance at the characters in Great Expectations with these conditions in mind is interesting. Conspicuously good characters include Joe, Biddy, and Herbert. Bad characters include Mrs. Joe, Orlick, Estella, Bentley Drummle, and Miss Havisham. The bad characters, in particular, conspicuously represent types. These types are, respectively, shrew, demon, ice princess, bully, and witch. That is, though they are not representative of a general class of persons, as Pip is, they are readily characterized by adherence to stereotypes. It might be more accurate to see these good and bad people as Propp does, in terms of their functions, so that they are not so much stereotypes of particular sorts of persons as typical players of certain roles.

Orlick's role in the fairy tale is that of demon, and in the later stages of the story it becomes clear that he is an agent of

Compeyson, the prime villain in the fairy tale. The critical comment on Orlick is the least satisfactory of all and it is interesting to note that for the reading version Dickens left out both Orlick and Estella.⁷⁰ When the novel is read as a fairy tale, however, Orlick fulfills important functions. Both Jung and Bettelheim refer to a character in fairy tales they call "hunter" who frequently appears.⁷¹ The hunter always appears out of the forest (marshes, here, serve the same purpose), is associated in some way with animals, and represents primitive nature. He may be either good or bad, according to the needs of the story; in "Little Red Riding Hood", for example, he is a saviour, but he is frequently evil and associated in some way with a witch. Orlick fulfills these requirements. He always appears slouching out of the marshes, where he lives, sometimes carrying a gun. In his lair, the lime-kiln, an appropriate witch's oven, the final battle with the hero takes place. According to Jung, "hunter and witch form a pair - the reflection in the nocturnal-cthonian part of the magical world, of a divine parental pair".⁷² This suggests that the correct place for Orlick in the schematization that this novel invites is as demonic husband to the fiendish Mrs. Joe, the husband her spirit deserves. Her witch-like quality is underlined by Orlick's referring to her as "Mother Gargery". Both the contrast between Joe and Orlick and his connections with Joe and Mrs. Joe are brought out in the scenes at the Forge. Orlick represents himself to Pip as a friend of the devil's and his use of hammer and fire, contrasted with Joe's, suggests that they form a pair, the demonic and the divine blacksmith. When Joe and Orlick fight over Mrs. Joe and Orlick later attacks and subdues her, his brutality puts an end to her shrewishness. She becomes submissive to Orlick in a way appropriate to a beaten wife. Orlick's understandable jealousy of Pip is not unlike the jealousy of Oedipal rivalry, though the favouritism towards Pip comes from Joe rather than from Mrs. Joe. Finally, Orlick's interest in

Biddy places him in a position of rivalry with Joe for the spirit of the woman Joe will marry.

Orlick is often spoken of as Pip's double; Harry Stone makes this connection and argues that Dickens made conscious use of the Doppelgänger technique from the Christmas books on, especially in The Haunted Man.⁷³ This claim might well be substantiated in a study of shadow selves, from Jonas Chuzzlewit onward, and of the possible influence from the German literary fairy tales and novella of the period, but that the technique was consciously adopted needs documentation. Yet it must be admitted that Orlick does things that are useful to Pip and that probably express Pip's secret wishes. By subduing Mrs. Joe Orlick relieves Pip of the person most responsible for his being "morally timid and very sensitive"; Mrs. Joe's comatose condition marks the beginning of Pip's moral growth for it is at this time that he outlines his conflicts about Estella to Biddy and receives her sage advice. Orlick's aiding Compeyson and Compeyson's destruction of Magwitch is, again, a positive gain for Pip. He doesn't get the money, but by that time Magwitch's money and exile would have cut Pip off from the final stages of acceptance and love.

The parallels between Pip and Orlick that have given rise to the double theory are underlined by Propp who points out that the false hero in the fairy tale, who is also the villain, makes the same journeys as the real hero. We note Orlick's mysterious transfer to Satis House where he acts as porter, and Orlick's journey to London to spy on Pip and Magwitch. Both make the journey to the lime-kiln. Finally, instead of being punished for his violent crime Orlick takes his leave robbing Pumblechook and making a fool of him by twisting his nose, which Pip would have loved to do. The brooding presence of Orlick hangs over the fairy-tale part of Great Expectations like the presence of evil and it is not hard to see why he has provoked critical speculation that is sometimes extravagant; though related most closely to Pip, in one way or another Orlick can be seen as having an affinity

with everyone in the book.

Magw^tich and Miss Havisham, in contrast, move away from their stereotyped roles towards humanity. Magw^tich begins as a frightening ogre, but after his role as donor is revealed and he tells of his past he takes on the character of the "bear's son hero", often portrayed as a "...powerful, awkward hero who may be driven from human society to seek solitude, like a bear hibernating in a cave."⁷⁴ His journey to Australia is his own dark journey and when he arrives in London, eager for a reunion with his beloved, he finds only a kind of acceptance. There are tears in his eyes when he burns the bank notes Pip gives him; these are the signs of his humanity, a token of his re-entry into the human community, foreshadowed by the click in his throat that Pip has noticed whenever Magw^tich has been moved by kindness to him. Dickens makes Magw^tich a criminal for the purposes of his theme, but he does not show Magw^tich to be a criminal, except in Pip's guilty conscience. What we see of Magw^tich in the novel is grateful, generous, brave and well-meaning, and the motivation for his unwitting selfishness, whose effects we do see, is more than adequate. His names indicate the changes in his "beauty-and-the-beast" relationship with Pip. First he is "the convict", then "my convict", "Magw^tich" (either magnanimous witch or magus plus witch), "Abel" (more sinned against than sinning), and "Provis", provider. They are progressively intimate and are released to Pip's and the reader's consciousness in an ascending order of intimacy. First he is an object; then we learn that his name is Abel just at the time that his story creates understanding and sympathy; finally he is thought of in terms of family intimacy so that by the end of the novel he is not merely "my convict", but "my uncle". Dickens clearly does not intend to over-emphasize Magw^tich's wickedness, and it is wrong for critics to do so, but it is right to point, as some others do,⁷⁵ to his ambiguous nature and to the ambiguous results of his gifts. He is a kind of Odin who has paid his fee in damaged insight, unable to

see, to the end, his own selfishness and the harm it has done to the "dear Boy" he is guiding, unintentionally, towards salvation. It is important that Pip should soften towards him and that we should be shown the gradual change in Pip's feelings. Magwitch has meant no harm, but in achieving his ambition, bred of a desire for revenge, he has done harm, and we must be convinced that Pip learns to overcome both the ambition, and the vengefulness that must strike him when he learns how he has been manipulated.

Miss Havisham, too, though her transformation is less carefully attended to than Magwitch's, makes an appropriately melodramatic re-entry into the real world in her final scene with Pip. Bereft of Estella, her white hair now pathetic rather than ghostly, Miss Havisham's "Pip - my dear" is the sign of "an earnest womanly compassion". She no longer conforms to the stereotype of "witch" or performs the function of father of the princess and so she, too, has left the fairy-tale world. With the humanizing of Miss Havisham we should not be surprised by currents of feeling in the intense scenes of this chapter that are more searchingly realistic than this section of the novel is generally given credit for being. Miss Havisham's role in Pip's emotional life has been that of mother-substitute. Stern, remote, and obsessed, like Mrs. Joe, the only mother little Pip has known, she is also rich and exotic enough to charm the boy. It is a crucial moment in his life when Pip decides to go to see her, against Joe's advice, and to foster that craving for beauty and refinement in himself that sees Miss Havisham and Estella in "everything that was picturesque" (CD, 63).

Miss Havisham does not encourage Pip, but she receives him kindly, "Come on your birthday, Pip". As Pip grows older his natural feeling towards Estella must be stifled, not only physically but intellectually. Some of this feeling is displaced on to Miss Havisham so that instead of Pip's making a clear transition from love of mother to

love of peer he is held in a state of emotional ambiguity for years. When he pictures Miss Havisham as waiting for him to sweep away the cobwebs and bring Satis House back to life, he pictures something that suggests that he will be the conquering hero for both women. If a prince restores an old king's kingdom that is one thing, but if he restores an old queen's kingdom the prince's situation is much more complicated.

Pip's final scenes with Miss Havisham (Ch. 49) are full of emotion. Each sees the other with compassion and affection; for each "suffering had given [the other] a heart to understand what [his] heart used to be". Miss Havisham has at last made contact with herself through another human being; where before she had looked in a mirror to see the image of her own grief, to define herself in space, now she sees her grief through Pip, "until you spoke to her the other day, and until I saw in you a looking glass that showed me what I once felt myself, I did not know what I had done". As Miss Havisham turns her averted face to him and drops to her knees Pip, too, sees her as he never has before: "she...dropped on her knees at my feet; with her folded hands raised to me in the manner in which, when her poor heart was young and fresh and whole, they must often have been raised to Heaven from her mother's side" (CD, 230). For the first time Pip is seeing her as a person, like himself, rather than as a role. If, to the reader, Miss Havisham's posture is reminiscent of melodrama, it must be observed that Pip's responses are not. Either he is still so much under her spell that forgiveness is easy, or the reader has not been adequately prepared, as he has with Magw^tich, for the change.

On the surface Pip's forgiveness is freely given, but as he is leaving he sees again the image of Miss Havisham hanging from the brewery roof, which suggests otherwise. Returning to make sure that she is all right, Pip sees the desolate figure in the ragged chair staring at the fire. A moment later Miss Havisham runs toward him, in flames, and the language in which Pip describes his attempt to

rescue her might almost be the language of rape: "closed with her", "threw her down", "we were on the ground struggling like desperate enemies", "the closer I covered her, the more wildly she shrieked and tried to free herself". Old Clem! Blow the fire, blow the fire - Old Clem! Roaring dryer, soaring higher - Old Clem! (CD, 55). Miss Havisham's bed is carried into the room and laid on the great table, just where the rotten bride cake had been, and though her dress was burnt "she still had something of the old ghastly bridal appearance, for they had covered her to the throat with white-cotton wool, and as she lay with a white sheet loosely overlying that, the phantom air of something that had been and was changed was still upon her" (CD, 232). A satisfying conclusion that allows the punishing woman to be punished and saved at the same time, and the hero's dark inward journey to approach its conclusion with a metamorphosis that liberates him.

The suggested origin both of Miss Havisham and of Magw^tich in Charles Matthews's Sketches⁷⁶ does not take account of the differences in their genesis, of which Miss Havisham's seems to have been the more complex.⁷⁷ In the person of The White Woman who daily walked in Berners Street in her bridal dress, on her way to church to marry the wealthy Quaker who wouldn't marry her, she had been present in Dickens's consciousness for many years.⁷⁸ Perhaps for this reason we find the congruence of dramatic working out, sensational detail, and emotional viability in her story that helps to account for its remarkable text.

Orlick, Magw^tich, and Miss Havisham are the three principal fairy-tale characters in Great Expectations. Though the latter two of these three do soften during the story all are stark, wild, and memorable, far removed from anything a mimetic novelist such as, say, George Eliot, would have created. Of these Magw^tich comes closest to developing into a novel-like character as the story progresses, so that in him we can almost see the transposition of modes, fairy tale to novel,

taking place. Miss Havisham remains in the world where the mice do not eat the cake, except for her two final interviews, one with Pip and Estella and one with Pip alone. Orlick, too, has his motivation explained in the confrontation in the old sluice house.

The difference, however, between fairy-tale characters and realistic characters who also play roles in the fairy tale is clear when we compare these three with Pip and with the two characters who, with him, play essential roles in both fairy tale and Bildungsroman, Jiggers and Herbert. If Miss Havisham's master mania, the vanity of sorrow, "results in her profound unfitness for this earth on which she was placed", Jiggers's master mania, "I'll have no feelings here", appears to equip him well for his dual role of facilitator in the fairy tale and of worldly mentor in the novel. As facilitator he makes explicit the connection between Magw^tich and Pip purely as a piece of business, even though he disapproves of it. The fact that Pip had earlier seen Mr. Jiggers at Miss Havisham's, and only there, naturally suggests to Pip that she is his benefactor. Structurally, Jiggers is the link between the two halves of the plot, the Magw^tich half and the Miss Havisham part, and if, at first, he looms dark and ogreish above Pip he never completely inhabits the other-world of fantasy. When Pip first sees Jiggers coming down the stairs at Satis House he observes Jiggers closely, but realistically, "I wondered whether he could be a doctor, but no, I thought, he couldn't be a doctor, or he would have a quieter and more persuasive manner". Though Jiggers is king of the London underworld he is more accurately seen as one of those figures in a novel against whom we can measure the hero's growth and change. Jiggers is first frightening and enigmatic; watching him at work Pip learns of the deviousness of the law. In a fallen world he is the imperfect agent of divine justice. Later, during dinner at Jiggers's House, Pip learns something of Jiggers's strength, verging on brutality, and of his fascination with the criminal mind. ("He's one of the real ones..."). Jiggers's need to

dominate, shown in his treatment of Molly, is the reason for his secretiveness, and once Pip has beaten him at that game by knowing the identity of Estella's father his plea for Jagers to be "more frank and manly" leads to Jagers's surprising sigh and comment about "poor dreams". The running title to the page where this scene occurs is "A Pair of Imposters". Jagers's sigh, like Mr. Bumble's cough and Mrs. Micawber's kiss, makes all the difference between a caricature and a character, and with it Jagers joins the company of all the other characters in this novel whose great expectations, in conflict with a recalcitrant world, become poor dreams.

Angus Wilson asks,

Who is he, this Prospero, this manipulator, agent and source of Pip's and Estella's fortunes? Is he good and benevolent as he sometimes seems? Or cynical and malign as he appears at other times? It is almost impossible to pin him down. 79

The answer is that Jagers is human, fallen man, the mediator between the world of dreams, often illicit, and the world of facts. Who could better serve as the authority-figure for Wemmick, Pip's mentor in the bleak gardens of the city? The evil that Jagers does is worldly evil; if, in this world, he assists criminals who live in a demonic world it is because this world has been infected by that demonic world and he must function in it. The good that he intends, giving Estella to Miss Havisham, is warped by the limitations of human imperfection, by the desire for revenge that produces Estella and thence Pip. When Pip is able to say to Bidy that "that poor dream has all gone by Bidy, all gone by" he is able to inhabit Jagers's world without Jagers's limitations of feeling.

In the section of this chapter dealing with the novel as fairy tale we designated Herbert the hero's helper, chosen by Jagers, the facilitator, and given to Pip shortly after his receipt of the magical agent. The helper is responsible, according to Propp, for: "the liquidation of the hero's misfortune or lack; the rescue from pursuit;

the solution of difficult tasks; the transfiguration of the hero". These are abstractions from the particular and detailed functions the novel elaborates. Herbert's efforts to educate Pip begin with table manners and extend to warning Pip about Estella's bad temper. Herbert, with Startop and Trabb's boy, rescues Pip from Orlick; he provides Pip with Magw[†]ich's identity by identifying Compeyson as Miss Havisham's brother's associate; he gives Pip advice about Magw[†]ich's nature, and he points out Pip's responsibility for Magw[†]ich's safety; he plans and helps execute the escape, and he is the cause, Pip says, of "the only good thing I had done". This last is at least the first stage in the hero's transfiguration to a gentleman with an educated heart. These functions become, in the Bildungsroman, those of a mentor, a role Herbert shares with his father, Matthew Pocket. Thus the roles in the two modes are back to back, and, far from being the "hopelessly inept" Herbert of Taylor Stoehr's analysis, he provides a neat example of a character who functions well both in his fairy-tale and in his novel roles.

By falling in with Pip's dissipations Herbert shows that Pip is a typical young man, as Lukács' typology requires; by his courteous treatment of Joe, his sense of responsibility for Magw[†]ich, and his sensible attachment to Clara he acts as a foil so that when Pip finally remarks, "I was one day enlightened by the reflection, that perhaps the inaptitude had never been in him at all, but had been in me" (CD, 278), the reader knows that Pip has at last added self-knowledge to sensitivity and moral courage. Herbert attests to the final solidity of Pip's change of heart, to the "transfiguration" of the hero that his friendship, which has shared Pip's inner and outer worlds, has helped to bring about.

The one character who appears to bear out Killy's claim that Dickens bridges the two worlds through his grotesques is Wemmick. Wemmick's bifurcated consciousness has proved too great a challenge for most critics and he is usually regarded as decoration, a product of Dickens's flamboyant fancy, but of little importance to theme or

story. I would suggest, on the contrary, that Wemmick's role is an important one. It does span two worlds; these are not, however, the real and the fairy-tale worlds, as Killy suggests, but the worlds of the head and the heart. Both of these worlds are important to the novel as Bildungsroman, for if Pip is to make his adjustment to society he must learn to function with both head and heart in society as it is. Wemmick's role is that of mentor, one of the necessary roles in the Bildungsroman. Wemmick functions entirely in the Bildungsroman and we note that he does not go to Satis House.

The list of essential roles for the Bildungsroman is brief. There must be a hero or heroine, an uncongenial environment or difficult father to rebel against, and, usually, mentor figures who replace the father and help the hero in his adjustment to society. R.D. McMaster points out that, "an orphan, Pip acquires three mothers and three fathers who serve to form his personality and standards of judgement....his three fathers are psychologically familiar aspects of any father: the savage who may make one impotent and destroy one's chances, the king who astonishes with his power, and the kindly protector". These he identifies as Magw^tich, Jaggers, and Joe.⁸⁰ I would suggest that Pip has also three mentors, Joe, Matthew/Herbert, and Jaggers/Wemmick, one for each stage of his expectations. Joe serves as moral mentor in the early chapters, both by precept and by example. His generosity and his compassion for Magw^tich ("Us wouldn't have you starved for it, would us, Pip?") and his injured dignity when both Jaggers and Miss Havisham assume that he will want money for releasing Pip ("But if you think as money can make compensation to me for the loss of the little child - what come to the forge - and ever the best of friends!--" (CD, 82)) provide a model of the Christian gentleman Pip eventually becomes, an extension of the "gentle Christian man" he sees his mentor to be. Joe's lessons about honesty, the rudiments of morality, ("If you can't get to be oncommon through going straight, you'll never get to do it through going crooked" CD, 41))

nicely balance Pip's lessons to Joe in reading and writing, the rudiments of education. Neither Joe nor Pip is a very good scholar. When Pip goes to London his kingly guardian assures him that he will go wrong, and that he will be seeing a good deal of Wemmick. Jaggers appoints Matthew Pocket as his tutor. Matthew, with help from Herbert, thus becomes Pip's official mentor in the acquisition of the social and educational skills appropriate to a nineteenth-century gentleman. Matthew, being a gentleman himself, is an appropriate tutor but his limitations become clear when we see his own life of domestic chaos, brought about precisely through his wife's excessive concern with gentility and her lack of practical skill. Matthew's role in parodying the conventional idea of a gentleman, which at this stage is also Pip's idea, is underlined when, almost the last time we hear of him in the novel, he is giving a lecture on Domestic Economy. A gentleman merely needs to know about things; he need not put his own house in order. Herbert extends his father's lessons, providing, as well, a continuation of Joe's good influence carried over into the bourgeois setting that becomes meaningful to Pip after the first third of the novel.

Matthew Pocket's limitations as a guide in matters of domestic economy are almost over-corrected in Wemmick, who has made a religion of the comforts of home. First, however, it is the official Wemmick, the kingly guardian's surrogate, who initiates Pip into the ways of the city. Wemmick handles the money, a substance Pip must learn to acquire and use wisely as a most important part of his adjustment to his society. Pip does learn, finally, to use his power over money to help Herbert, and both Wemmick and Miss Skiffins help him to do so. Wemmick and Miss Skiffins thus provide a parallel serio-comic pair to Joe and Biddy. The similarity between the two pairs is underlined by Wemmick's long care of the Aged, like Joe's care of Mrs. Joe, and by his sudden marriage to Miss Skiffins. In the end Pip goes beyond his mentor by demonstrating that his mastery over money is complete;

he can give it up.

Wemmick introduces Pip to Barnard's Inn with his city-bred view that it is quite like the country, a necessary adjustment of response for Pip. Wemmick's hesitation, when Pip's country handshake reminds him of the final handshakes at Newgate, prepares us for his continuing role as mentor when he takes Pip on a tour of Newgate; Pip remembers his first handshake with Wemmick as the condemned prisoner gives his last. Just as the dank little garden of Barnard's Inn is a kind of dark-journey parody of the country, so Wemmick's tour of his "greenhouse", of the "plants in his conservatory" is a bleak comment on the gardens society has made. Wemmick's city self, with its emphasis on portable property and self-preservation, is an important part of Pip's education. The vital part, however, occurs later in the novel. After Joe's visit to the city and after Magwitch's return, when Pip is deeply troubled about his relationship to both these father-figures, it is Wemmick's example in his care of the Aged that helps to complete Pip's education.

Wemmick's castle is the apotheosis of the ordinary. It has two functions in the novel: to parody the wild and inappropriate dreams of Pip and Wopsle and to underline Wemmick's self-reliance and concern for the Aged, the positive values that are the obverse of ambition and revenge.

Wemmick's house is a little wooden cottage, in the midst of plots of garden, that appears "to present the aspect of a rather dull retirement". Wemmick had got hold of the property "a bit at a time" and "It's a freehold by George!" Years of happy tinkering and ingenuity have produced a fortification complete with battlements, sham gothic windows, a moat with drawbridge, a small lake with an island the size of a salad, and a fountain capacious enough to wet the back of your hand. The estate boasts a pig, fowl, and rabbits, and its own cold frame so that "if you can suppose the little place besieged, it would hold out a devil of a time in point of provisions

(CD, 119). Wemmick boasts that he is his own engineer, carpenter, plumber, gardener and jack of all trades, and that all of this "brushes the Newgate cobwebs away!" This monument to independence is the healthy obverse, that is, of the world of crime where Wemmick conducts his business life. The castle is approached by means of a drawbridge over the moat, and when the drawbridge is up communication is cut off. But Pip needs to learn to go beyond Wemmick's bifurcated state; he must make connections with self-reliance and love and loyalty, but within the framework of the society of his time. As Dickens knows, and shows that he knows in the incident of Pip's going back to marry Bidley, Pip can't go home again. Fortunately the moat is only "about four feet wide and two feet deep" and anyone can step over that. Pip learns to do so and his final visits to Newgate prove it. "Those dreadful walls of Newgate" are no longer a barrier to be feared and avoided, but a gate at which he waits eagerly to express his loyalty and affection to Magw^tich. These final scenes are a proof that Pip has surpassed his mentor in being able to carry his educated heart right to the centre of corruption. He can now "accept the problematic nature of life without being defeated by it or giving in to escapism".⁸¹ It is entirely fitting that Pip should grow beyond his teachers and reject "portable property". He could not have made his Bildungsroman adjustment to life burdened by Magw^tich's money, a rankling reminder of Magw^tich's obsessions and his own, and a block to the self-reliance he has so painfully learned.

The one character in the novel who does not call Pip by the name both Pip and Magw^tich have chosen is Herbert. For Herbert Pip is Handel, the Harmonious Blacksmith, and this is what he must be seen to become, "little Pip" again, but in harmony with his adult surroundings. This harmony is accomplished by means of a series of illusions slowly and painfully dispelled. John H. Hagan Jr. has shown how carefully the surface structure of Great Expectations is patterned

around a series of parallel scenes, arguing that, "in each of these pairs there is a striking change in Pip's character or situation from the earlier scene to the later".⁸² This, he claims, underlines the development of the hero of the Bildungsroman. Hagan's parallels include: interviews between Pip and Biddy (Ch. 17 and after Mrs. Joe's funeral); meetings between Joe and Pip in London (Ch. 27 & 57); Pip's visits to Wemmick's castle (Ch. 25 & 37); dinners at Jaggers's home (Ch. 26 & 48); and Pip's journeys from London to Miss Havisham's. While it is true that Pip does change markedly between the first and second of each of these pairs, Hagan's scheme is a simplification of the pattern of Great Expectations. He has several times selected two events of a possible three or four. For instance, Pip makes not two but four trips from London to Miss Havisham's, has three, not two, interviews with Biddy, makes three, not two, visits to Wemmick's castle, and three, not two, visits to Newgate are dramatized.

Instead of a simple comparison between younger Pip and changed older Pip we find, if we examine the spectrum, that this patterned repetition highlights the interweaving of the two modes we are discussing. In the one instance in which there are only two parallel events in Great Expectations, Joe's two visits to London, these do accentuate the Bildungsroman pattern. One of the necessary roles in the Bildungsroman is that of the father against whom the hero rebels. Pip's resentment of his apprenticeship, his yearning for wealth and beauty, is part of his leaving home, but the scene with Joe during Joe's first visit to London is much closer to the classic antagonism between the father (who is not really the hero's father) and son typical of the Bildungsroman. Joe's second visit, during which he nurses Pip and pays his debts for him and Pip recognizes both his obligation to Joe and his difference from him, is, again, the classic reconciliation of the individual with his society.

Pip's intervening education has taken place through his fairy-tale experience with Magwitch and Estella and Miss Havisham, as well

as through his Bildungsroman experiences with Herbert and Wemmick. The fairy tale sheds light on the reality and the reality counteracts the fairy tale, so that the process of education is a process of the interweaving of the two. For example, when, on Pip's first journey to Satis House from London, he brings his London personality, with its assumptions of superiority, he is met by Orlick. Orlick is at once a reminder of home and Joe, and a representative of the demonic. Then, as Pip and Estella sit "in the dreamy room among the old strange influences", Estella draws Pip away from Joe. Pip does not visit Joe because he is in thrall to Estella. ("What was fit company for you once, would be quite unfit company for you now"(CD, 137)). Back in London the pendulum swings towards the Bildungsroman as Herbert advises Pip to "get over" Estella. Pip's second trip to Satis House is the occasion of the confrontation between Miss Havisham and Estella, where Estella says that she is what Miss Havisham has made her. This reinforces Herbert's warning. Pip's next visit to Miss Havisham, when he broaches the subject of Herbert's partnership and declares his love for Estella, is followed, on Pip's return to London, by the pressing demands of keeping Magwitch safe. This shift of interest to practical plans is particularly significant here, I think, because there is no period of reflection after Pip's shattering experience of Estella's rejection. In the Bildungsroman proper surely this incident would have been crucial, and would have required several chapters for the hero's recuperation. Instead, Pip is plunged into the rescue of Magwitch. When he returns to Miss Havisham's to discuss further the details of Herbert's partnership, he has learned that Molly is Estella's mother; this visit records the final collapse of Pip's secret dreams, and his recognition that he has been manipulated. After the fire he faces Orlick and then proceeds to the final stages of Magwitch's rescue. Thus the visits to Miss Havisham do much more than register stages of Pip's growth; they are an important part of his growth, and the alternation of secret dream with practical

reality provides a dialectical rhythm for Pip.

We have already noted the importance of Newgate in the romance pattern. Pip's change from horrified innocent to compassionate experienced visitor is clear to us because we have gone through the process of change. Pip's secret dreams of being the fairy prince who is to rescue Estella are shown to have the taint of prison and crime on them when Pip meets Estella for tea just after his tour of Newgate with Wemmick. The juxtaposition of Newgate and Estella shows Pip and shows the reader the contrast between wish and fact.

Similarly, the three interviews with Biddy beginning with Pip's "I want to be a gentleman" and ending with the final resignation of "that poor dream has all gone by" do more than mark the stages of Pip's growth. For the intervening interview, just after Mrs. Joe's death, Pip appears to have achieved his fantastic desire; he seems to be a gentleman, both in appearance and at heart. The magic donor's gift, that is, has given him a false confidence in his achievements ("I will come back."). It is this episode, showing Pip as he has been created by his fairy-tale donor, that gives the final interview with Biddy its poignancy. A simple Bildungsroman pattern might have measured Pip's growth but would have left out a whole dimension of feeling and sad irony that the interweaving of modes produces.

The first visit to Wemmick's shows Pip a fastness whose fairy-tale surface is a harmless sham. His second visit not only shows the reader the change in Pip, but also shows Pip how to behave in a castle of the heart. The third visit, during which Pip is left to toast a sausage for the Aged, gives Pip experience in the mode of behaviour he must in future adopt towards Magwitch. Again, we see the process of learning and the application of the lessons learned in one mode to experience in the other mode.

The two dinners with Jaggers are less important for their showing us Pip's intervening growth than for the cold light they shed on the fairy tale. During the first dinner Jaggers picks out Bentley Drummle

as "one of the real ones". Drummle will beat Pip's fairy princess, or cringe before her. The second dinner completes Pip's demystification; he learns that his princess's real mother is Molly, the murderess.

Hagan's juxtaposition of pairs of visits draws our attention, too, to the importance of the sequence of experience in Pip's education. In Chapter 25 Pip visits Wemmick's castle which, with its love and warmth and its ingenious use of space, makes a small pocket of civilization in dull Walworth. There is even provision for that good fellow, Miss Skiffins. In the next chapter, (Ch. 26) Pip visits Jaggers who uses only a small part of his bleak home, and the furniture, though "solid and good" has "an official look". The books are all law books and the table with the pile of papers and little lamp suggest that Jaggers "seemed to bring the office home with him in that respect too, and to wheel it out of an evening and fall to work". In Chapter 27 Joe comes to dinner with Pip. Though Pip has been at Wemmick's, an example of a good home, and at Jaggers's, an example of a bad one, his own behaviour towards Joe is more in line with Jaggers's. Pip does not use Joe, as Jaggers uses his guests, to find out his weaknesses, but his behaviour has the effect of making Joe feel out of place and uncomfortable, the effect that Jaggers later has on Herbert and Wemmick, as well as on Pip. These three successive chapters thus neatly present the problem that Pip must resolve: the problem of integration that runs all through this novel, particularly for the good people: for Matthew Pocket; for Herbert; even for Magw^tich. The problem is dramatized and caricatured in Wemmick's two selves and Wemmick never resolves it: even on his wedding day he brings a fishing rod, the business world's metaphor for a holiday, to justify his extravagance.

This problem of integration is posed, in another key, early in the novel and novel and fairy tale are contrasted and made to interact. Pip's first visit to Satis House, for example, is framed in Pumblechook's

relentless arithmetic, presumably meted out as a method of teaching the boy to get on in the world. At Satis House arithmetic does not help. But when Pip returns to the forge and faces the inquisition of Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook he is able to prove (to himself) that Pumblechook is a fraud who is only pretending to know what Miss Havisham is like. His invention of the conventional fairy-tale superlatives to confound his simple domestic circle is both chivalrous and self-protective. Pip communicates his feelings about the richness and strangeness of Satis House in terms his audience can grasp, yet keeps the precious experience to himself. In the course of this story Pumblechook is forced to admit that he has never seen Miss Havisham. This is the first instance of the interaction of Pip's secret dream world with the world of harsh fact. When Pip confesses to Joe that he has lied, Joe warns him about going straight: the real world places limits on the child's metaphor for his private experience. These two experiences combined give Pip an awareness that there is a dimension to experience beyond the needle-ridden nurture of Mrs. Joe and the calculating hypocrisy of Pumblechook, while warning him that he must bring his secret world into line with the truth as his tolerant and loving mentor knows it.

Again, Pip's meeting with Magwitch on the marshes belongs to the fairy-tale world and Pip takes from it a burden of fear and guilt. Joe's "We wouldn't have you starved to death for it, poor miserable fellow-creatur.--Would us, Pip?" (CD, 22), during the pursuit of the convicts should absolve the child, even though he cannot confess to Joe, for it takes Pip's action out of the region of terror and pity and places it in a framework of common-sense domestic charity. That it does not absolve Pip is clear for he conceals his involvement from Joe both then and later, when the manacle is used to bludgeon Mrs. Joe. Again, Pip needs to bring the two worlds together if he is to become Handel, the harmonious blacksmith.

When we come to look at the settings in Great Expectations it is not surprising to find that the thematic importance of two different

worlds or kinds of experience that are interwoven is borne out by the pattern of the settings. There is an almost completely consistent alternation between chapters set at Pip's home, whether the forge or Barnard's Inn or the Temple, and chapters set in a locale or amongst people who are related to the demonic world of the fairy tale. Thus in Part I the settings alternate between marshes and forge and Miss Havisham's and forge, with exceptions such as the scenes with Orlick and at the Jolly Bargeman, where the business of the fairy tale is being conducted. In Part II the pattern is slightly less emphatic, but scenes alternate between Barnard's Inn and Jaggers's office, punctuated by Pip's visits to Wemmick's, to Richmond with Estella, to Newgate, and to Wopsle's play. Even when Pip is at Barnard's Inn with Herbert there is a sense that the fastness of home has been invaded by the demonic. Pip and Herbert spend much of their time at home discussing Miss Havisham and Estella and at the end of Part II Magwitch arrives at the rooms in The Temple to which Pip and Herbert have removed. In Part III the alternation is continued between the Temple and either Jaggers's office or Miss Havisham's, until the scenes on the river which parallel the scenes on the marshes in Part I. The setting returns to the forge at the end, concluding with either Satis House or London, depending on the preferred ending.

The treatment of these settings is, as we should expect, very different from those of David Copperfield. Instead of the slow sifting of typical experience in the education of the affections of that novel, we have here a hero whose education is forced upon him by a fantastic twist of plot. In place of the detailed settings of David Copperfield, where we are given the colours and shapes of rooms and of the objects in them (Peggotty's work box, Aunt Betsey's parrot, Traddles's table, Gyp's pagoda), in Great Expectations place is used much more representatively, as in fairy tales. The marshes form a backdrop to Pip's emotions. Thus the deservedly famous opening chapter ends with a description of the marshes as "just a long black horizontal line,...and the river was just another horizontal line, not

nearly so broad nor yet so black; and the sky was just a row of long and angry red lines and dense black lines intermixed". Pip sees only two upright black things "in all that prospect", the sailors' beacon and the gibbet. These nicely demarcate Pip's moral world, just as Magw^tich's turning him upside down reverses his relation to the church steeple and serves as a metaphor for the effect Magw^tich will have on his life before the church comes "to itself" again. As Pip creeps out in the early morning to bring the stolen food and the file to Magw^tich, he sees the wooden finger-post directing people to the village as "a phantom devoting me to the Hulks". This is a typical romance setting, isolated, stark, a suitable background for the obsessed soul. It is a landscape impregnated with human emotion, a quality more easily seen, perhaps in the opening of Chapter 3:

It was a rimy morning, and very damp. I had seen the damp lying on the outside of my little window, as if some goblin had been crying there all night, and using the window for a pocket-handkerchief. Now I saw the damp lying on the bare hedges and spare grass, like a coarser sort of spiders' webs; hanging itself from twig to twig and blade to blade. On every rail and gate, wet lay clammy, and the marsh-mist was so thick, that the wooden finger on the post directing people to our village - a direction which they never accepted, for they never came there - was invisible to me until I was quite close under it. Then, as I looked up at it, while it dripped, it seemed to my oppressed conscience like a phantom devoting me to the Hulks. (CD, 9)

Observation is precise, the progression that moves from inside Pip's little room, past hedges and fences to the finger-post in just eleven lines masterly, but it is a landscape that exists inside the consciousness of an imaginative and oppressed child. The finger-post becomes an emotional landmark as, at the end of Part I, Pip breaks into tears beside it, thinking of the time when he had been "so innocent and so little there". The reader is aware that these settings mean more than they say, charged not only with the accumulated emotion of earlier experiences, as those of Copperfield often are, but charged also with nameless terror.

After Pip's initiation as toaster of sausages for the Aged there is a change in the treatment of setting appropriate to the change in Pip. Pip is no longer obsessed with guilt; he has lost Estella, and has made up his mind to do what he must for Magw^tich. Now he begins to see things as they are. Approaching Mrs. Whipple's house at Mill Pond Bank he observes that it has a "wooden front and three stories of bow window (not bay-window, which is another thing)", just as Wemmick had directed. In Mrs. Whipple's parlour Pip looks at Herbert with new eyes, "much as I looked at the corner cupboard with the glass and china, the shells upon the chimneypiece, and the coloured engravings on the wall, representing the death of Captain Cook, a ship launch, and his Majesty King George the Third in a state-coachman's wig, leather breeches, and top-boots, on the terrace at Windsor" (CD, 216). It is a typical setting with its individualities, the pictures, which might be called typical or representative individualities, duly noted.

Returning to London after his trial by Orlick on the marshes Pip looks out of the window in the early morning:

The winking lights upon the bridges were already pale, the coming sun was like a marsh of fire on the horizon. The river, still dark and mysterious, was spanned by bridges that were turning coldly grey, with here and there at top a warm touch from the burning in the sky. As I looked along the clustered roofs, with church towers and spires shooting into the unusually clear air, the sun rose up, and a veil seemed to be drawn from the river, and millions of sparkles burst out upon its waters. From me, too, a veil seemed to be drawn, and I felt strong and well. (CD, 250)

This is a moment, almost, of re-birth, the kind of experience Pip might have anticipated when first he came to London. Now, tempered by self-knowledge, he is ready to encounter the practical problems of Magw^tich's escape, the possibility of marriage, and the need to earn a living, that must be met before his adjustment in the world can be achieved.

This is a fitting prelude to the careful realism of the whole section of the novel dealing with Magw^tich's attempted escape:

Old London Bridge was soon passed, and old Billingsgate market with its oyster-boats and Dutchmen, and the White Tower and Traitor's Gate, and we were in among the tiers of shipping. Here, were the Leith, Aberdeen, and Glasgow steamers, loading and unloading goods, and looking immensely high out of the water as we passed alongside; here, were colliers by the score and score, with the coal-whippers plunging off stages on deck, as counterweight to measures of coal swinging up, which were then rattled over the side into barges; here, at her moorings, was tomorrow's steamer for Rotterdam... (CD, 251-252)

It is not surprising to learn that on May 22, 1861, Dickens chartered a steamer to go over the course of Magw^tich's flight, and, as T.W. Hill points out, "he must have made many previous investigations, as the whole of this vivid narrative shows that he must have studied the river and its currents very thoroughly".⁸³

This detailed exactness of setting is appropriate to the realistic novel Great Expectations becomes after its fairy story is complete. Not that the settings stop having emotional connotations, but that the veil of Pip's obsession has been drawn from them. As Pip goes back to the village intending to bestow himself on the "not over-particular" Biddy he says,

The June weather was delicious. The sky was blue, the larks were soaring high over the green corn, I thought all that countryside more beautiful and peaceful by far than I had ever known it to be yet. (CD, 276)

A few lines further, as Pip is reaching the forge, we begin to see it in a setting not specified earlier, "The limes were there, and the white thorns were there, and the chestnut-trees were there, and their leaves rustled harmoniously when I stopped to listen; but the clink of Joe's hammer was not in the midsummer wind". When we saw the forge earlier in the book it was in the mind's eye, distinguished visually only by the presence of the usual cottage rooms, big kitchen, pantry, dark parlour and Pip's little room under the eaves. It was dominated

by the big fireplace where Pip and Joe sat and by the sound of Joe's hammer. (We note, also, that one of Propp's characteristics of the folk-tale hero is that he has some connection with a hearth.)⁸⁴ But as a pleasant house in pleasant surroundings with particular plants around it, as, in other words, an outsider might have seen it, the forge had not previously appeared. This is completely different from the treatment of Mr. Peggotty's boat in David's early life, where the various physical realities of that carefully-detailed interior become a permanent part of David's consciousness. They are, first and last, seen as they might have been seen by an objective observer. In both novels these settings provide a basis for comparison with other interiors and help to indicate the social stratification that is, as we have seen, one of the hallmarks of the Bildungsroman as Lukács describes it. But the "very deliberately selected simple settings"⁸⁵ of Great Expectations are different in kind and point to the difference in underlying mode between the two works. In Great Expectations the final adjustment of the hero does not become possible until after he has acquired his educated heart. Only then can he see things as they are without projecting his own moods upon them. The forge is now simply the blacksmith's house, surrounded by limes and hawthorn and with fresh curtains blowing in at the parlour window; up to this point it has been the centre of fear, shame, and guilt in Pip's consciousness.

Few interior settings are described as carefully as Mrs. Whipple's house. Most are distinguished only by the emotional atmosphere a descriptive adjective or two creates: the rooms in Barnard's Inn have dirty windows, broken pulleys, and rotting stairs; Pip's room at Mr. Pocket's is "a pleasant one" and so furnished that he can use it as a sitting room. Only Satis House and garden, Jaggers's office, and Wemmick's castle are described in any detail. The first of these are, respectively, the centres of Pip's internal and external dark journeys, and the other the antidote to all dark journeys, not a

castle in the air but a castle in Walworth. Elsewhere there is enough detail to indicate social stratification, as, for instance, in the description of Jagger's home with its solid and good furniture, but the rooms are not dealt with, as they are in Copperfield, so that they become as clear and distinctive as characters themselves.

These differences in the settings of the two novels, both Bildungsromane, lead to interesting distinctions between the two according to Lukács's typology. Lukács chooses Goethe's Wilhelm Meister as his typical novel of education because in it Goethe "steers a middle course between abstract idealism, which concentrates on pure action, and Romanticism, which interiorises action and reduces it to contemplation".⁸⁶ In David Copperfield, too, David steers a middle course between action and reflection. David is a much more typical hero than Pip, and the events of his life, childhood, school, young man in love, are, as Forster noted, typical too. In Lukács's terms Great Expectations steers a much more hazardous course. Pip's experiences are so special that part of the reader's sense of its breathtaking success may be his recognition that Dickens has found, in the fairy-tale expression of a universal fantasy, the exact formula that allows him to push the mode to its limits without falling over the edge into an account of the "merely private". It is worth quoting Lukács here:

The robust sense of security underlying this type of novel arises, then, from the relativation of its central character, which in turn is determined by a belief in the possibility of common destinies and life-formations. As soon as this belief disappears -- which, in formal terms, amounts to saying: as soon as the action of the novel is constructed out of the destinies of a lonely person who merely passes through various real or illusory communities but whose fate does not finally flow into them -- the form of the work must undergo a substantial change, coming closer to that of the novel of disillusionment, in which loneliness is neither accidental nor the fault of the individual, but signifies that the desire for the essence always leads out of the world of social structures and communities and that a community is possible only at the

surface of life and can only be based on compromise. The central character becomes problematic, not because of his so-called 'false tendencies', but just because he wants to realise his deepest interiority in the outside world. The educative element which this type of novel still retains and which distinguishes it sharply from the novel of disillusionment is that the hero's ultimate state of resigned loneliness does not signify the total collapse and defilement of all his ideals but a recognition of the discrepancy between the interiority and the world. The hero actively realises this duality: he accommodates himself to society by resigning himself to accept its life forms, and by locking inside himself and keeping entirely to himself the interiority which can only be realised inside the soul. His ultimate arrival expresses the present state of the world but is neither a protest against it nor an affirmation of it, only an understanding and experiencing of it which tries to be fair to both sides and which ascribes the soul's inability to fulfil itself in the world not only to the inessential nature of the world but also to the feebleness of the soul.⁸⁷

The scenes with Joe and Biddy and little Pip, just before the end of the novel, suggest that the next Bildungsroman hero will be young Pip Gargery, and that his way will be more typical than that of his uncle. Mr. Philip Pirrip, returned from the East, takes his namesake, now the same age as Pip was when we first met him, for a walk,

...and we talked immensely, understanding one another to perfection. And I took him down to the churchyard, and set him on a certain tombstone there, and he showed me from that elevation which stone was sacred to the memory of Philip Pirrip, late of this Parish, and Also Georgiana, Wife of the Above. (CD, 278)

Here Pip is pointing both to the homelessness of his own childhood, a homelessness that made him a candidate for the condition of hero, and to the rightness of his setting young Pip "on a certain tombstone there" without turning him upside down or scaring the life out of him and thus filling his young soul with obsessions that would impede his growth. Young Pip will begin with an "interiority", that is, more in accord with the world than his mentor's.

According to Lukács the post-Goethean type of the novel of education suffers from:

...the danger of a subjectivity which is not exemplary, which has not become a symbol, and which is bound to destroy the epic form. The hero and his destiny then have no more than personal interest and the work as a whole becomes a private memoir of how a certain person succeeded in coming to terms with his world. (The novel of disillusionment counteracts the increasing subjectivity of the characters by the crushing, equalizing universality of fate.) Such a subjectivity is even more difficult to surmount than that of the impersonal narrative: it endows everything - even if the technique is perfectly objectivised - with the fatal, irrelevant and petty character of the merely private; it remains a mere aspect, making the absence of a totality the more painfully obvious as it constantly claims to create one. The overwhelming majority of modern 'novels of education' have completely failed to avoid this pitfall.⁸⁸

Here, perhaps, is the clue to Dickens's success in Great Expectations. He objectified the inner world, in the manner of a fairy tale, and so made the subjective exemplary. Moreover, he was shrewd enough to make the inner world of his hero both Everyman's fantasy and the mid-nineteenth-century daydream of "the aspirant bourgeois" which became less fantastic as that century, and our own, progressed so that it now requires some effort of imagination to see the novel as the historic document it is.

So convincing was Dickens's objectivication that many critics seem to believe that the novel is a tragedy. Shaw, for instance, speaks of "the procession of morbid or unhappy or dislikeable creatures who make the book so tragic".⁸⁹ Yet the whole point of the novel of education is to show the hero's accommodation to society. We can scarcely say, in one breath, that Pip has acquired an educated heart, and, therefore, reached the most important goal of a Dickens character, and in the next complain of the unpleasantness of his fate. Unless the failure to achieve one's infantile and adolescent fantasies is tragic, the original ending surely closes on a note of realism, the realism Dickens alluded to when he expressed the wish that the whole third part might be read at once and added "...and the pity is the greater, because the general turn and tone of the working out and

winding up, will be away from all such things as they conventionally go. But what must be must be."⁹⁰ Further, we should remember that the role of bachelor uncle was one that Dickens fancied as a reward for some of his most gently treated characters who had been marred in youth: Tom Pinch, Newman Noggs, Smike, Scrooge himself. And the door to domestic bliss is not finally closed on Pip; he might well meet little Jane Pocket again and make a most suitable marriage.

Shaw comments that the original ending "is quite a healthy ending and a possible one; but it somehow does not belong to the tale. And the other ending belongs to the tale, but falsifies it at the last moment".⁹¹ Perhaps the tell-tale word here is "tale". The original ending does not belong to the fairy tale, to the part of the novel that is a romance, and the romance ending, for all its rightness of atmosphere and its "pretty writing", belongs to the tale but falsifies the novel at the last moment. It would be interesting to examine other works of combined realism and fantasy to see whether the use of fantasy as a method of revealing psychological truth places the author in an ambiguous position at the end when he must step out firmly in one mode or the other.

In Great Expectations I have tried to show that Pip's rescue from Orlick marks the end of the fairy tale. From that point on the novel is realistic, clearly occupied with a believable working out of characters' fates in a recognizable social framework. Shaw is troubled by the word "Piccadilly" in the original/ending, which he calls "the Piccadilly ending", pointing out Dickens's unconscious debt to Lever's A Day's Ride: A Life's Romance. That may be, but it is probably not the only reason for Dickens's choice of location for Pip's final scene. "Piccadilly" also suggests that Pip is no longer haunted by feelings of guilt and by his association with crime. Little Britain is not his haunt now, but the broad streets of the West End where Mr. Philip Pirrip walks while going about his modest business, and only on such rare occasions as his meeting with Estella thinks nostalgically of his life's romance.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER V

1. Francis Quarles, Emblems Divine and Moral; Together with Hieroglyphicks of the life of man. (London, 1736).
2. e.g. Jerome Hamilton Buckley, Introduction to Season of Youth (Harvard, 1974), pp. 1-27; John H. Hagan, Jr. "Structural Patterns in Great Expectations", ELH, 21 (1954): 54.
3. "Advice to Authors", NCF, 29 (1975): 379.
4. Letters III Nonesuch, September 18, 1960, p. 182.
5. Letters III Nonesuch, 4 October 1860, p. 182.
6. See unsigned review in The Atlantic Monthly, 8 (1861): 380-82.
 "The plot of the romance is therefore universally admitted to be the best that Dickens has ever invented."
 Throughout the article the reviewer uses the term "romance" in the sense in which the romance has been distinguished from the novel in this thesis. Hawthorne's preface to The House of the Seven Gables, published in 1851, would have provided contemporary readers with a clear statement of the distinction.
7. See Forster's comment that the story of Nell took form with less direct consciousness of design than any he wrote. Ley, 146.
8. Letters III Nonesuch, p. 186.
9. Scott, Essays on Chivalry, Romance, and the Drama (no date), "Chandos Classics", p. 65.
10. Harry Stone, "Fire, Hand and Gate", Kenyon Review, 24 (1962): 662-91.
11. Dorothy Van Ghent, The English Novel: Form and Function, "On Great Expectations", (New York, 1953), p. 133.
12. Walther Killy, Wirklichkeit und Kunstcharakter (München, 1963), pp. 104-24.
13. Paul Pickrel, "Great Expectations", in Dickens: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Martin Price (Englewood Cliffs, 1967), p. 162.
14. Michael Kotzin, Dickens and the Fairy Tale (Bowling Green, 1972).
15. F.R. and Q.D. Leavis, Dickens the Novelist (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 360.
16. Humphry House, The Dickens World (London, 1960), p. 156.
17. G. Robert Stange, "Expectations Well Lost: Dickens' Fable for His Time", College English 16 (1954): 9-17.
18. R.G. Baldwin, "Great Expectations", in Studies of Major Works in English, ed. John Orrell (Toronto, 1968), p. 209.

19. Hagan, p. 54.
20. Pickrel, p. 161.
21. V. Propp, Morphology of the Folktale. First Edition Translated by Laurence Scott with an Introduction by Svatava Pirkova-Jacobson. Second Edition Revised and Edited with a Preface by Louis A. Wagner/New Introduction by Alan Dundes (Austin and London, 1968).
22. cf. Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance, 1930.
23. Sir Walter Scott, see p. 76 fn. 16. See also Preface to Fortunes of Nigel.
24. Nathaniel Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables. Preface.
25. Henry James, The American, Preface.
26. Northrop Frye, The Secular Scripture (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), pp. 3-31.
27. Leavis, p. 379n.
28. Leavis, pp. 378-79.
29. Unsigned review in The Atlantic Monthly 8 (1861): pp. 380-382.
30. See Preface, to the Second Edition, p. ix "...The expression narodnaja skázka has been rendered as "folktale", "volšébnaja skázka as "fairy tale", and the words skázka (noun), skázočnyi (adjective) simply as "tale"...The morphology presented by the author is, of course, a morphology of the fairy tale specifically, and he is careful to make note of this fact in the Foreword and in Chapter II. Thus the title of the work is, unfortunately, somewhat unclear. It is evident from the text that the unqualified word skázka is used by Propp both in the sense of the tale in general and in the sense of the fairy tale, depending upon context. The reader must infer the appropriate meaning in each instance.
31. Svatava Pirkova-Jacobson. Preface to Morphology of the Folktale, revised edition, xxi.
32. Taylor Stoehr, Dickens: The Dreamer's Stance (Ithaca, 1965). See p. 127, "The hopelessly inept Herbert".
33. Propp, p. 23.
34. Ibid., p. 79.
35. Ibid., pp. 79-80.
36. Propp, p. 22.
37. Propp, p. 22.

38. Propp, p. 58.
39. See, for example, Pickrel, "...The story is, then, a fairy tale, with a terrible ogre, Magwich, a wildly eccentric fairy god-mother...", p. 161.
40. See, for example, Bergonzi and Hannaford, pp. 83-84 of this thesis, and Christopher Mulvey, "David Copperfield and the Folk-Story Structure" in Dickens Studies Annual, 5, Ed. Robert B. Partlow, Jr. (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1976), pp. 74-94.
41. Mulvey, p. 75, p. 94.
42. Mulvey, p. 94.
43. Lionel Trilling, The Liberal Imagination (Garden City, 1950), p. 59.
44. Bruno Bettelheim, The Uses of Enchantment (New York, 1976), p. 25.
45. See William H. Marshall, The World of the Victorian Novel (South Brunswick & New York, 1967), p. 207.
46. Frye, p. 104.
47. Leavis, p. 415. Note also that Harry Stone's treatment of the lime-kiln and the old sluice house as hell suggests a comparable journey.
48. Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, 91 (1862): 580.
49. John Butt, "Dickens at Work", The Durham University Journal, N.S. 9(1948), p. 76.
50. Frye, p. 124.
51. Stoehr, pp. 122-23.
52. See, for example, Julian Moynahan, "The Hero's Guilt: The Case of Great Expectations", EC 10, 1960): 60-79.
53. Leavis, p. 374.
54. Frye, pp. 109-123.
55. Frye, p. 124.
56. In "Pip, Philip and Astrophil: Dickens's Debt to Sidney?", The Dickensian 63,(1967): 58-62.
57. Georg Lukács, Theory of the Novel, pp. 132, 133.
58. R.G. Baldwin, pp. 208-9.
59. William F. Axton, "Keystone Structure in Dickens' Serial Novels", University of Toronto Quarterly, 37 (1967): 31-50.
60. Moynahan, p. 60.
61. Dorothy Van Ghent, The English Novel: Form and Function (New York, 1953), pp. 125-138.

62. T.E. Connolly, "Technique in Great Expectations, PQ, 34 (1955): 48-55.
63. Russell Brain, "Dickensian Diagnoses", in Some Reflections on Genius (London, 1960), pp. 123-36.
64. Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol 5, p. 331.
65. Singer, p. 331.
66. Singer, p. 330.
67. Charles Dickens, Great Expectations Ed. R.D. McMaster (Toronto, 1965), Introduction, p. xx.
68. Lukács, See passage quoted on pp. 293-94.
69. Killy, p. 112.
70. Charles Dickens, The Public Readings, Ed. P.A.W. Collins (London, 1975), p. 305.
71. C.G. Jung, Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairy Tales, ed. Violet S. de Lasglo (Garden City, 1958), p. 108; and Bettelheim, p. 81n.
72. Jung, p. 108.
73. Stone, p. 667.
74. Frye, p. 116.
75. Stone, p. 676.
76. Martin Meisel, "Miss Havisham Brought to Book", PMLA 81 (1966): 278-285.
77. Harry Stone, "Dickens' Woman in White", Victorian Newsletter, 33 (1968): 5-8.
78. Charles Dickens, "Where We Stopped Growing", Household Words, VI (1853): 361-63.
79. Charles Dickens, Great Expectations, Afterword by Angus Wilson (New York and Scarborough, Ontario, 1963), p. 530.
80. McMaster, p. viii.
81. Bettelheim, p. 8.
82. Hagan, p. 64, n. 5.
83. T.W. Hill, "Notes on Great Expectations", The Dickensian, 56, (1960): 123.
84. Propp, Appendix 1, Table 1, p. 120.
85. Leavis, p. 379, note 6.
86. Lukács, p. 135.

87. Ibid., pp. 135-36.
88. Lukács, p. 137.
89. George Bernard Shaw, Preface to Great Expectations, Limited Editions Club (Edinburgh, 1937), p. xvii.
90. Ley, p. 737.
91. Shaw, xviii.

CONCLUSION

This thesis was described in the introduction as an attempt to find the operative structural principle in each of five works that appear to have structural similarities. Under examination the superficial similarities between the 'life-and-adventures' single-hero novels gave way to the much more pervasive influence of the underlying mode in which each particular work was written. The identification of each of these modes and the description of them, followed by the examination of each of the five novels in relation to its determining mode, has led to the solution of some persistent critical problems. Further, the author's narrative stance, his attitude to or manner of addressing the theme or story he has in mind, appears to determine the mode that underlies the work.

The organization, imposed by the thesis, under the headings of 'plot', 'character', 'setting', and, sometimes, 'language' has led to particular insights that may have more general application than in the explications of these five novels. Ronald Paulson's observations on the fictions of satire suggest that certain characters, or characters playing certain roles, are always present in satire; Propp defines both a pattern of action and a group of roles that distinguish the fairy tale; allegory has its typical landscapes and patterns of action, and so on. When one begins to see novels in terms of their underlying modes the whole subject of characterization changes; certain roles become clear, and the need for certain character types, such as the gull in a satire, may help to explain the presence of characters whose nature and function are not otherwise understood. Relate Nicholas Nickleby to melodrama, instead of to the picaresque or to Yorkshire schools, and one has done much to restore enjoyment in that much-neglected work.

The doors this approach opens are inviting indeed. Examination of the remaining Dickens novels through their determining modes would yield fresh insights about the individual novels and provide the

first tentative steps to a poetic of fiction that would demonstrate, as well, the variety of modes used by the most considerable novelist in English. Another line of investigation might be to examine a large number of novels that appear to be in the same mode, satirical novels or allegorical ones, to see how the mode works in them. This would extend the work already available in such books as Stuart Miller's The Picaresque Novel, and in Lukács's essay on the Bildungsroman. Examinations such as these would do much to clarify Frye's phrase, "the conventions of literary structure." This, in turn, would help to provide criteria for judging any number of novels, say those of the Brontës, on whose nature and merit it is difficult for critics to agree.

When many works arrive at the same form they arrive at that form through development from within, as living creatures do. This thesis demonstrates the development from within of a series of apparently related novels; they appear to be related because they appear to have arrived at the same form. Demonstration of the radical differences in these forms suggests that the attempt to find the determining modes, and the subsequent analysis of many novels in relation to these modes, would be a fruitful one.

APPENDIX

The twenty-two points that follow are quoted from Propp. I have indicated, in parentheses, the parallel in Great Expectations. The first seven points are preparatory; the action is begun by number eight. Further, points twelve and thirteen are displaced, in Great Expectations, to the beginning of the book. Propp allows for displacements such as these, and does not consider them a change in the sequence of functions. Dickens, of course, wished to get in "the pivot" on which the story would turn, the "grotesque tragi-comic conception", in the first number of his tale.

According to Propp:

A tale usually begins with some sort of initial situation. The members of a family are enumerated, or the future hero (e.g., a soldier) is simply introduced by mention of his name or indication of his status. Although this situation is not a function, it nevertheless is an important morphological element.

After the initial situation there follow the functions:

1. One of the members of a family absents himself from home.
(Death of the parents is seen as an intensified form of absence.)
2. An interdiction is addressed to the hero.
(Thou shalt not steal. This is implied in Pip's background and in the fact that Mrs. Joe is on the Ram-Page when he arrives home late.)
3. The interdiction is violated.
(Pip brings the file and the food. He is obeying the convict's interdiction and in doing so violating the prior and implicit prohibition of his home.)

Here the villain enters on the scene and begins the performance of his role. His role is to disturb the peace of a happy family, to cause some form of misfortune, damage, or harm. The villain(s) may be a dragon, a devil, bandits, a witch, or a stepmother, etc.

It must be pointed out here that Compeyson, the ultimate villain in the story, appears at this point. He is responsible for the "villainy"

or the villainous effects that Miss Havisham and Estella have on Pip. (Propp points out that one of the possibilities for the spheres of action is that 'a single sphere of action is distributed among several characters'.) For the next five functions, therefore, Miss Havisham and Estella, who are playing the roles of father of the princess, and princess, respectively, are doing the villain's work. Their actions are a direct result of Compeyson's villainy.

4. The villain attempts to make a reconnaissance - with the aim of obtaining information.
(*"What do you think of her?"* (CD, 34))
5. The villain receives information about the victim.
(*"You are near crying again now."* (CD, 37))
6. The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or his belongings - his heart.
(*Miss Havisham appears fond of Pip.*)
7. The victim submits to deception and thereby helps the enemy.
(*Pip thinks Miss Havisham has a special interest in him.*)

The first seven sections are preparatory. The action is begun by number eight.

8. The villain causes harm or injury
or
- 8a. One member of a family lacks something, desires to have something.
In the initial situation an insufficiency is provoked, a lack is realized. (Pip is in love with Estella; he wants to be a gentleman.) Here a quest is begun.
9. Misfortune or shortage is made known.
(*Pip tells Bidley, "I want to be a gentleman".*)

This function brings the hero into play. It is the signal for the hero's departure from home; the hero is dispatched from home. There is a command or request, accompanied by threats and promises.

(*Magwich sends Pip to London.*)

10. The seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction.
There is a connective moment of agreement.
(*Jaggers presents Magwich's terms and Pip accepts them.*)
11. The hero leaves home.
This is different from the temporary action at the beginning, when Pip went to the churchyard.
(*Pip goes to London.*)

The next two functions were displaced to the opening of the book.

After number eleven Propp notes:

Now a new character enters the tale: this personage might be termed the donor, or more precisely, the provider. Usually he is encountered accidentally - in the forest, along the roadway, etc. It is from him that the hero (both seeker-hero and the victim-hero) obtains some agent (usually magical) which permits the eventual liquidation of misfortune. But before receipt of the magical agent takes place, the hero is subjected to a number of quite diverse actions which, however, all lead to the result that a magical agent comes into his hands.

12. The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares the way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper.

(Magwich presents Pip with the possibility of helping him. Objectively this amounts to a test, although subjectively the hero is not aware of it as such.)

13. The hero reacts to the actions of the future donor.

The next point returns to the hero as he leaves home.

14. A magical agent is placed at the disposal of the hero and he uses it.

(Money)

Here Propp notes:

The hero of a fairy tale is that character who either directly suffers from the action of the villain in the complication (the one who senses some kind of lack), or who agrees to liquidate the misfortune or lack of another person. (Pip agrees, unknowingly, to liquidate Magwich's lack, while he is liquidating his own.) In the course of the action the hero is the person who is supplied with a magical agent..., and who makes use of it or is served by it.

(Money, the magical agent here, is at the disposal of the hero and the middle section of the novel examines the use the hero makes of it.)

15. The hero is transferred, reaches, or is led to the whereabouts of an object of search.

(Estella comes to London.)

16. The hero and the villain join in direct combat.

(Pip and Bentley Drummle barely avoid a duel. Pip and Bentley Drummle engage in a struggle before the fire, and for the fire. The hero is not to receive the object of his quest. Orlick present) Bentley and Orlick are associates of Compeyson and Orlick is in his employment.

17. The hero is branded.
(Fire)
18. The villain is defeated.
(Miss Havisham dies after Pip has come to understand her. Pip continues to grow.)
19. The initial misfortune or lack is liquidated.
(Pip has become a gentleman. It does not accomplish his purpose.)
20. The hero returns (home) - often with the character of flight from someone or something.
(Pip goes down to the village and hears about his ingratitude to Pumblechook from the waiter.)
21. The hero is pursued.
(Orlick tricks Pip to the sluice house.)
22. The hero is rescued from pursuit.
(Herbert and Trabb's boy come after Pip.)

Propp comments here:

A great many tales end on the note of rescue from pursuit. The hero arrives home and then, if he has obtained a girl, marries her, etc. Nevertheless, this is far from always being the case. A tale may have another misfortune in store for the hero: a villain may appear once again, may seize whatever Ivan (the hero) has obtained, may kill Ivan, etc. In a word, an initial villainy is repeated, sometimes in the same forms as in the beginning, and sometimes in other forms which are new for a given tale. With this a new story commences.

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Preliminary note.

The following bibliography is necessarily selective. It includes, first, works read during the exploration of the subject of this thesis, and, second, works referred to in the text. Books are arranged in the following categories:

- I. DICKENS'S WORKS
- II. BIBLIOGRAPHIES
- III. BIOGRAPHY
- IV. CRITICISM
 - 1. General Studies
 - a) Books
 - b) Articles
 - 2. Studies of Particular Works: Oliver Twist
Nicholas Nickleby
Martin Chuzzlewit
David Copperfield
Great Expectations
- V. CRITICAL THEORY
- VI. RELATED TEXTS
- VII. BACKGROUND WORKS

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