The nature and function of Evil in some novels by Charles Dickens.

Evil is not something tangible. It is not created or discovered, it merely intrudes or disrupts. In a sense, being merely incipient destructiveness, negation of what is Good, it exists only as a continual threat. Human beings can never be more than its agents, though only they may recognize it. Evil may not be present without its opposite, Good, but Good need never know Evil. An artist may define Evil in terms of colours, a musician with a chord or counterpoint, a novelist by means of characters and events.

In the novels of Dickens, Evil is inseparable from horror. It is reflected in the great looking-glass above the Veneering sideboard, is revealed in the light from the police bull's-eye during the descent into the hell of Tom-all-Alone's, gleams from the eyes of John Jasper whenever he turns them upon pretty Rosa Budd. It exerts a strange "fascination of repulsion" over all who are unwary enough to stray into its presence, or upon whom it seemingly has designs. Dickens himself was fascinated throughout his life by the problem of Evil. In his self-appointed role as a kind of social historian, he became increasingly aware of its threat to the whole of society. The strongly-felt presence of this threat in his novels probably accounts for Dickens being attributed with the invention of the modern "thriller".[1]

The following pages attempt to define Dickens' sense of Good and Evil, especially in relation to his own heightened sense of "life".

I have employed terms such as "life", "the life force", "the problem of self" and "the forces for Good" in such a way that they should either be self-explanatory or else defined by their context. Once or twice I have had occasion to use Kierkegaardis terms, "single-mindedness" and "double-mindedness". These may be understood by remembering Kierkegaardts dictum about "purity of heart" being "to will one thing, the Good in truth". Evil is essentially double-mindedness because it involves turning one's eyes away from the eternal Good to something which is finite.

Whenever possible, I have used John Harmon of Our Mutual Friend to illustrate various points, principally as a means of imposing some semblance of order upon what may well appear to be a rather rambling sort of essay. I conclude, however, with a brief examination of some of the imagery from The Mystery of Edwin Drood, which will effectively summarize what has preceded it. I have not attempted here to solve the Mystery itself, any points I might make being essentially peripheral to those of such commentators as Edmund Wilson and Philip Collins.

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The concept of life as such - as it asserts itself, for instance, in the poems of Walt Whitman - appears to be of relatively recent origin. Dickens, however, had no difficulty or compunction in appropriating it to himself and for his own use · Thus, in 1858, he wrote to John Forster, "I am always deeply sensible of the wonderful exercise I have of life and its highest sensations", and continued,

"Nor are you to suppose that I disguise from myself what might be urged on the other side ... in the way of a thousand uncertainties, caprices, and difficulties of disposition. ... "[2]

However inadequate as a piece of self-analysis, this passage contains much that is characteristic of its author. Throughout his writing career, but especially in its later stages, Dickens became increasingly aware of the ambivalent nature of "the life force" and of what is nowadays referred to as "the problem of self". Vivacious, charming Harold Skimpole of Bleak House in a sense epitomises the problem. Having narrowly escaped arrest for debt only through the intervention and generosity of young Richard Oarstone and Esther Summerson, Skimpole preserves "with an absence of all effort, his delightful spirits and his easy flow of conversation", while Esther wonders meanwhile at her own and Richard's "transferred impression of having been arrested since dinner, and that it was very curious altogether."[3]

Throughout the novel Skimpole preserves his lively gaiety - and his selfishness. He is thus as consistent in his own particular brand of destructiveness as any other of Dickens' more overt villains in theirs. Now the point here is that this consistency of action and effect is inseparable from the life force itself. There is a very interesting and memorable scene in Our Mutual Friend where Rogue Riderhood - riverside scavenger, generally disliked, and of unprepossessing appearance - is run down by a steamship, and carried into a nearby tavern, more dead than alive. Several of his

acquaintances attend to him, and at last a spark of life is detected:

> See! A token of life! An indubitable token of life! The spark may smoulder and go out, or it may glow and expand, but see! The four rough fellows seeing, shed tears. Neither Riderhood in this world, nor Riderhood in the other, could draw tears from them; but a striving human soul between the two can do it easily.[4]

The signs of life are seen to strengthen as consciousness returns:

> The low, bad, unimpressible face is coming up from the depths of the river, or what other depths, to the surface again. As he grows warm, the doctor and the four men cool. As his lineaments soften with life, their faces and their hearts harden to him.[5]

This, then, is Dickens asserting the absolute value of life in the face of death in a manner no different - unless more strictly dramatic - than Dostoyevskyis in Crime and Punishment:

> ... someone condemned to death says, or thinks an hour before his death, that if he had to live on a high rock, on such a narrow ledge that held only have room to stand, and the ocean, everlasting darkness, everlasting solitude, everlasting tempest around him, if he had to remain standing on a square yard of space all his life, a thousand years, eternity, it were better to live so than die at once.[6]

It is also the absolute value of life acknowledged by Macbeth:

> Had I but died an hour before this chance I had livid a blessed time; ... [7]

Rogue Riderhoodis ordeal and temporary loss of self has no other effect upon him than the strengthening of his arrogant belief in his own invincibility. For he now considers himself immune from drowning.[8] Much later in the novel another character - the bored and rootless Eugene Wrayburn - undergoes a similar ordeal after having been brutally struck down by his would-be murderer, the schoolmaster Bradley Headstone. For days Wrayburn wages a battle against death:

> This frequent rising of a drowning man from the deep, to sink again, was dreadful to the beholders. ... As the man rising from the deep would disappear the sooner for fighting with the water, so he in his desperate struggle went down again.[9]

But eventually Wrayburn, too, recovers. Moreover, he profits from his ordeal: that same lesson which Riderhood seems not to heed – the absolute value of human life - becomes the means of breaking down the artificial barrier of class difference which had come between Wrayburn and his love for Lizzie Hexam.[10]

Wrayburn is linked with the younger John Harmon (alias Julius Handford and John Rokesmith) inasmuch as both are victims of dictatorial fathers.[11] Both rebel, but are obliged to suffer in consequence. Wrayburn finds himself cut off from a meaningful existence, Harmon is forced to flee abroad. When Harmon returns to England, moreover, he undergoes the same process of loss of self endured by Wrayburn (and by Riderhood). Here is the relevant passage:

> "The figure like myself was assailed, and my valise was in its hand. I was trodden upon and fallen over. I heard a noise of

> blows, and thought it was a wood-cutter cutting down a tree. I could not have said that my name was John Harmon - I could not have thought it - I didn't know it - but when I heard the blows, I thought of the wood-cutter and his axe, and had some dead idea that I was lying in a forest.
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> "This is still correct? Still correct, with the exception that I cannot possibly express it to myself without using the word I. But it was not I. There was no such thing as I, within my knowledge.
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> "It was only after a downward slide through something like a tube, and then a great noise and a sparkling and a crackling as of fires, that the consciousness came upon me, 'This is John Harmon drowning; John Harmon, struggle for your life. John Harmon, call on Heaven and save yourself!' I think I cried it out aloud in a great agony, and then a heavy horrid unintelligible something vanished, and it was I who was straggling there alone in the water."[12]

After this, Harmon has still to spend a self-imposed "probationary period" leading the life of the fictitious John Rokesmith. Then, and only then, can he return to the world of the living, as it were, and marry Bella Wilfer.

Harmon and Wrayburn are linked, despite differences of class, by common areas of experience; and Rogue Riderhood and Bradley Headstone are similarly linked. Riderhood, "an ill-looking visitor with a squinting leer", is "a man as gets my living ... by the sweat of my brow";[13] Headstone's "countenance (has) a look of care ... the

face belonging to a naturally slow or inattentive intellect that has toiled hard to get what it has won ..."[14] Each is a figure of destructiveness, and each, eventually, preys upon the others. Before the attempted murder Headstone disguises himself in the other's clothes; later, he is visited at his school by Riderhood, confronted with the clothes Riderhood has fished from the river, and in front of his assembled pupils is forced to write and then erase his name upon the blackboard. Whereupon he falls into a fit.[15] In this manner is Headstone's loss of self symbolically enacted. Afterwards he follows Riderhood back to the river, to the Weir-Mill Lock, and there the two men engage in a death-struggle in "the ooze and scum behind one of the rotting gates".[16]

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In Dickens' novels that which is life-promoting may be said to be Good, and that which is destructive, negative or barren may be called Evil. Yet clearly there is no easy division. The destructiveness of Riderhood or Headstone is virtually inseparable from their most vital needs, material or psychological. Riderhood's livelihood is hard-won from the river, and it is his occupation as much as any innate streak of villainy which earns him his unpopularity. Recognition of which compels him to adopt a "pugilistic" attitude to a hostile world,[17] an attitude self-defensive in the truest sense of the term. Riderhood is as much a victim of his environment as he is "a bird of prey", and the good and bad in him are both that which enables him to combat the

pressures of his environment. For him there is no question of right or wrong, because the instinct of self-preservation allows him no freedom of choice. Thus although he dispossesses old Betty Higden of her few remaining coins, he has also provided her with shelter (which action costs him nothing); the whole episode, interestingly enough, is subordinated to the tone of compassion with which Dickens describes Betty Higden's approaching death.[18]

Bradley Headstone, despite the far greater complexity of his motivations and character, is scarcely less a victim than Riderhood. Having been raised a pauper lad, he had set himself to acquire such a store of knowledge as would enable him to successfully pursue his chosen career of school-teacher. (A noble profession, and laudable ambition, like those of the cathedral organist John Jasper in Edwin Drood.) But the effort had not been made without cost, so that Headstone "always seemed to be uneasy lest anything should be missing from his mental warehouse, and taking stock to assure himself."[19] As Dickens' imagery suggests, it is as much the system as the individual which is at fault here.[20] The immolation of Headstone to the demands of a competitive and acquisitive society, the rigorous working out of the consequences of the clash between his perverted nature and a mountingly intolerable burden of mortification, is among Dickens' finest achievements in the way of sustained psychological realism.

Evil may be said to enter into Headstone at the last when, having been denied his impossible love for Lizzie Hexam, his self-interest turns upon itself, and his one morose gratification becomes his nightly goading at the hands of Eugene Wrayburn:

> He knew equally well that he fed his wrath and hatred, and that he accumulated provocation and self-justification, by being made the nightly sport of the reckless and insolent Eugene. Knowing all this, and still always going on with infinite endurance, pains, and perseverance, could his dark soul doubt whither he went?[21]

Yet this self-inflicted torture is still, in a sense, life sustaining:

> Under his daily restraint, it was his compensation, not his trouble, to give a glance towards his state at night, and to the freedom of its being indulged.[22]

The evil in Bradley Headstone is the perversion itself, a perversion which Dickens attributes, in part, to its possessor being "used to the little audience of a school, and unused to the larger ways of men".[23]

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Here we arrive at what is perhaps the most crucial of Dickens' insights into the nature of Good and Evil: whilst these terms defy all attempts to equate them with mere right and wrong, it is in the testing of one's sense of right and wrong through participation in human relationships that the reality of Good and Evil becomes known.

Thus the reality from which both Bradley Headstone and Rogue Riderhood are out off - their constrained lives having rendered them impervious to its claims - is the truer reality of the natural affections and emotions, the easy commerce of feelings and experience between one person and another. The selfishness of Harold Skimpole, whose entire family is lacking in "any idea of time and money" (that is, in two of the most basic human concerns), is clearly a product of his divorce from reality. When Edmund Wilson reminds us that Dickens worked "always through the observed interrelations between highly individualized human beings rather than through political or economic analysis"[24], he reminds us too of Dickens' attitude to human relationships generally.

Bradley Headstone, who "could do mental arithmetic mechanically, sing at sight mechanically, blow various wind instruments mechanically, even play the great church organ mechanically",[25] foreshadows the cathedral organist John Jasper, the murderer of Edwin Drood. Now it is scarcely too much to say that the clash between Good and Evil, between life and death, had become for Dickens his prime concern at the time of writing his last novel, and that consequently the central metaphor of <u>The Mystery of Edwin Drood</u> is to be understood as the incursion into drowsy Cloisterham of alien elements potentially destructive yet also undeniably lifepromoting. An opium-addict and possibly himself a foreigner, Jasper[26] represents a source of Evil:

> Impassive, moody, solitary, resolute, so concentrated on one idea, and on its attendant fixed purpose, that he would share

> it with no fellow-creature, he lived apart from human life. Constantly exercising an Art which brought him into mechanical harmony with others, and which could not have been pursued unless he and they had been in the nicest mechanical relations and unison, it is curious to consider that the spirit of the man was in moral accordance or interchange with nothing around him.[27]

From passages remarkable for their power of evocative description, we learn that Cloisterham is a city time has passed by, "a monotonous, silent city, deriving an earthy flavour throughout from its cathedral crypt", "no meet dwelling-place for any one with hankerings after the noisy world".[28] The previous invasions of foreigners - Druids, Romans Saxons, Normans - are all comfortably forgotten, and Cloisterham's "inhabitants seem to suppose, with an inconsistency more strange than rare, that all its changes are behind it, and that there are no more to come."[29] In describing Miss Twinkleton's Seminary for Young Ladies, housed in what was once a convent, Dickens savagely attacks the sterile, cloistered life:

> Whether the nuns of yore, being of a submissive rather than a stiff-necked generation, habitually bent their contemplative heads to avoid collision with the beams in the low ceilings of the many chambers of their House; whether they sat in its long low windows telling their beads for their mortification, instead of making necklaces of them for their adornment; whether they were ever walled up alive in odd angles and jutting gables of the building for having some ineradicable

> leaven of busy mother Nature in them which has kept the fermenting world alive ever since; these may be matters of interest to its haunting ghosts (if any), but constitute no item in Miss Twinkleton's half-yearly accounts.[30]

In his last novels Dickens clearly recognized the extent to which repressed or perverted sexuality was associated with Evil and with death. He is unsparing here.

Mere formal education, such as might be imbibed by the young ladies under Miss Twinkleton's tender care, can tell them nothing of life's deeper mysteries. Indeed, as Dickens politely hints, the Seminary for Young Ladies prefers to turn a blind eye to such things. Miss Twinkleton herself possesses "two distinct and separate phases of being", but the nocturnal, more human, phase is never witnessed by the young ladies.[31] To the same effect, in Our Mutual Friend "Miss Peecher's simply arranged little work-box of thoughts, fitted with no gloomy and dark recesses" can comprehend nothing of the depths of Bradley Headstone's tortured sou1.[32]

In all his novels, beginning with Oliver Twist, Dickens depicts an Evil which the daylight world hardly recognizes yet which threatens to invade it with disastrous consequences. In Oliver Twist it was Fagin and Monks peering in through the window, an episode Harry Maylie is inclined to dismiss as a dream;[33] in Our Mutual Friend it is the confrontation between Riderhood and Headstone in the schoolroom. In the face of such a threat, Dickens places great weight upon the role of experience. Experience, that is, of what the

world is really like. It is a principal reason why Dickens' novels teem with such abundant "life".

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Mr Bumble apostrophizes the law as idiotic and wishes its eye opened by experience. At a more sophisticated level, Dickens' heroes acquire humanity and inner stature in the course of their experience of the world. There is a piece of doggerel expressing their situation which Dickens, with bitter irony, puts into the mouths of two of his most sponging characters (Skimpole in Bleak House, Silas Wegg in Our Mutual Friend):

> Thrown on the wide world, doom'd to wander and roam,
> Bereft of his parents, bereft of a home[34]

it goes, and its applicability to various Dickens surrogates such as Oliver Twist, David Copperfield and Pip, will be obvious. The wanderings of these characters invariably bring them to London, the city seeming to perform a virtually homoeopathic role in their spiritual and moral progress.[35] In this regard, Professor Spilka interestingly observes of Dickens that "the city's desolation, its spiritual depletion, its lack of vital purpose, are his abiding targets. ... In consequence his warmth owes much to bleakness; it links externally (as internally) with spiritual malaise, and represents a profound engagement with experience."[36]

Among the several reasons for Dickens' fascination with the English police and their exploits was his life-long interest in the strange,

the unusual and the macabre - in short, his novelist's curiosity.[37] His "nightly wanderings into strange places", as he called them, enabled him to bring to his writings many detailed and firsthand accounts of the darker, seamy side of English life, and his entrance into "Society" gave him those insights which rounded-out his already strong, almost Kierkegaardian, sense of "the solidarity of the race".[38] Moreover, several trips abroad - to America, France, Italy - seemed to confirm him in his faith in the essential value of the English way of life. Dickens henceforth considered it part of the trust imposed upon him by his (predominantly middle-class) public that he should foster and promote a wider awareness of this value, and of what threatened to destroy it.[39] By the time he came to write Bleak House, therefore, Dickens occupied a probably unique position as the spokesman and "friend of the common Englishman".[40] The result was an enormous, highly complex - yet brilliantly unified - novel, one which might almost be termed cosmic were it not so firmly rooted in the English Court of Chancery, one which provided a "testimony to future ages, how civilization and barbarism walked this boastful island together."[41]

The "experience" which Dickens presents his readers, then, is something transcending any fixed viewpoint or allegiance to a particular class or interest. Again we think of people like Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, Esther Summerson, the younger John Harmon - people living for a time outside or on the edge of society. We think too of Dickens' criminals and the policemen who pursue them. The motifs of sleuthing and the chase recur in most Dickens novels.

Thus in Bleak House the pursuit of Jo, the hapless young crossing-sweeper, leads Inspector Bucket and Mr Snagsby to the terrible slum, Tom-all-Alone's:

> When they came at last to Tom-all-Alone's, Mr Bucket stops for a moment at the corner, and takes a lighted bull's-eye from the constable on duty there, who then accompanies him with his own particular bull's-eye at his waist. Between his two conductors, Mr Snagsby passes along the middle of a villainous street, undrained, unventilated, deep in black mud and corrupt water - though the roads are dry elsewhere - and reeking with such smells and sights that he, who has lived in London all his life, can scarce believe his senses. Branching from this street and its heaps of ruins, are other streets and courts so infamous that Mr Snagsby sickens in body and mind, and feels as if he were going, every moment deeper down, into the infernal gulf.[42]

Here Bucket and Mr Snagsby come upon the brickmakers' families whom the reader has met previously at Saint Albans. The two families, it appears, have trecked to London in a futile bid to find employment.

Upon leaving, Bucket and Mr Snagsby return the way they had come:

> By the noisome ways through which they descended into that pit, they gradually emerge from it; the crowd flitting, and whistling, and skulking about them, until they come to the verge, where restoration of the bull's-eyes is made to Darby. Here, the crowd, like a concourse of imprisoned demons, turns back, yelling, and is seen no more.[43]

This entire episode seems to have influenced Kafka's description in The Trial of Joseph K.'s visit to the home of the artist Titorelli.[44] There are obvious similarities - in the nauseating details employed by both writers to describe the sludge and the stench, in the difficulty encountered in finding the required address, in the presence of hordes of curious, shrieking onlookers, and in the references to cramped living quarters. Both writers would have us infer the shameful failure of the authorities to concern themselves with these social evils - thus Kafka's slum is "almost at the diametrically opposite end of the town from where the Court held its meetings" - while at the same time giving us to understand that both institutions - Court and slum - are somehow connected, the presence of one implying the other. Where Dickens account differs from Kafka's is in its greater realism - Tom-all Alone's is a real slum in a specific part of London, and is further "realized" by its visitors from other equally specific localities - and in Dickens' use of a multiple viewpoint, Thus Dickens fluctuates between straight impressionism in his best "Household Words" manner and a presentation of Mr Snagsby's horrified reactions to what he sees, whereas everything described by Kafka bears directly upon Joseph K.'s state of mind. For instance, the precocious sexuality of the shrieking schoolgirls heightens L's self-consciousness in a manner consistent with the rest of the nightmare imagery of the novel.

We know from Forster that Dickens liked to dwell at length upon how closely the lives of everyone were inter-connected, and how "tomorrow bore so close a resemblance to nothing half so much as yesterday."[45] There was indeed something of the mystic in Dickens, who seems to have possessed that same supernormal consciousness with which the mystic gathers scattered clues in support of his experiences. This ability may bear some relation to Dickens' "infantile perspective". At any rate, he apparently obtained great satisfaction from these insights of his, despite an attitude to them which was not unambiguous. Thus in Bleak House Esther describes Richard Carstone's lack of enthusiasm for a career:

> "Then," pursued Richard, "it's monotonous, and to-day is too like yesterday, and to-morrow is too like to-day." "But I am afraid," said I, "this is an objection to all kinds of application - to life itself, except under some very uncommon circumstances."[46]

We have come full circle here from "the problem of self" with which we began. For having acquired by experience that insight into Good and Evil - including insight into their own moral failings - which is their privilege as well as their fate, the various Dickens surrogates face the responsibility, of returning to the world of the living, and applying their knowledge for the general good. (Richard Carstone, subordinating even his love for Ada Clare to his own Chancery suit, is not one of the privileged. In this sense, the principal Dickens surrogates in Bleak House are actually Esther Summerson, an outcast by reason of her obscure parentage and her

symbolic disfigurement by smallpox; and her eventual husband, surgeon Allan Woodcourt, who returns home after having been shipwrecked in the Indies.) Now Dickens well understood that to accept the responsibility of being "recalled to life" was no easy matter, for this very problem underlay his own ambiguous attitude to his work and career. Probably the most popular writer of his century, seeing himself in an almost mystical relation to his public,[47] Dickens was not one to under-value his own experience and insights. His career, that is to say, was one of those "very uncommon circumstances" to which Esther Summerson refers, scarcely one to bear testimony to the monotony of life. Yet Dickens' private life was far from being the same succession of triumphs as his public life (insofar as the two can be separated), and it seems clear that the clash between Dickens the artist and Dickens the husband/father was very strong. His "wonderful exercise ... of life and its highest sensations"[48] was thus continually at variance with his domestic responsibilities, responsibilities which his own writing showed to be life-sustaining in a far wider, more meaningful sense.

Perhaps Dickens was dramatizing something of the clash between his public image and his private responsibilities - and his growing disillusionment about the relation of the artist to his public - when he wrote this memorable passage in Our Mutual Friend:

> "It is a sensation not experienced by many mortals," said he, "to be looking into a churchyard on a wild windy night, and to feel that I no more hold a place among the living than these

> dead do, and even to know that I lie buried somewhere else, as they lie buried here. Nothing uses me to it. A spirit that was once a man could hardly feel stranger or lonelier, going unrecognised among mankind than I feel.
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> "But this is the fanciful side of the situation. It has a real side, so difficult that, though I think of it every day, I never thoroughly think it out. Now, let me determine to think it out as I walk home. I know I evade it, as many men - perhaps most men - do evade thinking their way through their greatest perplexity. I will try to pin myself to mine. Don't evade it, John Harmon; don't evade it; think it out!"[49]

Forster observed of Dickens that "his literary work was so intensely one with his nature that he is not separable from it, and the man and the method throw a singular light on each other."[50] Certainly the limbo-world of Dickens' novels - what Orwell called "a never-never land, a kind of eternity"[51] - reflects Dickens' sense of <u>not belonging</u> -. whether to family, class or station in life is less clear.

Dickens' characters tend to create their own private worlds, which then grow around them like yeast. In this way the majority of them become entrapped, although there is a sense in which they transcend their imprisonment by means of "grotesque comedy".[52] In the case of Dickens' heroes, however, the threat of imprisonment or retarded growth is always a source of imminent defeat, a source of Evil. The threat is partly one of circumstances: thus Harmon in his role of John Rokesmith "had lapsed into the condition in which he

found himself, as many a man lapses into many a condition, without perceiving the accumulative power of its separate circumstances."[53] And partly the threat is the psychological "problem of self", which now reveals itself to be the recurring problem of the multiple self. Just as Dickens himself "was very much a man of one idea, each having its turn of absolute predominance",[54] so his heroes find it no easy matter to pass from one state of mind or being to another. We have seen that Dickens' criminals, for whatever reason, are impervious to change, yet Pip's eventual acceptance of Magwitch comes only after both men have endured severe physical and mental torment; Eugene Wrayburn has to defy death before he can marry Lizzie Hexam; and even John Harmon - who has already undergone a process of loss of self - seems strangely reluctant to confess his true identity to his wife - until an unexpected confrontation with Mortimer Lightwood, his father's solicitor, forces the issue. Harmon's attachment to his play-acting seems especially relevant to Dickens' own situation.

In a slightly different vein, the scene in which Esther's guardian relinquishes her to her husband-to-be, Allan Woodcourt, provides one of those typical Dickens episodes where, all parties except one being "in the know", they artfully contrive how best to reveal their secret to the innocent one - like Wemmick's wedding to Miss Skiffins which he camouflages for Pip's benefit, and perhaps his own, as a fishing trip. Change and transition are never easily accomplished in Dickens, especially at a non-personal level:

witness the resultant rhetoric about the dust-heaps in Our Mutual Friend. But in striving to the best of their ability to remedy an imperfect situation, and in the exercise of their own right principles, "the forces for Good" acquire experience of the world, strengthen their own constancy of will and purpose, and promote their cause. "And this is the eternal law. For, Evil often stops short at itself and dies with the doer of it; but Good, never."[55]

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So there is a sense in which lack of change may be wholly good: namely, steadfastness in the cause of Good itself. A few characters, most notably Joe Gargery in Great Expectations, seem to arrive instinctively at a state of unchanging goodness. Others, like Mr and Mrs Boffin in Our Mutual Friend, have but to experience some slight check to their foibles and misplaced aspirations. (Thus Mrs Boffin has to learn the true nature of "Fashionable Society"; and the Boffins' play-acting shows their case to be a sort of parallel to that of John Harmon.) Others again, such as Pip, can only arrive at that state of single-mindedness which is the true Good by a long process of suffering and atonement. However, in every case, knowledge of the Good coincides with self-realization and the reconciling of internal and external realities. In other words, that "vague restless craving for something undefined, which nothing could satisfy",[56] that restlessness which Dickens could never exorcize from his own life, attains in the novels its fulfillment and thus its vanquishment. Even good, uncomplaining Esther Summerson had known

something of this state of restlessness when, after having gratefully received her guardian's proposal of marriage, she had observed to herself her feeling "as if something for which there was no name or distinct idea were indefinitely lost to me."[57] (Kierkegaard would have recognized this feeling as dread, "a sympathetic antipathy and an antipathetic sympathy". It is a principal source of that moral ambivalence discussed below.)

Dickens often symbolized his own internal disquietude as the sound of footsteps in the streets,[58] as in this passage from A Tale of Two Cities:

> The footsteps were incessant, and the hurry of them became more and more rapid. The corner echoed and re-echoed with the tread of feet; some, as it seemed, under the windows; some, as it seemed, in the room; some coming, some going, some breaking off, some stopping altogether; all in the distant streets, and not one within sight."[59]

These expressions of an almost mystical communion with life (a communion which receives its most powerful expression in The Mystery of Edwin Drood) are closely akin to that "fanciful side of the situation" described by John Harmon in Our Mutual Friend.[60] Fanciful, because the life depicted is illusory, a mere echo. The hollowness of death is in these footsteps. In A Tale of Two Cities they presage the nightmare of the French Revolution which threatens the lives of even innocent Englishmen drawn within its clutches. Because Dickens saw life as a circular journey, from one home to another, his novels characteristically end with his heroes and heroines comfortably

ensconced in some abode of domestic bliss, their one safe refuge from what Kafka expressively called "the world of the death-dealers".[61] Yet in placing his final emphasis upon the home and the family, Dickens was decidedly not resorting to mere escapism or condescension to his readers. If the endings of his novels sometimes fail to ring true, if they seem forced, it is because the characters have entered a reality beyond Dickens' experience, that truer reality denied him by his insatiable restlessness. Dickens' vision thus finally exceeds his grasp - he remains stranded in the limbo-world of his own making.

Not that Dickens' expressed attitude to the home was entirely unequivocal: he saw it as a potential prison as well as sanctuary. (Conversely, his attitude to prisons often led him to refer to them in terms of "home".[62]) The description of John Harmon's search for the site where he had so narrowly escaped death could very well be a microcosm of many Dickens novels:

> He tried a new direction, but made nothing of it; walls, dark doorways, flights of stairs and rooms, were too abundant. And, like most people so puzzled, he again and again described a circle, and found himself at the point from which he had begun. "This is like what I have read in narratives of escape from prison," said he, "where the little track of the fugitives in the night always seems to take the shape of the great round world, on which they wander; as if it were a secret law."[63]

What is being symbolically depicted here is virtually a longing to re-experience the mother's womb (as a comparison with the imagery of the assault on Harmon - imagery of re-birth - makes evident), and "the fugitives in the night" might almost be people like Oliver Twist and David Copperfield restlesslessly seeking mother-substitutes and their "true" home,[64] Significantly, Harmon himself, as one of Dickens' later heroes, soon abandons his search and confines his attention to present reality. To be sure, his emancipation from an obsessive past or unrealistic expectations of the future makes him less interesting than David Copperfield or Pip; but Harmon is perhaps unique among Dickens' heroes in both his aptitude for normal living and in awareness of his own identity. His frequent self-injunctions ("John Harmon, struggle for your life") confirm this emancipation even as they emphasize a temporary inability (as John Rokesmith) to fulfil his true role.[65] Marriage to Bella Wilfer, however, finally reconciles both husband and wife to the real world, and to their rightful station within it.

If Dickens saw the home as a prison, then, it was seldom in a deprecatory light. As Silas Wegg has it, "Be it ever so ghastly, all things considered there's no place like it."[66] The majority of Dickens' characters attain comparative freedom within its confines. On the other hand, the main difference between Dickens' heroes and his criminals, both typically "bereft of a home", is one of potential. His criminals lead such constrained lives that they seem incapable of love of another person, except in a destructive, possessive way. Their villainy, moreover, is often directly

attributable to their harsh upbringing. As Rose Maylie says of Oliver Twist: "But even if he has been wicked, think how young he is; think that he may never have known a mother's love, or the comforts of a home; that ill-usage and blows, or the want of bread, may have driven him to herd with men who have forced him to guilt."[67] Whereas Dickens' heroes, whose knowledge of Good and Evil is acquired from a succession of usually rather tentative relationships - indeed, relationships often as potentially destructive as those of Dickens' criminals - are characterized by their dissatisfaction with reality, a dissatisfaction also attributable to childhood deprivation. Thus David Copperfield reflects on his childhood, as seen through the eyes of experience:

> I know enough of the world now, to have almost lost the capacity of being much surprised by anything; but it is matter of some surprise to me, even now, that I can have been so easily thrown away at such an age. A child of excellent abilities, and with strong powers of observation, quick, eager, delicate, and soon hurt bodily or mentally, it seems wonderful to me that nobody should have made any sign in my behalf. But none was made; and I became, at ten years old, a little labouring hind in the service of Murdstone & Grinby.[68]

Dickens' ambivalent attitude to the home would have let him sympathize with Somerset Maugham's dictum, "It is only the artist, and maybe the criminal, who can make his own life", without, one suspects, agreeing with it. Equally, he may well have agreed with it whilst reserving judgement upon its significance.

In any case, modern psychoanalytical theory has confirmed the rightness of Dickens' emphasis upon the home, showing it to underlie "the problem of self" with which he was so concerned. In the words of David Holbrook, "the more one explores psychoanalytical theory, the more one begins to locate the focus of morality, and the cruces of our creative explorations of reality, which are in the early life of the child and its immediate environment."[69] Most importantly, a child's ability for loving and for hating are the means whereby he attains knowledge of right and wrong, Good and Evil. In terms of psychology, evil is an inward dissatisfaction "projected" upon the external world. In this sense, narcissistic characters such as Fagin and Quilp from Dickens' early novels are themselves veritable figures of Evil (not that this was ever in doubt, of course); and Edmund Wilson's observation that "though Quilp is ceaselessly tormenting his wife and browbeating the boy who works for him, ... in a sense they (still) love him"[70] is relevant here, because it indicates that Quilp's rage is not really directed against Mrs Quilp or Kit 'Tabbies as such. Later, Wilson rightly observes of Quilp and Mrs Gamp that "such figures are so much all of a piece of evil that they have almost a kind of innocence."[71]

Our knowledge of Good, on the other hand, is acquired by a process of "introjection" or identification, whereby inward satisfaction is identified with love of another being, the "object". Both processes - projection and introjection - begin in the early life of the child, in its relation with the mother. The sense of reality corresponds to a growing awareness of an inner and an outer state of

being, awareness that the world is actually independent of one's own rage or desire; and "the capacity for objective judgement and action is ... essentially a capacity for the tendencies of loving and hating for neutralizing each other."[72] Dickens' early novels such as Oliver Twist do not differentiate between subjective and objective reality - both good and bad characters being bathed in the atmosphere of a dream - and the distinction between Good and Evil is correspondingly slight.[73] This moral ambivalence is even reflected in the characters themselves. Thus after Oliver has set out for the book-stall with Mr Brownlow's five-pound note, and Mr Grimwig has wagered his head upon Oliver's non-return, Dickens observes:

> It is worthy of remark, as illustrating the importance we attach to our own judgements, and the pride with which we put forth our most rash and hasty conclusions, that, although Mr Grimwig was not by any means a bad-hearted man, and though he would have been unfeignedly sorry to see his respected friend duped and deceived, he really did most earnestly and strongly hope at that moment, that Oliver Twist might not come back.[74]

In A Tale of Two Cities, as we have seen, Dickens depicted an outsider's impression of the flow of life (symbolizing his own restlessness), and hinted it was as akin to death as the sound of the death-dealing footsteps themselves. Mr Grimwig, in contrast, instead of allowing life to flow by unimpeded, commits himself to a point of view which proves immediately compromising. But life itself is compromise, and this is the point. We sense an affinity between Mr Grimwigls impetuosity and Rogue Riderhood's "spark of life": both are sources of potential destructiveness because all life is

potentially destructive. Life, however, is also experience, a principal means of attaining knowledge of Good and Evil. The home and family finally provide a means of applying this knowledge, and of participating in the flow of life in a significant way. The family and family relationships also provide that heightened sense of reality to which Dickens, heroes all aspire. Significantly, perhaps, Mr Grimwig is one of Dickens' eccentric bachelors, like Captain Cattle in Dombey and Son.

Dickens was not unaware at this time that "everything in our lives, whether of good or evil, affects us most by contrast",[75] but he needed to further mature as an artist and as a person before his additional experience enabled him to convincingly depict Good contending with Evil in the real world. Contrast is of the essence of Great Expectations, especially the contrast between Pip's childhood innocence of the marshes and his corruption by the double-mindedness (Kierkegaard's appropriate term) of the city. In Our Mutual Friend the principal scene of action shifts from the industrial blight of the city to the unpolluted waters of the upper Thames, associated with childhood. Against such a background the life-and-death contest between Good and Evil (in which Evil finally destroys itself) attains almost a kind of poignancy. Significantly, there is a degree of sympathy in these scenes for Headstone and Riderhoodfs fate which is never extended to mere parasites like Fledgeby and Silas Wegg.

"To become capable of love", continues David Holbrook, "we must needs come to love and embrace the bad in ourselves, and to come to terms with the bad in the world and in others. And to relinquish for ever certain desires to be omnipotent, to possess an idealized perfection, and to control what cannot be controlled."[76] Here is a succinct account of Pip's "snob's progress", and a vindication, too, of John Harmonts temporary exile from a world where infection with double-mindedness is all too possible. In these later novels Dickens' psychological concern leads him to repudiate the religious notion of original sin, though the notion of guilt remains. Pip is continually motivated by a sense of guilt - at first by a false sense of his own inferiority, later by a truer guilt for the harm he has caused others - and his snobbery throughout much of the novel is only the reverse side of the same coin. (Pip's sense of inferiority stems, in the first place, from his deprivation of parental love and care in his childhood.) Harmonts "re-birth" repudiates original sin, but not a sense of guilt:

> ... the thought entered my head of turning the danger I had passed through, to the account of being for some time supposed to have disappeared mysteriously, and of proving Bella. The dread of our being forced on one another, and perpetuating the fate that seemed to have fallen on my father's riches - the fate that they should lead to nothing but evil - was strong upon the moral timidity that dates from my childhood with my poor sister.[77]

Harmon's "moral timidity" - Dickens carefully refrains from any suggestion of actual guilt - is thus a principal motivating force

behind his subsequent actions. To this must be added the fact that he has tasted death. "It is true" says Kierkegaard, "... that the more highly we value man, the more terrible death appears. ... The dread of death therefore corresponds to that of childbirth ..."[78] Conversely, Harmon' "death" and "re-birth" present him with a heightened sense of the value of life. Yet a pall of death spreads above the city in Our Mutual Friend, and it seems for a moment that Macbeth was right:

> There's nothing serious in mortality,
> All is but toys; renown and grace is dead,
> The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
> Is left this vault to brag of."[79]

Against the emptiness of the lives of Podsnap and Veneering, the deceptions of Fledgeby and the Lammles, the destructiveness of Riderhood and Headstone, Dickens re-affirms the absolute value of lifeland respect for the lives of others. In The Mystery of Edwin Drood he returns again to these themes in particular the theme of the Resurrection and the Life.

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In reacting against the far-fetched and highly ingenious "solutions" read into the unfinished Mystery of Edwin Drood by some of its commentators, Professor Collins is led to quote Orwell's observation about the mark of Dickens' writing being "unnecessary detail".[80] Which seems a pity, inasmuch as Edwin Drood is in many respects the most poetic, most organic, most highly concentrated novel Dickens

wrote. Its themes of Good and Evil, life and death, purity and corruption contending with each other for the soul of John Jasper, for Cloisterham, for England itself, are all brilliantly stated in the evocative, over-lapping descriptions of London opium den and Cloisterham cathedral of the first chapter; and after this tour de force the remainder of the novel (or what we have of it) scarcely lets up for an instant. Even Luke Honeythunder, Chairman of the Haven of Philanthropy, seems on due consideration perfectly compatible with the novel's allegorical tone and purpose. "Always something in the nature of a Boil upon the face of society", Honeythunder bodies forth the complacency/intolerance of that society. "You were to have universal concord, and were to get it by eliminating all the people who wouldn't, or conscientiously couldn't, be concordant. You were to love your brother as yourself, but after an indefinite interval of maligning him (very much as if you hated him), and calling him all manner of names."[81] One has only to think forward to after the murder, and to the vituperation and suspicion directed against Neville Landless by the citizens of Cloisterham, to realize how little "unnecessary detail" Dickens was employing in his description of Honeythunder.

Equally significant is the description of Jasper in the opening chapter as "a jaded traveller". The novel is full of references to travellers and travel. The descriptions of Cloisterham itself bear a superficial resemblance to the impersonal descriptions in some travellers' guide-book. (By way of contrast, the description at the start of Chapter VIII of Great Expectations, of the multifarious

businesses and their proprietors in the High Street, exhibits a fay livelier, more subjective point of view.) Further, the images of travel tend to fall into one of two categories: either images of local travel upon the roads of England, often with some passing historical reference, or else images of some alien culture, usually of the East. But the two types of image also frequently fuse with one another:

> Time was when travel-stained pilgrims rode in clattering parties through the city's welcome shades; time is when wayfarers, leading a gipsy life between haymaking time and harvest, and looking as if they were just made of the dust of the earth, so very dusty are they, lounge about on cool door-steps, trying to mend their unmendable shoes ... At all the more public pumps there is much cooling of bare feet, together with much bubbling and gurgling of drinking with hand to spout on the part of these Bedouins, the Cloisterham police meanwhile looking askant from their beats with suspicion, and manifest impatience that the intruders should depart from within the civic bounds, and once more fry themselves on the simmering high roads.[82]

The inference seems clear. The Cloisterham authorities – secular and religious - have failed to move with the times, and their present arrogance in the face of intrusions from the outside world are a virtual denial, in every sense, of the life-sustaining processes of Nature.

A further examination of the novel's imagery supports this conclusion. The cathedral clergy are likened to that sedate and unlively bird, the rook, which infests the cathedral tower. Mr Tope, Chief Verger, is "accustomed to be high with excursion parties". The Dean adopts "a pleasant air of patronage"[83] (he is, after all, "a modest and worthy gentleman"), but Dickens draws a parallel between him and Mr Sapsea, local auctioneer and Cloisterham mayor. Now Mr Sapsea, often mistaken for the Dean, leads as cloistered and as arrogant a life as might well be imagined: "If I have not gone to foreign countries, young man, foreign countries have come to me". His profession perfectly symbolizes Cloisterham's stagnant condition: its commerce in second-hand, outmoded values. The Sapsea business, moreover, is described in terms further hinting at decadence and sterility: "Over the doorway is a wooden effigy, about half life-size, representing Mr Sapsea's father, in a curly wig and toga, in the act of selling. The chastity of the idea ... (has) been much admired."[84]

Travel, however, implies experience. Significantly, the most lively member of the cathedral clergy, and the most recent addition to its ranks, is Canon Crisparkle:

> Mr Crisparkle, Minor Canon, fair and rosy, ... social, contented, and boy-like; Mr Crisparkle, Minor Canon, and good man, lately 'Coach' upon the chief Pagan high roads, but since promoted by a patron (grateful for a well-taught son) to his present Christian beat ...[85]

Canon Crisparkle, indeed, is the antithesis of John Jasper, and one of "the forces for Good" in Edwin Drood. The experience of the outside world which he brings to the cathedral life contains the potential means of rejuvenating that life, just as Jasper may be said to embody its potential destruction. But because Dickens recognized change at a non-personal level, especially change for the better, to be almost beyond individual human control,[86] what we actually have in the first half of Edwin Drood is no more than a setting of the stage for an eventual confrontation between Good and Evil. There is a sorting-out of characters in these early chapters, "the forces for Good" assembling in "bean-stalk country" (Mr Tartar's ship-shape rooms in London, full of souvenirs of his travels) just as they assembled by the paper-mill in Our Mutual Friend. The characters' back-and-forth movements between Cloisterham and London suggest a process of osmosis, a mutually-beneficial contact of "gritty", rigidifying London with the drowsy cathedral city of Cloisterham.

Two further key images in Edwin Drood are, in fact, images of interpenetration and of levelling-out. Together they suggest an alternative to Honeythunder's unworkable methods of social change. As usual, Dickens' nostalgia for a vanishing epoch (or perhaps merely a romantic sadness in the face of change) conflicts with his acknowledgement of the need for such change, as may be inferred from the mixture of irony and regret in his description of Jasper's "hybrid hotel" where he stays when in London:

> It is hotel, boarding-house, or lodging-house, at its visitor's option. It announces itself, in the new Railway Advertisers, as a novel enterprise, timidly beginning to spring up. It bashfully, almost apologetically, gives the traveller to understand that it does not expect him, on the good old constitutional hotel plan, to order a pint of sweet blacking for his drinking, and throw it away; but insinuates that he may have his boots blacked instead of his stomach, and maybe also have bed, breakfast, attendance, and a porter up all night, for a certain fixed charge. From these and similar premises, many true Britons in the lowest spirits deduce that the times are levelling times, except in the article of high roads, of which there will shortly be not one in England.[87]

Dickens was no socialist. What he wanted was a new social order which would more clearly reflect the hierarchy of Good and Evil, or at least a social order no longer inimical to "the forces for Good".

Edwin Drood might be described as Dickens' most Darwinian novel, though similar elements are present in most of his later works. A key image in Bleak House is that of uncompleted railway bridges,[88] whilst in the chapter entitled "Steel and Iron" Dickens observes of the two Rouncewell brothers (George, the trooper, and his brother the ironmaster): "The brothers are very like each other, sitting face to face; but a certain massive simplicity, and absence of usage in the ways of the world, is all on the trooper's side."[89] In Dickens' opinion (indicated here by the ambiguous relation of the chapter title to its contents), the struggle for survival in a

changing world probably destroys as much of value as it creates. (Dickens was no militarist either, but there is surely deliberate irony in the trooper's having been reduced to running a shooting-gallery.) So what Dickens is describing is not strictly an evolutionary process at all; it is rather a transitional process from one epoch to another, temporary disorder yielding to order. And this emerging order Dickens associates with Good.

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As in Bleak House, the fortunes of all its characters are affected by a legacy of long ago and by the seemingly interminable Chancery suit in London, and as in Great Expectations the lives of Pip and his acquaintances are constrained by all-but-forgotten actions and by the whim of a convict in far-off Australia, so in Edwin Drood it seems that past actions and unsuspected present circumstances are at work. Before his disappearance Edwin had broken off his engagement to Rosa, an engagement bequeathed to them by their parents with unfortunate results, but what had prompted this engagement in the first place? What are the family backgrounds of Edwin and of Jasper? Who was Neville and Helena's father, and is he still alive? That caused Jasper to resort to such a drastic remedy as opium for relief from his occasional "agony"? Why is the "Princess Puffer" pursuing him with such vindictiveness? These are some of the seemingly unanswerable questions which prevent us from grasping the full significance of even the fragment of Edwin Drood-that we possess. It seems clear, however, that Drood is a very tightly-structured novel

whose Christian purpose is to emphasize the absolute value of life in the face of death, Good as an absolute contrast to Evil, The innumerable dialectical elements - sun and shadow, change and stagnation, reality and illusion, Christian and pagan, self-sacrifice and self-destruction – all move to this end. One of the last passages Dickens wrote was this optimistic description of city and cathedral:

> A brilliant morning shines on the old city. Its antiquities and ruins are surpassingly beautiful with a lusty ivy gleaming in the sun, and the rich trees waving in the balmy air. Changes of glorious light from moving boughs, songs of birds, scents from gardens, woods, and fields - or, rather, from the one great garden of the whole cultivated island in its yielding time - penetrate into the Cathedral, subdue its earthy odour, and preach the Resurrection and the Life. The cold stone tombs of centuries ago grow warm; and flecks of brightness dart into the sternest marble corners of the building, fluttering there like wings.[90]

It is a passage characteristic in many ways of both Edwin Droodand its author. For whilst the notions of "the gloomy Dickens" and "the jolly Dickens" may not be incompatible, both clearly misrepresent him. I propose, instead, "the vital Diskens".

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Notes.

1. Osbert Sitwell: Dickens (1932); cited by Arnold Hauser: The Social History of Art, Vol. 4 (London, 1962), p. 116.
2. Cited by Philip Collins: Dickens and Crime (London, 1965), p. 312.
3. Bleak House, Chapter VI.
4. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Third Ch. III.
5. Ibid.
6. Cited by Colin Wilson and Pat Pitman: Encyclopaedia of Murder (London, 1964), P. 24.
7. Macbeth, II, 3, 98-9.
8. A self-delusion to which Riderhood clings to the very last. Compare his death-struggle with Bradley Headstone: Our Mutual Friend, Book the Fourth, Ch. XV.
9. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Fourth, Ch. X.
10. There is a moving and curiously proleptic exchange between Eugene and Lizzie immediately before the attack:

    He looked at her with a real sentiment of remorseful tenderness and pity. It was not strong enough to impel him to sacrifice himself and spare her, but it was a strong emotion.

    "Lizzie! I never thought before, that there was a woman in the world who could affect me so much by saying so little. But don't be hard in your construction of me. You don't know what my state of mind towards you is. You don't know how you haunt me and bewilder me. You don't know how the cursed carelessness that is over-officious in helping me at every other turning of

my life, WON'T help me here. You have struck it dead, I think, and I sometimes almost wish you had struck me dead along with it."

She had not been prepared for such passionate expressions, and they awakened some natural sparks of feminine pride and joy in her breast. To consider, wrong as he was, that he could care so much for her, and that she had the power to move him so:(Our Mutual Friend, Book the Fourth, Ch. VI.)

11. When Harmon's sister wished to marry against her father's wishes, the father had cast her out of home. Harmon, in turn, was disowned for pleading his sister's cause. Eugene Wrayburn's father had pre-determined each of his sons' careers, and wished also to choose for them their respective wives. See Our Mutual Friend, Book the First, Chapters II and XII.
12. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Ch. XIII.
13. Our Mutual Friend, Book the First, Ch. XII.
14. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Ch. I.
15. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Fourth, Ch. XV.
16. Ibid.
17. Compare Our Mutual Friend, Book the Third, Ch. III.
18. Compare Our Mutual Friend, Book the Third, Ch. VIII.
19. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Ch. I.
20. Refer to Arnold Kettle's essay on Our Mutual Friend in Gross and Pearson: Dickens and the Twentieth Century (London, 1962), p.217, for a full appraisal of this point.
21. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Third, Ch. XI.

22. Ibid.
23. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Ch. VI.
24. Edmund Wilson: "Dickens: The Two Scrooges" in The Wound and the Bow (London, 1961), p. 31.
25. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Ch. I.
26. "Mt Jasper is a dark man of some six-and-twenty, with thick, lustrous, well-arranged black hair and whiskers." (The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. II.) Compare Wilson, op. cit., p. 78.
27. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. XXIII.
28. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. III.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Third, Ch. XI.
33. Oliver Twist, Chapters XXXIV-XXXV.
34. Bleak House, Ch. XXXI. Compare Our Mutual Friend, Book the First, Ch. XV.
35. Another type of experience is that of Mr Gradgrind in Hard Times, who has to experience the confutation of his Utilitarian philosophy; the involvement of his own children reveals to him its inadequacies and renders in him a change of heart. Compare F.R. Leavis: The Great Tradition (Peregrine Books, 1962), p. 260.
36. Mark Spilka: Dickens and Kafka: a Mutual Interpretation (London, 1963), p. 85.
37. Compare Collins, op. cit., pp. 213-217.

38. A phrase of Walter Lowrie's in his introduction to Kierkegaardts The Concept of Dread (Princeton, 1944), p. xi. Lowrie claims "that S. K. is the only modern man who has so profound a sense of the solidarity of the race that original sin makes any sense to him." Compare footnote 77 below.
39. Dickens "spoke of his public as if a mystical relationship existed between him and it, as if he was in a position of trust which he must not abuse." (Hesketh Pearson: Dickens, London, 1964, p. 255.)
40. "It is sometimes forgotten that Dickens was not so much the friend of the common man as the friend of the common Englishman." G. H. Ford: "The Governor Eyre Case in England" in University of Toronto Quarterly, XVII (1948) p. 227. Cited by Collins, op. cit., p. 46.
41. Bleak House, Ch. XI.
42. Bleak House, Ch. XXII.
43. Ibid.
44. Franz Kafka: The Trial, Ch. VII. *
45. Cited by W. J. Harvey in his essay on Bleak House, published in Gross and Pearson, op. cit., p. 136.
46. Bleak House, Ch. XVII.
47. Compare footnote 39 above.
48. Compare p. 2, and footnote 2, above.

    * Suprisingly, Spilka does not seem to have noticed the direct similarities of the two scenes. Cf. Spilka, op, cit., pp. 205-6.

49. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Ch. XIII.

50. Cited by Collins, op. cit., p. 171.
51. George Orwell: "Charles Dickens" in Collected Essays (London, 1961), p. 81.
52. Professor Spilka's term. Compare Spilka, op. cit., pp. 61-119.
53. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Ch. XIV.
54. John Forster, cited by Collins, op. cit., p. 171,
55. Our Mutual Friend, Book the First, Ch IX.
56. Dickens quoted in Hesketh Pearson, op. cit., p. 167.
57. Bleak House, Ch. XLIV.
58. An observation I owe to Hesketh Pearson, op. cit., pp. 167-168.
59. A Tale of Two Cities, Ch. VI.
60. Compare p. 190 and footnote 49, above.
61. Cited by Professor Roy Pascal in a lecture entitled "Dickens and Kafka" given at Melbourne University on July 15th, 1966.
62. Compare Collins, op. cit., pp. 50-51, and Edmund Wilson, op. cit., p. 49.
63. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Ch. XIII.
64. On David Copperfield, compare Spilka, op. cit., pp. 121-195.
65. On suppression of personality by Dickens' characters, compare Spilka, p. 217. Usually this suppression of personality is permanent.
66. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Third, Ch. VII.
67. Oliver Twist, Ch. XXX.
68. David Copperfield, Ch. XI.
69. David Holbrook: The Quest For Love (London, 1964), p. 16.
70. Edmund Wilson, op. cit., p. 56.
71. Edmund Wilson, p. 73.

72. Compare Holbrook, op. cit., p. 68.
73. Compare John Bayley's essay on Oliver Twist published in Gross and Pearson, op. cit., pp. 50-51.
74. Oliver Twist, Ch. XIV.
75. The Old Curiosity Shop quoted in M. and M. Hardwick: The Charles Dickens Companion (London, 1965), p. 181.
76. Holbrook, op. cit., p. 72.
77. Our Mutual Friend, Book the Second, Oh. XIII. Holbrook attributes "true guilt" to "the cannibalistic attack on the mother's breast" by the infant, and quotes Winnicott: "This is the only true guilt, since implanted guilt is false to the self." Clearly this "implanted guilt" is repudiated by Harmon's "rebirth"; but, equally clearly, whilst "original sin" or "true guilt" is associated with the process of generation, it is not actually transmitted from one generation to the next. See Holbrook, pp. 79-80.
78. W. H. Auden (ed.): The Living Thoughts of Kierkegaard (Bloomington, 1963), p. 176.
79. Macbeth, II, 3, 100-103.
80. See Collins, op. cit., p. 290.
81. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. VI.
82. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. XIX.
83. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. II.
84. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. IV.
85. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. II.
86. Compare the role of the Manette family in A Tale of Two Cities and compare p. 21 above.

87. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. XXIII.

88. Bleak House, Ch. LV.

89. Bleak House, Ch. LXIII.

90. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Ch. XXIII.

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