The Melodramatic Representation of the Child in the Text and in Illustration

Charles Dickens's View of Education and of Children

By

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Declaration

I declare that no portion of this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification at this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Abstract

This thesis seeks to investigate the use and impact of melodrama in Dickens's portrayal of children and education by analysing both the text and accompanying illustrations of *Oliver Twist* (1837), *Hard Times* (1854) and *Great Expectations* (1861). Dickens's use of melodrama has been well studied, yet the importance of melodrama when discussing Dickens's views about children's life and their education has been largely overlooked. Some studies have ignored the effectiveness of illustration in discussing Dickens's attempt to rouse sympathy towards children. This thesis focuses on the representation of children and education through both the melodramatic themes of the texts and the melodramatic vision of the illustrations. By focusing on the reasons for the tragic burden of the child protagonists, this thesis will examine how Dickens highlights two social forces affecting society and children: poverty and education. Therefore, this thesis explores the methods Dickens used to prove his point of view and to popularise the need for educational reform. By investigating the melodramatic portrayal of children in words and pictures melodrama in texts and in illustrations, this thesis seeks to demonstrate that Dickens's fictional works point to the fact that the social harms done are man- made. The novels urge readers not to look away but to show concern for all children and treat them humanely.

The thesis argues that Dickens was effective in using his creative imagination to promote social awareness and the need for Christian charity towards children. Dickens's three novels are comments on the social and economic condition of Victorian poverty, children and education, and together with the illustrations which accompanied the three texts, tell the story of suffering children.

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Introduction

This thesis explores the ways in which Charles Dickens's novels responded to the New Poor Law of 1834 and the way in which children were negatively affected by its far-reaching implications. Dickens's novels seek to reshape English legal and social structure to be more generous and protective towards children and to establish effective educational institutions and fairer social organisation. The aim of this research is to explore what Dickens is passionate about, how this is manifest in his work, and the strategies he employs to engage his readers. Three novels and selected illustrations will be examined in the following chapters. In particular, this thesis focuses on the significance of melodrama in the three selected texts and illustrations in terms of characterisations and mode, and the way in which this was a pivotal strategy in securing the attention of his audience.

The novels of Charles Dickens were well-received by readers due to the impact of his stories which establish an idea or a message that proved to be popular. In several ways, then, the reader opens his heart to learn a lesson. The novels of Dickens raised awareness of the importance charity, education, and culture towards those who were less fortunate. Dickens wanted his books to be read by the public as well as by reformers. Their cultural value, information and plots are designed for a variety of readers, including children and families. Dickens affected his reader and his society deeply. His novel, *A Christmas Carol,*1843 has become one of the most famous works associated with Christmas and its festive and friendly spirit. This story helped make Christmas a special time in Victorian Britain and later on as well. It has established a strong condemnation of selfishness and instituted the importance of kindness. It brought an everlasting feeling of a white, blissful, and cheerful Christmas. *A Christmas Carol* is focussed on a businessman Ebenezer Scrooge, a greedy old man who possessed a dark spirit of Christmas. Four ghosts had taught him to become kind and to love the poor. This novel caused Victorians to make Christmas a special occasion for the poor; and it enabled the rich to celebrate it in a more modern and socialised concept.

Like any planned joyful activities Christmas also became a special time when neighbours and friends can cook turkeys, everyday 'singing a Christmas Carol', and encouraging the habit of giving as long as they tend to express to people the best way to keep up the good spirit of camaraderie towards all humanity.[1]

Philip Collins describes how Charles Dickens was very popular in the Victorian era and how his novels have a special cultural effect. Collins focuses on the reader's relation to the novels and his response to specific scenes. *A Christmas Carol*, according to Collins, 'was the means of lighting up hundreds of kind fires at Christmas time; caused a wonderful outpouring of Christmas good-feeling; of Christmas punch-brewing; an awful slaughter of Christmas turkeys, and roasting and basting of Christmas beef'.[2] Since this novel takes its events on the eve of Christmas, encourages the Victorians to know the value of Christmas.

Charles Dickens chose to present children as the victims of suffering and neglect. Typically, he turned his sympathy to his portrayal of children as well as their values, feelings and development. In all his fiction Dickens relies on a combination of literary modes including melodrama and this is the mode I will be focusing on in this thesis. While in his novels Dickens explores the pressure of poverty and education on children by setting his novels in Britain, his narrative style brought him international recognition. Dickens's commentary on social problems is one of his greatest achievements, and one of the functions of melodrama in the novels is to express the harsh reality of poverty and distress, and to give a sense of sentiment and tragic atmosphere to move readers. The remarkable impression of passions which Dickens's novels leave is partly suggested by the emotionally-charged language and narratives of melodrama and qualities which were found in the contemporary theatre. Satire, Gothic tropes and humour in his novels alongside melodrama are used to make fun and mock specific aspects of everyday life and to highlight the problems children

[1]Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1843) p.44.
[2]Philip Collins (ed). *Charles Dickens: The Critical Heritage*. Taylor & Francis Group, 1996. *ProQuest E-book Central*, 365-366
https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ljmu/detail.action?docID=168688.

encountered. It was Dickens's intention to evoke a strong emotional appeal in his reader through the depiction of childhood endangered.

Melodrama helped to make the child protagonists sympathetic to a wide readership; the more pitiable the children in Dickens's fictional stories, the more convincing are the novels' calls for urgent social reform. Melodrama is an influential element in raising the voices of suffering children. This study focuses on three novels to explore the melodramatic representation of children: *Oliver Twist, Great Expectations* and *Hard Times*. These novels have been chosen because they indicate three stages that the writer went through in his literary career in terms of his representation of childhood poverty, education and emotional distress. These novels also highlight the development of the writer's vision in presenting his views about children and education in different social classes.

Oliver Twist (1837) was Dickens's second novel. In many ways, it can be seen as combining Dickens's social activism with his melodramatic technique through which he sought to make sense of the moral and material chaos of Victorian England. It makes extensive use of symbolism to satirize the New Poor Law and especially melodrama that was widely employed by campaigners against its treatment of the poor. Melodramatic portrayals are combined with realistic detail to show the impact of poverty and utilitarian principles on children. Written as a monthly serialisation, *Oliver Twist* is Dickens's indictment of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and the 'workhouse test' whereby relief was only granted to the destitute if they agreed to enter the workhouse and which authorised the indenture of young children into apprenticeships to tradesmen. At the same time, the novel juxtaposed and contrasted the exploitation of children under the poor law regime with the parallel exploitation of juveniles within the criminal underworld. In fact, Dickens wanted to make a point about children's suffering and poverty, which he did by bringing out the significance of childhood and the threat of them being drawn into a life of crime. This is an argument that runs through each of the three novels examined here.

Hard Times (1854) portrays the busy life of Coketown which is an imaginary version of Preston. The novel weaves together the stories of middle-class and working-class children and its objective was to satirise the way utilitarianism got inside both families and the classroom. It was written

at a time when children experienced a pitiful life because their education was restricted to economically useful knowledge. Children and their education were intended to meet the needs of industry. At the same time, the novel's depiction of utilitarian Coketown contrasts with the alternative setting of the circus with its imaginative colourful world and the promise of children's healthy development there. In *Hard Times*, the description of the plight of families and workers in the utilitarian environment of a factory town is shown as dark and in gloomy contrast to the fantasy and satisfying world of the circus and its members.

Great Expectations (1861) explores childhood in relation to three classes. The first class is Pip from a working-class home, the second is the upper-middle classes, featuring a privileged girl, Estella, and the third class is that of the criminal underclass, embodied by Magwitch. These representations of class milieu include parent and guardian figures, such as Miss Havisham, Mr. and Mrs Joe and their absence, in the case of Magwitch. The main characters all lost their childhoods because their parents were not able to make their children happy. Magwitch was the lowest of the low and represented as a dangerous criminal who turned out to be kind and paid for Pip's education. Magwitch worked hard in Australia to bequeath his money to Pip. But for Pip, Magwitch was the criminal he was in earlier life. This draws on theme of morals but with an underlying irony. On the one hand, Magwitch's position as a symbolic father to Pip and Miss Havisham's role as a symbolic mother, both show generosity to Pip and Estella. On the other hand, they are guilty of committing immoral acts as a means of achieving importance or revenge. This is an idea that is repeatedly used by Dickens to underline the fact that the beliefs of adults can affect their children's morality. At home child characters are in a world of cold-heartedness. *Great Expectations* is a melodramatic view in which the households are not warm and comfortable, offering children a compassion-filled and peaceful atmosphere. Although the conventions of mystery, horror, death, imprisonment, and escape can be seen across all three novels, the gothic melodrama in *Great Expectations* is perhaps more obvious than in the earlier novels.

I have selected these three novels because they illustrate the lives of children in the Victorian era and Dickens's particular efforts at social

reform. In addition, each one of these novels has a special quality in terms of its characterisation, specifically linked to class and education, such as the protagonist's socio-economic background. Also, these novels show the diversity of threat under which children found themselves. Hence, I am going to focus on these three novels in which Dickens constructs the importance of childhood and education and critically analyse Dickens's use of melodrama as a strategy of communicating his attempts to improve the plight of children. Although they were written at different times in the writer's life, their interest in children and education was distinctive. Each one seeks to prove that economic change does not only exacerbate the problems of poverty, but it leads to children being humiliated and made to suffer. From my analysis of *Oliver Twist, Hard Times* and *Great Expectations*, it is evident that children are still victims despite the attempts to reform their condition. Dickens's depiction appears to be quite an intricate representation of poor children's lives, who found it difficult to improve their life. Those fictional children were chosen by Dickens to show what can happen to poor children if they receive less attention than other children. In fact, it is noticeable that *Great Expectations* starts earlier in Christmas Eve 1812, the same year when Dickens was born. The novel starts when Pip was a young boy, until Pip grew to be a young man in 1840.

In addition to the poor, another group of wretched children were the criminal classes, which of course, included the poor. In contrast to *Oliver Twist, Hard Times* is concerned less with the physical brutality inflicted upon children than with emotional and psychological violence. The children of the family central to the plot (the Gradgrinds) are materially very comfortable and do not suffer physical punishment at the hand of their parents. However, the harsh conditions and poverty of the mill workers are prominent themes of the novel. While Dickens expressed his revulsion of the reality of poverty in *Oliver Twist*, in *Hard Times* he shows his contempt for the influence of the Utilitarian approach to education in England with its emphasis on fact-based learning which would produce a literate, disciplined workforce useful to industrialisation. Utilitarianism focused on the relationship between the person and his behaviour and on the best outcomes for the benefit of society regardless of the moral fulfilment of the person concerned. Utilitarianism ignores a sense of the value of happiness, so that any deeds can be accepted once they contribute to raise

the income. This concept will be discussed further in the chapter on *Hard Times*. In contrast to *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations* has a protagonist who is not a pauper but from the common working people. The text does not contain reference to the workhouse, that was dominant in *Oliver Twist*. *Great Expectations* is an indication of social inequality due to social status.

The impact of industrialisation reached almost every aspect of daily life, including significantly raising average incomes. However, although it was a time of the British Empire and of great wealth, the capitalist system was widening the gap between the rich and the poor.[3] There was rampant exploitation of industrial children; factory hands were at the mercy of the industrial bourgeoisie. Pauper children were available for a cheap price and were used ubiquitously in dangerous jobs like chimney sweeping. The child worker was also employed in coal-mines, factories, or left to roam the streets because in Victorian Society children of the poor needed to resort to lower labours to escape their impoverishment. As Gordon Roderick and Michael Stephens point out, the 'widespread poverty and apathy and indifference to educational needs were common among the populace'.[4] Thus, poor children and their education were not a primary concern for Victorians and furthermore there was little sense of sentimentality associated with representations of many poor children who lived and worked in streets.

The New Poor Law (1834) in its treatment of pauper children was to make a system where children would be kept separate from their families and other pauper adults, while providing basic education in reading and writing and training in employment. However, separation from their family and strict discipline meant that workhouses did not offer a 'homely' environment for pauper children and orphans and there was little attention to their emotional needs. Nadja Durbach argues that workhouses 'offered only the most basic amenities' for paupers.[5] To critics of the workhouse regime, pauper children were victims of punitive legislation. Many appealed to

[3]Kellow Chesney, *The Victorian Underworld* (England: Penguin, 1970), p.11.
[4]Gordon Roderick and Michael Stephens, *Where Did We Go Wrong? Industrial Performance, Education and the Economy in Victorian Britain* (London: Falmer, 1981), p. 7.
[5]Nadja Durbach, 'Roast Beef, the New Poor Law, and the British Nation, 1834–63', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 52, no. 4, 2013, p.963.

philanthropists to save children from the mean-spiritedness of the New Poor Law and its guardians.

As a novelist Dickens used his pen to portray the cries of suffering of the victims in a better way than any philanthropist could do. He wished others to see the child as he himself saw him, victimized and innocent. According to Arthur A. Adrian, his 'sympathy always focused on the child' and this is echoed in his recurrent pleas for children.[6] Dickens and his contemporaries placed so much importance on childhood and education because there was a continual cruelty shown to children in Victorian society which helped to perpetuate the inequities in society.

Dickens shared similar ideas to social activists and moral reformers in supporting children against social problems by trying to address the conditions of children and their education. In fact, the neglected child became a pervasive trope during this era. Dickens's awareness of social perils was acquired initially when his father was imprisoned, and he found himself working to support his family. His work as a reporter in parliament was a crucial experience that drove his involvement in public and social issues. In addition, he visited destitute areas where children lived and were schooled such as a parochial district in Bethnal Green, the Yorkshire schools, Industrial schools and the Norwood School.[7] Dickens developed a strong conscience and an ability to bond with victims who had suffered social injustice. As a result, he knew that the social and educational systems were not effective or helpful for children because their life chances were significantly influenced by conditions of poverty.

Childhood and education became the focus of Dickens's concern. In his work he powerfully demonstrates the crisis that the educational institutions faced and their grim picture of inefficiency. In fact, Dickens's views of childhood developed against the doctrine of utilitarianism and what he saw as the inhumanity of some industrialists, and his intention was to outline the dystopia to which this lead. Patrick

[6]Arthur Adrian, 'Dickens and Inverted Parenthood', *Dickensian*, vol. 67, no.363 (1971), p.9.
[7]Charles Dickens, The Quiet Poor, *Household Words*, 9,(1854),pp.201-206, and John Sutherland, 'Discovering Literature: Romantics and Victorian', British Library, *Nicholas Nickleby* and the Yorkshire schools, 2014<https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/nicholas-nickleby-and-the-yorkshire-schools>, and Charles Dickens, London Pauper Children, *Household Words* 31, 1850, 1(23), pgs.549-552.

Brantlinger argues that Dickens 'detested utilitarianism' and 'hated the New Poor Law'.[8] Victorian children of the middle and working classes may never have experienced hunger or destitution, but Dickens shows how they were also let down by being provided with an inadequate education that neglected their feelings and imagination. Such education was destructive to the innocence of children. Propertied Victorians —like Gradgrind in *Hard Times*—were interested in what might be termed as 'take everything on political economy' which was in fact irrational and hard.[9] According to this view, like factory owners, parents were encouraged to turn their children into obedient workers.

Dickens's views imply some religious sentiments and the importance of Christian morality and charitable works.[10] For Dickens, joyless materialism was threatening the rich inner life of imagination and beauty. In other words, without compassion and humanity, the social gap would widen with every form of immorality and cruelty. As a result, people who had sensitive souls and caring natures also helped out at local charities for education and childhood care. Dickens's aims were to increase demands for the symbolic friendly hands who would defend and protect children and people who would open their hearts with kindness to innocent children. Dickens used an emotional appeal which expresses his views of the need for urgent reform. In this way, Dickens effectively gives an insight into the sources of both misery and happiness in childhood. Using melodrama as an emotional framework, Dickens seeks to motivate loving kindness across all classes of society. He faithfully renders the sentimentality of the situation. Dickens's views are powerful as lessons that even the worst conditions can be changed to be satisfactory for all child victims. More empathy and educational efforts were demanded to reduce children's illiteracy, pauperism and to control their exploitation.

Characters who care for others and are responsive to those who are in need are represented as influential and sympathetic in Dickens's novels. For example, relationships between characters draw attention to the

[8]Patrick Brantlinger, 'How Oliver Twist Learned to Read, and What He Read', in Patrick Scott and Pauline Fletcher (eds), *Culture and Education in Victorian England* (London: Bucknell UP, 1990), pp.72-66.
[9]Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854), p.18.
[10]Charles Dickens, 'The Power of Small Beginnings', *Household Words*, Jul 20, 1(17), (1850), pp.407-408.

importance of noble passion, empathy and charity which lead some characters to perform acts of virtue despite their socially marginal or conventionally undesirable backgrounds. Addressing the relationship between children and adults, Dickens reminds the reader of the possibility of child protection. This makes child adoption and education part of the process of rescue. It is melodramatic sentimentality and sensitive charity towards children, but not the law, which enables children to survive. The narrative theme then expresses that the more sensitive the adults, the more children survive and thrive. The religious quality and morality they possess exemplifies the growing sentimentality towards children, advocated by philanthropists like Dickens. In his views of childhood, Dickens focuses on the power of moral education that it is a reform grounded in Christianity.[11]

The importance of childhood as a time of play and imagination can be seen from the sentimentality of the earlier Romantic period. It is true that enlightened ideas about childhood and education are present here in Dickens just as they are present in Romanticism. By including sentiment in his novels, Dickens moved away from the puritanical approach that considered children as born with Original Sin, who must therefore have their activity controlled. At the same time Dickens's interest in children's education is seen in his striking views on kindness in education that emphasise feelings and experience rather than exclusively discipline. This is shown in the views of the educationalist John Locke who viewed children as 'a blank' canvas.[12] According to Locke, the child is born free of experiences and thus his/her blank is gradually filled with a range of beliefs, education, skills and emotion because much of these acquired from his supervisions and the environment in which he/she lived, nurtured and educated. This view leads to careful use of appropriate educations which build confidence and teach useful skills and social morals. This includes domestic and formal education. Also, it leads parents, schools and educators to protect children from being victimized unfairly. Throughout their education children develop their personality and expand their experiences. So, for Dickens and Locke, the essential element in raising children is the emotional nurture given them

[11]Joyce Kloc McClure, 'Seeing through the Fog: Love and Injustice in 'Bleak House', *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2003, pp. 23–44; and Robert H. Bremner, 'Child Welfare in Fiction and Fact', *Child welfare* 74.1 (1995): 19-31. *ProQuest.*

[12]Galia Benziman, *Narratives of Child Neglect in Romantic and Victorian Culture* (London: MacMillan, 2012), p. 34.

by their parents. From this perspective it is then possible to identify that every child is innocent, and any inadequate nurturance or disorder behaviour is the fault of parents and society. As his child characters are responsive to a sympathy of guidance than rough discipline, Dickens's highlighting of such situations through melodrama was effective in drawing public attention to poverty.

Melodrama in the theatre and novels emerged from the popular voices from the time of the French Revolution and English industrialism and found its place in the popular culture of nineteenth-century England. Melodrama has its origins in non-vocal mimic performance, and it was favoured as a form of drama in ancient Greece and became popular in revolutionary France before becoming an important form of theatre entertainment in England in the early nineteenth century. The popularity of melodrama in the late eighteenth century and the beginning of nineteenth century relates to public theatre which incorporated plays featuring humour, tragedy and romance. It was a cultural feature of everyday life in Victorian society. Melodrama is increasingly used in the later novels and illustrations to shape Victorian culture and to reflect Victorian victims and villains. The popularity of melodramatic novels emerged from the staging of plays as Victorian writers engaged the people by staging public readings of their novels, and, as in the case of Dickens, serialised novels in weekly or monthly magazines and periodicals. The reading of novels, therefore, was not originally conceived as a private activity, but very much a public one and, as will be discussed, very much suited to melodrama.[13]

Sally Ledger argues that in its 'bodiliness' mode, melodrama was important to the anti-Poor Law movement.[14] Ledger means that melodrama attempted to show the perils of the New Poor Law through physical models

[13]Carolyn Williams, *The Cambridge Companion to English Melodrama* (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), George J. Worth, *Dickensian Melodrama: A Reading of the Novels* (USA: Kansas UP, 1978), J. Hillis, Miller, '*Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels*(USA, Harvard UP, 1958),p.60,Catherine Waters Catherine, *Dickens and the Politics of the Family* (Cambridge: CUP,1997), Juliet John, *Dickens's villains: Melodrama, Character, Popular Culture*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001),Sally Ledger, *Dickens and The Popular Radical Imagination* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), Sally Ledger. "'Dont' Be So Melodramatic!': Dickens and the Affective Mode." *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, vol. 4, no. 4, 2007, pp. 19, Valerie Sanders. "'Joyful Convulsions': Dickens's Comings and Goings." *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, vol. 14, no. 14, 2012, pp. 19, Claire Wood, ''Oliver Twist: A Patchwork of Genres''– The Electronic British Library(2014).https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/oliver-.

[14]Sally Ledger, *Dickens and The Popular Radical Imagination* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), p.85.

of understanding. Its impact is emphasized, and it is presented in terms of interpretation organised with pictures of symbolic meanings, such as the workhouse in *Oliver Twist* is related to the poor, thus poverty has a symbolic significance which is represented melodramatically by the figures of starved children.

Dickens's work promotes awareness of the dangers involved with industrialisation. Under capitalism, the social differences between rich and poor were exacerbated as well as an associated increase in hypocrisy and brutality. This context lead to many social problems such as prostitution, vagrancy and petty crime, particularly theft.[15] For champions of the poor and oppressed, melodrama provided the best means of highlighting their plight, precisely because it appealed to—and indeed demand sympathy from—the audience or readers. Melodrama used social context as a means of communication with the reader.

Melodrama is a genre of literature that focuses on the emotional impact of the story. Carolyn Williams noted that melodrama was 'both a genre or a mode' and is, indeed, an appropriate comment for the work of Charles Dickens, particularly his representation of children.[16] Dickens's melodrama was so appealing because of its direct reflection of the social environment from the perspective of children and because of Dickens's use of unexpected good and unexpected evil which is expressed by a melodramatic plot and characters. Then, through sentimentality and empathy, and through the imagination of the situation of the suffering child, Dickens speaks to the heart of his reader. In fact, within the realistic and imaginative depiction of writing, melodrama becomes increasingly important to invite the reader to imagine what some children as well as poor people had to endure their plight.

Dickens's melodrama embraces impressionistic forms of imagery as evidence that society is savage and that humanity is either dead or decayed. In these novels he is not primarily concerned with ideal models of childhood, but stories of children on the margins of that industrial world. His and his reader's relationship develops through domestic scenes and

[15]Heather Shore, *London's Criminal Underworld's, c.1720-c.1930 A Social and Cultural History* (UK: MacMillan, 2015), pp.113-115.
[16]Carolyn Williams, *The Cambridge Companion to English Melodrama* (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), p.4.

passionate renderings of situations which were popular in Dickens's and Victorian melodrama. He created melodramatic scenes in which he combined the modest use of caricature sometimes with violent death in response to children disciplined at the hands of adults.

In his novels, Dickens combines imaginative pathos, realism and humour. Though there are lessons in Dickens's works focusing on poverty and abandoned and ragged children, he does not convey these through dull description and mundane events. Instead he relies on the power of imagination and hyperbole to go beyond realism. His attempts at attracting the reader's attention and appealing to their feelings are also means of calling them to action. Dickens's melodrama is a sentimental appeal for reform. Dickens's melodrama has laughter and tears, characters and tones, settings and horror, social messages and emotional tales of what Mathew Buckley argues is a 'mixed form'.[17] This meant that melodramatic mode of writing implied the use of another mode, such as satire or irony, or as a form of contrast with another mode, such as the sterility and corruption of utilitarian philosophy, which Dickens highlights in *Oliver Twist* and *Hard Times*, and the heart-breaking class division in *Great Expectations*.

In discussing whether the novels of Dickens can be best described as melodramatic, George J. Worth argues that it is more meaningful to consider specific melodramatic devices and to categorise these devices as 'melodramatic situations', 'melodramatic speech', 'melodramatic scenes', melodramatic narrative and melodramatic commentary.[18] It is these specific devices which I will refer to, and draw on in the subsequent sections. For example, melodramatic situations in Dickens occur when a crucial ingredient of melodrama, good and evil characters, face each other in a continuing struggle. These characters are often simply drawn, but they can verbally articulate their passionate feelings. For example, in *Oliver Twist*, the situation of Nancy, Fagin and Sikes. Dickens wants to show Nancy's fear when she sees Oliver in danger because of Fagin and Sikes. This presents itself in a melodramatic situation which

[17]Mathew Buckley, 'Early English Melodrama' in Carolyn Williams (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to English Melodrama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2018), p. 13.
[18]George J. Worth, *Dickensian Melodrama: A Reading of the Novels* (USA: Kansas UP, 1978) p. 16.

ended in tragedy when Sikes killed her. She does feel concern for Oliver which leads her to confront Fagin and Sikes. Nancy 'cried', 'screamed', 'speaking very loud' 'looking pale and breathless', and when Fagin threatened Oliver with the club, Nancy took it from Fagin's hand and warned Fagin to put a mark on him or to leave the boy. Nancy 'stamped her foot violently on the floor as she vented this threat', and her face was pale with 'a passion of rage'. 'He's a thief, a liar, a devil, all that's bad, from this night forth; isn't that enough for the old wretch without blows'.[19]

Melodramatic speech is direct, often unsubtle and, in Dickens's prose, the implicit feelings of the characters is conveyed by their explicit expressions. The chosen words and manner often used by a character echoe their social class. In *Oliver Twist*, Nancy shows her purpose in her sympathetic words when she speaks to Rose: 'dear, sweet, angel lady'.[20] It is possible to feel the effect of the words. Melodramatic scenes refer to intense confrontations between two highly articulate, emotional characters, each sustaining the power of rational thought as expressed through language, as when Oliver flees from the workhouse.

Melodramatic narrative occurs when a character's thoughts are represented by their experiences. The language of expressing the perceptions of a character in this mode is emotive. By blending melodrama, romance and realism, Dickens reveals the experiences of his child characters by presenting their environment and their emotional responses in rich detail. Melodramatic commentary refers to the involvement of the narrator external to the novel and the techniques employed to heighten the emotions and interest of the reader. Dickens's novels contain many such comments which include the communication of moral values. This can be seen when Fagin speaks to Oliver about the Newgate Calendar. Dickens writes that Oliver, 'who had never known the love of friends or kindred, it might come to him now, when desolate and deserted, he stood alone in the midst of wickedness and guilt'.[21]

The identification of these various aspects of melodramatic technique will be useful in discussing how Dickens portrays life in Victorian England 'not necessarily to reflect reality but to improve that reality', in the

[19]Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, vol:1 261-267.
[20]Ibid., vol:3, 65.
[21]Ibid., vol:2, p.6.

words of Juliet John.[22] Dickens, the moralist and social reformer, could easily find his voice in melodrama. The power of Dickens's melodrama owes itself to its expression of deep humanity and to a world of moral absolutes when right is confronted by wrong and kindness struggles against greed. It seems here that there is an emphasis on the human condition in a manner full of theatricality and pathos by exaggerating that which occurs in every shameless society. Melodrama is a direct tool for speaking to the heart of the reader and imparting a social message clearly. It implies representative description and emotional effects. It is a democratic and accessible art form. It speaks to the readers in a clear, direct, urgent tone.

I have chosen to analyse illustrations alongside the novels because illustration helps to provide the reader access to the imaginative world of the story and is particularly effective in representing the situation of children. I want to show how Dickens's views on children are worked out in illustrative design. I will examine how his illustrators drew on and embellished the melodramatic symbols and emblems in his writing in order to further appeal for sympathy for children in their depictions. Illustration was an important way to influence the readers' sense of compassion and to appeal against poverty and mistreatment of children.

To open readers' hearts, illustration participates actively in rendering children in sentimental domestic scenes from Victorian society, as well as around its streets and chimneys. Illustrations call for the emotional power of justice. Leslie Williams argues that the role of illustration depends on its affective mode of portraying an issue. This meant the use of illustration often created all sorts of appeal. There is emotion embedded and it offers a description of a moment involving individuals but also with implications for wider society. Its visual technique is, as Williams writes, 'a comment on powerful storytelling'.[23] Indeed, this happens when the illustrator draws his images in relation to the context of the relevant themes. Its central depiction is atmospheric, and it complements and heightens the effective storytelling.

[22]Juliet John, *Dickens's villains: Melodrama, Character, Popular Culture*, (UK: Oxford UP, 2001), p. 19.
[23]Leslie Williams, 'Visualising Victorian Schooling: Art as Document and Propaganda', in Patrick Scott and Pauline Fletcher(eds), *Culture and Education in Victorian England* (London and Toronto: Bucknell UP, 1990), p.144.

There is a close connection between Dickens's popularity and the illustrations in his texts. The illustrations served to popularise his views on childhood and education, and to extend his readership. His use of melodrama in fiction and non-fiction works as well as his incorporation of illustrations contributed to and reinforced his view on children. Such fictions, which had been serialised in periodicals, gradually won the readers' interest. According to Jane R. Cohen, 'Dickens's illustrations, informative as well as imaginative at best, not only expanded the world of his readers, but the number of his readers, especially among the uneducated'.[24] This is evidence of their important roles in entertaining, novel reading, delivering lessons, dealing with educationalists and local and working class readers, enhancing appeal. These include the use of melodrama to tell a story of children suffering extreme conditions. Thus, to convey urgent messages they used principles of 'informative' storylines and 'imaginative' protagonists set in a society recognisable to the Victorian audience. They reveal a melodramatic parallel of a society that can no longer help its weak and vulnerable. Making the impact of neglect on children visible and making the visible picture as melodramatic representation, illustration encourages charitable works and persuades kind Victorians to be more aware and generous towards them. The illustrations in Dickens's work gave lots of helpful symbols which can hold the attention of any reader; that is, this kind of impact characterises its ability to construct literature and culture from a series of symbolic and informative representations. Sometimes the illustrations become more than a way of expressing important information in the form of representational social frames in which the reader provides details, seeing them as they appear as visual forms with inherent sympathy.

There are similarities and parallels between the work of different illustrators, especially between original and later illustrations. Malcolm Andrews believes that the first group of illustrations established the 'iconography' of Dickens's novels that helped to bring Dickens's story and its time into focus for the Victorian' s eye.[25]

[24]Jane Rabb Cohen, *Charles Dickens and His Original Illustrators* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1980), p.9.
[25]Malcolm Andrews, 'Illustrations', in David Pareissien (ed), *A companion to Charles Dickens* (Oxford: Blackwell,2008) pp.97-125.

The interpretations of the texts not only draw on melodrama but also different forms of representation, including realism, fairytale, satire, romance, and caricature. His illustrators were careful to consider Dickens's themes and style and they clearly draw on all these artistic modes. Early artists who had a close relationship with Dickens and who took the work of monthly parts of Dickens were George Cruikshank, Robert Seymour and Hablot Knight Browne whose signature was Phiz. John Harvey believes it is likely that these illustrators were influenced by Dickens's satirical style, thus, while Cruikshank chose to use 'caricatures' in place of realistic imagery, Phiz was tied to the 'metamorphoses'.[26] Phiz's style of 'metamorphoses' is a form of satirical depiction, which can change shape into odd and hypocritical forms. While Phiz relied on the body language to provide illustration for details of characters and settings background, Phiz used his way to deliver the message which was not close to that of Dickens. This is because of the way in which he portrayed the facial features and the fashion which are quite different to the way in which Dickens illustrated characters and their clothes. They were not accurately depicted. It would appear that the unrealistic or overtuned style, which is always so prominent in Phiz's work is not associated with Dickens's novels. He particularly used an oversized head, skinny body, long nose, enormous eyes and his style often includes humour. This causes an ironic effect, unlike caricature, and contrast with the cartoonish work of Cruikshank. Cruikshank's style offers a cartoon character and creates an extremely sympathetic interpretation. The illustrations by Cruikshank and Phiz often featured children, especially children who were suffering and poor, but always used opposing techniques, such as caricature and romantic or metamorphoses, two melodramatic ways that prompt emotion in the reader. Such techniques were common among Victorians and were used to produce wit, satire or romantic satire to draw the attention of Victorian bourgeoisie and the middle classes. However, their portrayals of gloomy Victorian society are not similar in their use of the comic and gothic tropes of melodrama. As Audrey Jaffe points out, 'there are parallels between the illustrations [of Cruikshank and Phiz] and

[26]John Harvey, *Victorian Novelists and Their Illustrators*, (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1970), pp.2-3.

the situation to which they refer'.[27] For Jaffe, these skilful illustrations depicted London and its urban environment to remind the readers of recognizable places, districts and names which were present in their everyday life, suggest the world in which they lived and the surroundings they may have passed by without noticing them. These kinds of parallels can provide the potential of reality, where powerful emotions are revealed in familiar descriptions. Depictions of Cruikshank and Phiz, which are exaggerated in form and theme, are based on making strong remarks that make the reader imagine, feel and see. In this research, I will select a number of illustrations to show how they were influenced by the works of Dickens.

Victorian readers were clearly impressed by the effective manner of illustrations, which emerged in conjunction with the development of the novel in the nineteenth century. They often accompanied socially critical novels to create a focus on the subject which the novelist wanted to be highlighted, such as class division, childhood, or industrialisation. Sarah Hamilton Phelps traces the importance of illustrations to the Victorians as an emotional tool offering them clarification of the details they wanted, because, she writes, their 'visual images' were tied to 'humour and sentiment' in literature.[28]

Illustration became important as part of the production of novels in the Victorian era because they were used both to convey and to interpret layers of allegory. They actively interact with the image of children as well as social perils. They suggest a necessary relationship between society and efforts at social reform. This prompted social investigation because illustration helps to bring deep feelings into focus; for example, the features of grim or sad faces are used to demonstrate that a child is suffering physical or emotional abuse. It makes it possible for readers to understand what sorts of suffering these children endured. Illustration is the explicit depiction of the child's feelings. It contains expressions of feelings and possible behaviours. It is a representation of the information, content and

[27]Audrey Jaffe 'Spectacular Sympathy: Visualise and Ideology in Dickens's 'A Christmas Carol' in Carol T. Christ and John O. Jordan (ed), *Victorian Literature and the Victorian Visual Imagination*, (USA: California UP,1995), p.237.
[28]Sarah Hamilton Phelps. 'The Hartley Collection of Victorian Illustration', *Boston Museum Bulletin*, vol. 70, no. 360, 1972, pp. 52–67, www.jstor.org/stable/4171568 [accessed 10 Sept. 2020].

feelings which needed to be highlighted in order for Dickens to best convey his major themes and social messages about the state of childhood and education in the aftermath of the New Poor Law.

Chapter 1

1.1 *Oliver Twist* (1837)

In *Oliver Twist* (1837) Charles Dickens explained the impact of the New Poor Law on poor children and especially orphans. It tells a story about childhood, first in relation to the gloomy workhouse regime and its apprenticeship system for pauper children, where the 'parish boy', Oliver, begins his life. Dickens's critique of the Poor Laws draws on Christian philanthropy and humanity. He had a moral vision which is shaped by symbolism of melodrama and satirical humour, so, the melodrama here is perhaps satiric in showing the plight of the children and the inhuman behaviours to which they were subject. The early sections of the novel use satire to send up the hypocrisy and cruelty of the parish guardians and poor law officials, combined with melodrama and pathos to convey the plight of the children they abuse and neglect. The inhumanity of the workhouse regime is then thrown into relief when Oliver moves to London and is lured into the criminal underworld. While the novel continues to use melodramatic contrast and sentiment to depict Oliver's innocence, it moves from satire to comedy and the gothic to portray the mischievous young pickpockets and the wily criminals who corrupt and exploit them. The later sections of the novel move towards sentiment and pathos as Oliver is rescued from the Fagin's and Sikes's clutches by the benevolent Brownlows and the penitent fallen woman, Nancy.

Melodrama has a clear function in *Oliver Twist*. It is used in different ways to evoke emotional reactions. There are melodramatic details about characters, settings and themes. For example, Oliver is put into situations that makes the reader sympathetic to him. In *Oliver Twist*, the real problem is the New Poor Law and Oliver's melodramatic and satirical story can tell what Dickens meant to be told about the perils of his society. When everything is not going right with Oliver, it is because of the limited resources of relief. Oliver is just an example and there is no exemption for any orphan child and the worst conditions are for the children who are born outside wedlock.

Dickens does reflect an accurate and realistic view of the social problems but despite the horrors, this is made engaging to the reader through various strategies including melodrama. As Sharon Aronofsky Weltman points out *Oliver Twist* was 'bound up in melodrama'.[29] Dickens uses melodrama in *Oliver Twist* to offer his readers a thrilling story filled with the melodramatic element which they liked. This helps Dickens to reveal the wrong methods of treating Oliver. The emotional impact of the scenes were designed to entertain the reader and satisfy his or her interest. In fact, Dickens's goal is to create an effective novel. *The Times* recorded the corrupt results of the New Poor Law. The inefficient educational system was complicated by the pauper children who lived in the workhouse. In London at St. Pancras where three hundred children lived, 'the education of the pauper children was almost totally neglected, and they were let out on hire to work in a cotton factory and other employments'.[30]

Melodrama is central to the Dickens's call for useful training, moral discipline and adequate nutrition. According to Lydia Murdoch, *Oliver Twist* is one of several 'philanthropic melodramas' which was written 'to prove the need for the child rescue'.[31] The term melodrama is used here with an emotional function. It is associated with religious and sympathetic morals and it makes *Oliver Twist* engage with the need for social reform and for society to be more kind towards pauper-children and encourage generous benefactors to support the children who really do need support because they are being deprived by social welfare structures. Richard L. Stein argues that *Oliver Twist* is 'a nightmarish melodrama that enacts some of the deepest fears and uncertain ties of the age'.[32] According to Stein, this novel besides its illustrative interpretation by Cruikshank, comes to represent the cruelty of the world, and, in this light, Oliver and the workhouse children serve as victims of destitution and mistreatment. In melodramatic terms, *Oliver Twist* drives readers to expect the worst.

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[29]Sharon Aronofsky Weltman, 'Melodrama and the Modern Musical' in Carolyn Williams (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to English Melodrama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP,2018), p.274.

[30]*The Times*, 26 October 1842, p. 3.

[31]Lydia Murdoch, *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, And Contested Citizenship in London* (USA: Rutgers UP, 2007), p.17.

[32]Richard L. Stein, *Victoria's Year: English Literature and Culture*, 1837-1838 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987), p. 136.

Several melodramatic scenes are important to understanding Dickens's use of melodrama to improve the plight of children in this novel. I shall discuss the workhouse scene, the scene in the Sowerberry's house, the Brownlow's house scene and Fagin's accommodation scene in this chapter; all of which highlight a sympathy for Oliver. Two themes are significant to note in Oliver's upbringing: food and sympathy. This discussion considers the primary text of *Oliver Twist* first, then addresses illustrations of the text drawn by Cruikshank in 1837-1839. His illustrations accompanied the monthly publication of the text. Also, in this section one of Charles Pear's illustration which features Fagin (1912) will interpreted. Pear's illustration of Fagin offers an interesting continuation of the visual representation of the character, drawing closely on Cruikshank's earlier work.

I have chosen George Cruikshank's illustration because I find that Cruikshank is quite capable in putting Dickens's ideas about poverty and childhood at the centre of his representations. His illustrations are always accompanied by titles or notes of explanation. Each illustration makes it apparent that the help of family and adults is extremely important for children. He has portrayed important information in precise detail such as Oliver's starvation and beating. Moreover, the depiction of the workhouse scene when Oliver is asking for more food from the lady and the cook's response is so characteristic of the workhouse officials. This depiction is based largely on their facial and body features that had taken from the display of Victorian culture from outside the novel. Cruikshank observes those characters closely before he turns them into illustrations. Michael Steig argues that the significance of this kind of illustration is 'to create feelings of pity and horror, as well as comedy in the two absurdly horrified adults'.[33] So, first of all, Cruikshank made a clear insight into the content of the life in the workhouse. Furthermore, it is important to note that what Cruikshank has presented is effective, satirical, and emotional since he draws deeply and specifically to explore the history of time and shows what life really was like, for the paupers. He did so because he understood the lives of the poor and rich. Cruikshank was a well-known illustrator and

[33]Michael Steig, 'George Cruikshank and the Grotesque: A Psychodynamic Approach', *The Princeton University Library Chronicle*, vol. 35, no. 1/2, 1973, P. 207

cartoonist for creating drawings which provided a focus on characters and scenes that offered commentary on the social and economic life in England. In addition to the work of the novel and book illustrations, he had a particular interest in satirising both royal family and the politics of the French revolution. He started his career early because of his family business of the print factory. This played a significant role part in both his life and work. This opportunity helped him to explore how time is experienced and how many things are controlled by culture, including law, society and politics.

A key to Dickens's human and moral inspiration, *Oliver Twist* successfully reflects how things appear hard to for children; he 'elevate[s] the pauper in our sympathies at the cost of the struggling labourer' as noted by a contemporary reviewer.[34] This work encouraged 'curious philanthropy' and kind gentlemen and ladies to be generous to poor children.[35] Dickens shows that compassion could challenge the belief held by Victorians that pauper and orphan children are born poor. One of the roles that compassionate mercy plays in a society is to help maintain sincerity and moralistic sentiment and to prevent social hypocrisy. At the same time, while Dickens wanted to explore the matter of charities and their role in childhood and education, Dickens satirised in melodrama a group of merciless people who are responsible for providing parish charity, such as Bumble. He was the church official and he was the workhouse beadle, but he was not generous toward Oliver. On the other hand, in Oliver's life, there is the compassionate charitable gentleman, Mr. Brownlow. The private individual's charity benefited Oliver more than the government's charitable institution. In a melodramatic depiction of parish charity and philanthropy, Dickens underlines Mr. Brownlow's tenderness towards Oliver, and how Oliver was neglected and cruelly treated by his masters in the workhouse and beyond. Also, there are more examples of honest philanthropists who saw children as important and were interested in taking care of others in need, such as Mrs. Maylie who adopted Rose and took care of Oliver, and Rose who pitied Oliver and Nancy.

[34]*The Literary Examiner*, 1837.

[35]Ibid.

Oliver Twist was written before the Education Act of 1870 that proposed compulsory education for children. Before that time, the rich were educated by private tutors or at public school (for men) while there existed some voluntary schools and schools run by churches for the less wealthy. The subject of formal education in *Oliver Twist* is largely absent, as it would have been from the lives of pauper children. However, it is evident from *Oliver Twist* that Dickens associated the lack of education with the brutality and barbarity of the crime-infested streets of London and personified in the characters of Sikes and Fagin.

Oliver Twist offers a critique on the ways of treating children and presented examples of the worst institutions alongside sympathetic guardians. At the same time, the novel's depiction of the diet in the workhouse draws on harsh metaphors and alludes to untrue expressions to provoke controversy. Ian Miller claims that *Oliver Twist* is 'an exaggerated rendering' of the destitute poor.[36] However, *The Times* published various articles focused on the 'horrors' of the workhouses and the problems of 'want' which were caused by the New Poor Law. A report in *The Times* from 1838 notes that one of the children at Eye workhouse ate 'a mouse' because 'he was hungry', another poor person ate 'the poultice'.[37]

In England, The New Poor Law 1834 was passed to amend the Old Poor Law (1601). However, it was ineffective and not generous. Julie-Marie Strange notes that the New Poor Law was driven by lack of sympathy for poor children and families for all its social 'harshness and stigma' that made very tough time for the pauper that was living and dying in poor.[38] The new law existed first to decrease the responsibilities of the government towards the poor by imposing a system of indoor relief and workhouse admission and then to cope with the conditions of industrialisation. This law depended on letting the paupers support themselves by doing more work and earning more money, instead of being offered aid and external supplement as the earliest forms of poor laws before the nineteenth century.

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[36]Ian Miller, 'Feeding in the Workhouse: The Institutional and Ideology Function of Food in Britain', ca 1834-70', *Journal of British Studies* 52(october2013): p.940.
[37]*The Times,* 16 June 1838, p. 6.
[38]Julie-Marie Strange, *Death, Grief and poverty in Britain, 1870-1914*(Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), p.7; A. N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (London: Arrow Books,2003), p. 28; Samantha A. Shave, *Pauper policies: Poor law practice in England*, 1780-1850(Manchester: Manchester UP,2017), pp. 10-88.

There was the Old Poor Law which was founded in the Elizabethan age (1601), which was associated with charity and taxes collected from the rich. This law was focused on the circumstantial relief, but it helped the poor with money, clothes while the disabled poor or sick people could be admitted in alms houses or hospitals. It can be seen that the old law for the poor and the new law for the poor could not help diminishing the growth of social problems that accompanied poverty at all times. It can be argued that the benefits offered by The New Poor Law for educational and social demands was very limited or inadequate. This poor law ignored how poverty was strong enough to cause criminality and immoral behaviours. As Kellow Chesney argues, scenes of 'exploited' children became familiar, and crime and prostitution were rife because most Victorians relied heavily on the New Poor Law doctrine as part of pauper relief, while its way to the reform is opposing the improvement relief's standards.[39] For the pauper themselves, the poor laws had caused misery and suffering. This was a system that gave no opportunities to children who were born in poverty, and gave social and economic improvements only through the institution of workhouse.

Dickens therefore uses the context of the New Poor Law in *Oliver Twist*, to reveal its terrible results in workhouses from apprenticeship and from poverty. In an article, 'The Frozen-out Poor Law' in 1861, Dickens expresses how the New Poor Law system 'makes workhouses discouragements to poverty, and goals encouragements to crime'.[40] According to Mathew Buckley, *Oliver Twist* comes when Britain was 'at the height of economic agony' bringing chaos as hostility between the two local communities, the indigent and rich.[41] In terms of Dickens's social rebellion, Patrick Brantlinger argues that 'he [Dickens] hated the New Poor Law'.[42] For this reason, his works sought to offer a new perspective on art, using them to shed a new light on the Victorian home, children, education and domestic culture in the nineteenth century.

[39]Kellow Chesney, *The Victorian Underworld* (England: Penguin, 1970), pp.10-15.
[40]Dickens, 'The Frozen Out Poor', *All the Year Round,* 4 (95), (1861), pp. 446-449.
[41]Mathew Buckley, 'Early English Melodrama' in Carolyn Williams (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to English Melodrama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2018),27.
[42]Patrick Brantlinger, 'How Oliver Twist Learned to Read, and What He Read', in Patrick Scott and Pauline Fletcher (eds), *Culture and Education in Victorian England* (London: Bucknell UP, 1990), pp.72-66.

The workhouse was established for the purpose of helping paupers that had economic and social problems however it was designed to decrease the number of those seeking refuge as it involved strict rules like those of a prison instead of domestic social institution. Many workhouses were badly directed. In his 'How Cruel was the Victorian Poor Law?', David Roberts argued that much of the cruel work of the workhouse was done because of 'the heartless' nature of 'this odious Law'.[43] According to the British scholars and historians, workhouses were overcrowded with the poor meaning that it could not serve them well. Local authorities failed to provide a fair employment system and a cultural life. Its relief services discouraged entrants, and gave the basics of morality training. Help was not aimed at giving only enough food and shelter, but it was hoped to give a reasonable labour to the pauper. Moreover, the authorities established 'the workhouse test', a type of poor labour which sought to keep the able-bodied work indoor for no wages. As H.M. Boot has shown in an article which discusses the Old and New poor Law, that 'the chance that the guardians might offer indoor or workhouse-tested relief rather than outdoor relief was itself enough to discourage many of the poor from seeking help'.[44]

This was no house despite its name; it was more likely to be a shelter made for a permanent pauper employment, in many cases there were no restrictions on the hours of child or adult labour; all were forced to work. Although the New Poor Law fed the poor children for free in the workhouse, Dickens attacks the dietary methods of the workhouses and its officials' brutal practices. In *Oliver Twist*, such workhouses roughly provided the children a small portion of food which did not support the child's body to grow strong and fight against sickness. For example, in chapter two of *Oliver Twist*, the old lady Mrs. Mann has welcomed the infant Oliver as the first baby on the farm. She was appointed by the government to foster children who were born in poverty. She was supposed to look after the orphaned babies, but she was so much greedy and used their fees for herself. Dickens has mentioned that what food system allowed

[43]David Roberts, 'How Cruel Was the Victorian Poor Law?' *The Historical Journal*, vol.6, no.1, 1963, pp.97-107.

[44]H. M Boot, Unemployment and Poor Law Relief in Manchester, 1850-50. Social History, vol:15, no.2, 1990, pp. 217–228, www.jstor.org/stable/4285843 [accessed 28-may2020].

was just ‘a piece of bread and butter’.[45] This was ‘the smallest possible portion of the weakest possible food’ and Oliver’s ineffective nutrition affects his body and puts him in risk of hunger.[46]Oliver’s workhouse in social and Christian terms is one of the very best ways help to convince the reader to see the weakness of this charitable work. So the effect of the workhouse is opposed to its purposes, having been designed to give help and peace. Here it descends into being ‘inefficient as well as brutal’ and its methods were ‘a reduced diet’ and ‘inefficient’ education, Kellow Chesney argues.[47]

Although Miller shows how the provision of food was essential for paupers and how the food which was supplied by the workhouse was considered to be enough ‘to sustain life’ and ‘to avoid starvation’.[48] This has been challenged by Marjorie Cruikshank, K.D.M. Snell and Jeanine Duckworth. According to Cruikshank ‘workhouse children were often weak, ill fed and prone to infection’.[49] For Snell, the workhouse showed as ‘a feared and shameful institution that deterred many people from applying for relief’.[50] More than this, in a study of the relationship between poverty and crime, Duckworth has pointed out that poor children had nothing positive from the workhouse except the ‘bitter memories’, the ‘frequent beatings and unrelenting hard work with only a bowel of gruel at the end of it’.[51]

In addition to the highlighting of inadequate food in the workhouse, another strategy to catch the reader’s attention is that of contrasting character descriptions in melodramatic scenes. Dickens portrayed the workhouse-cooking master as ‘a fat, healthy man’ while the orphan Oliver as ‘small’ and ‘little bag of bones’.[52]

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[45]Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (London: Richard Bentley, 1838), Vol:1, p.20.
[46]Ibid., p. 10.
[47]Kellow Chesney, *The Victorian Underworld* (England: Penguin, 1970), p.19.
[48]Ian Miller, ‘Feeding in the Workhouse: The Institutional and Ideology Function of Food in Britain’, p.942.
[49]Marjorie Cruikshank, *Children and Industry: Children Health and Welfare in North-West Textile Towns During the Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester UP,1981), p.14.
[50]K.D.M. Snell, *Parish and Belonging: Community, Identity and Welfare in England and Wales, 1700-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), p. 211.
[51]Jeanine Duckworth, *Fagin’s Children: Criminal Children in Victorian England* (London: Hambledon, 2002), p.19.
[52]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 1, pp.63-64.

Despite the lack of food, the workhouse did attempt to maintain morals in contrast to the increase of crimes and its causes in street life. The inhumane form of the workhouse did not detract from the principles of morals, religions and education. Graeme White argues that 'many paupers probably ate better inside a workhouse than they had done outside'.[53] This is one of Dickens's melodramatic contrasts in *Oliver Twist*. Dickens complained about the workhouse for being 'the wretched home' linked to 'hunger' and 'ill-usage'.[54] Then he moved to other abuses of children exploitation, most specifically, criminal gangs.

The emphasis on poverty and apprenticeship conveyed by a sentimental story played a significant role to provoke an appeal to the authority of the Poor Laws. As *Oliver Twist*'s narrative proceeds, there is great pathos in Dickens' portrayal of the child victim. Physical abuse is extreme and indeed the reader is left wondering how a child could survive the brutality which Oliver suffers, but in this era, children were acted upon, lacked agency, and their ill-treatment was commonplace.

Poverty is shown everywhere in *Oliver Twist.* It is shown through the representation of people and buildings. When Oliver as apprentice undertaker goes with his master Sowerberry to fetch the body of a woman who has died of starvation, he sees an appalling view of derelict slum houses 'decay' and 'filthy'.[55] It is not safe for any child to see such miserable place where ' there was no fire in the room; but a man was crouching mechanically over an empty stove…There were some ragged children in another corner and in a small recess opposite the door there lay upon the ground something covered with an old blanket. Oliver shuddered…the boy felt that it was a corpse'.[56] Later in the text, Dickens again highlights the physical decay of the accommodation of the poor, when he portrays Oliver at Fagin's house, 'the walls and ceiling of the room were perfectly black with age and dirt'.[57] Too much destitution and lack of

[53]Graeme White et al., *In and Out of the Workhouse: The Coming of the New Poor Law to Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire*. EARO for the workers' Educational Association Eastern District, 1978, p.41.
[54]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 1, pp. 19-20.
[55]Ibid., 82.
[56]Ibid., 83.
[57]Ibid., 131.

sanitary conditions led to problems and offered a situation where the pauper suffers to live.

Dickens highlights several sad descriptions of heart-rending cases of the miserable life of the paupers, living in extreme dirt and unpleasant conditions in the Bethnal Green area of London which was considered one of the London's poorest slums. Here the filth of the streets intensified the misery of the 'Quiet Poor' crowded into rooms and cellars into an image of destitute poverty and hardships. As Dickens describes in his essay,

> The whole place is completely destitute of sewerage; one sewer has been made in a street which forms part of its boundary; it has its share in that, but nothing more. The houses all stand over cesspools; and, before the windows, filth, dead cats, and putrid matter of all sorts run down or stagnate in the open gutters. How do people, who are quiet people, live in such a place'.[58]

In this context poverty is so extreme that the people lack the means to live a clean life. This article, which was featured in *Household Words* in 1854, was published almost twenty years after the publication of Oliver *Twist* in 1837, where Dickens continued to describe the conditions of the poor. From reading *Oliver Twist* and the article in *Household Words*, it is evident that the conditions of the poor had not improved during these twenty years.

In contrast, the disagreeable scene of London was featured earlier, before both *Oliver Twist* and his description in his *Household Words* article, 'Quiet Poor' in 1854. Dickens wrote to John Foster telling him about the blacking factory in which he had worked as a child himself;

> It was a crazy, tumble-down old house, abutting of course on the river, and literally overrun with rats. its wainscoted rooms , and its rotten floors and staircase , and the old grey swarming down in the cellars , and the sound of their squeaking and scuffling coming up the stairs at all times , and the dirt and decay of the place , rise up visibly before me, as if were there again.[59]

Dickens wanted to describe England as decaying instead of as attractive. This image of decaying England was made accessible for readers through Dickens's melodrama.

[58]Dickens, The *Quiet Poor*, 1854,P.201.
[59]John Forster, *Dickens*, Vol: 2, 1973, p.36.

As noted earlier, an important factor in addressing poverty during this period was the workhouse. Dickens accepted the Victorian system of the workhouse, but he disliked the bad treatment of the individuals. Dickens introduces Oliver, the novel's child protagonist, by emphasising that he is lucky to be born in a workhouse; 'had been surrounded by careful grandmothers, anxious aunts, experienced nurses, and doctors of profound wisdom, he would most inevitably and indubitably have been killed in no time'.[60] It is ironic, because it is usually the family who help the mother giving birth, but as there is no family or any relatives except the dying mother, Oliver is surrounded by a professional surgeon and a drunken nurse trying to help him breathe.

Oliver is already at odds with the adult world by his survival. He is not considered as a blessing, instead, Dickens wrote in *Oliver Twist*, Oliver is 'a new burden' on the parish survivors.[61] Similarly, according to Watkins, Victorian children were born with a sense of guilt and so the concept of a 'burden' is not alien to the reader. It appears that those children who were born poor were not seen by many to deserve essential welfare.[62]

Accordingly, the opening paragraph and the impersonal reference to Oliver as 'the item of mortality' suggests disrespect.[63] It means more than Oliver as the most unwelcomed child. Calling him 'item' makes him an object rather than a human or a person. In fact, this description of Oliver as an 'item' makes him a mixed representation of death and life. Struggling to survive, Oliver has an unknown fate. It was as if Dickens wanted to lead the reader to explore the mystery surrounding this child 'whose name is prefixed to the head of this [first] chapter [of the novel]'.[64] Dickens uses a number of narrative strategies in *Oliver Twist* to engage the sympathy of the reader. *Oliver Twist* is narrated by two different forms of narration. The first- person narrator and the omniscient third- person narrator because that is Dickens's primary motivation for discovering the policy of the New Poor Law for those who born in poverty which is important to enable the reader to better understand his response towards the

[60]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 1, p.3.
[61]Ibid., p. 3.
[62]Gwen Watkins, *Dickens in Search of Himself – Recurrent Themes and Characters in the work of Charles Dickens* (London: MacMillan, 1987), p.120.
[63]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol*:* 1, p.1.
[64]Ibid.

society and to offer some possible benefits for paupers. The first- person narrative is used to create the novel and help give context for the novel and its themes, especially the one about children's poverty, children's neglect and children's education. Here the narrator is Oliver himself. It helps Oliver to tell his story. The omniscient third- person narrator is used to let the reader understands what types the characters are represented as an observer saying, for example,

> although I am not disposed to maintain that being born in a workhouse is in itself the most fortunate and enviable circumstances that can possibly befall a human being, I do mean to say that in this particular instance, it was the best thing for Oliver Twist that could possibly have occurred'.[65]

According to this example, this point of view is to make the workhouse scene prominent to the reader. This means that no matter how much misery the workhouse includes, it was inevitable for Oliver because he is an orphan and draws heavily on satire. Hence, both points of view increase the thrills and urgency in Oliver's story; one helps to represent Oliver's true feelings, while the other helps to dig deeper into characters, plot and emotions.

Another approach used by Dickens to engage readers was the structure of traditional fairy tale. The most touching melodrama required elements from fairy tales. This resulted in making the story of an orphan palatable and recognisable. Galia Benziman defined the social forces which Dickens warned about from its threatening impact on childhood, such as 'socio-political dilemmas' [66]and in such cases leading to 'melodramatic plot devices and fairy tale solutions' which are featured in his work. Here, by using the word 'dilemmas' Benziman indicated how Dickens handles unfulfilled social institutions through two conventional solutions of both melodrama and fairy tales. For example, many poor children, typical of Dickens's time, sought children's institutions and workhouses to save their lives for there was nobody who would even look at them. However, when

[65]Ibid., p. 2.
[66]Galia Benziman, 'Who Stole the Child', in Peter Merchant and Catherine Waters(eds) *Dickens and the Imagined Child* (Surrey: Ashgate,2015), p. 27.

the workhouse failed in its function, it became the worst of the worst and served nothing for paupers. This could be characterised as a 'dilemma' and is a common thread for Oliver and other children in the novel. In addition, in her analysis, Benziman finds that Dickens wrote with an element of comedy and fantasy in order to avoid the political dissatisfaction of readers. She notes also that in his fiction, there is always 'Cinderella's Fairy Godmother'.[67] It means that rather than criticising the social problems surrounding the poor, Dickens allows fantasy to solve the problems, treating his social regrets and his claim to correct the child's social condition. Emotions are the major feature of Dickens's melodrama. For Dickens, godmother is a model guide to what is children need in the seeking of help because the need for the poor characters to support themselves is made by sentimental coincidence and passion person emerged at the time of the dangers that cause children harm. The poor child's character is supported when he met the fairy god mother when there is no hope of help. Dickens had alighted upon fairy godmother as a person of sentiments and compassion who understands deprived children and pities their plight. From the novel, there are examples for those characters who are clearly much more concerned about Oliver and held responsible for safety. In fact, Nancy is far more interested in caring for Oliver than in tending to put her life in dangerous circumstances. She did something good for Oliver which cost her life. Nancy did not pretend to be the good mother as she would continue to do until her death. Dickens describes those scenes in melodramatic terms to great sympathetic effect. Melodrama inspires sentimentality through many emotional moments. In the opening chapter of *Oliver Twist*, the moment of Oliver's birth, when his mother kisses him, is one of the most sympathetic melodramatic moments which Dickens shows. This kiss, according to Benziman, is the 'single affectionate moment' in his life which Oliver gained from his parent.[68] Later the effect of her blessing touches Oliver in a manner which make him feels and behave as a beloved son.[69]

Melodrama in *Oliver Twist* drew on the topic of food through the 'fairy godmother' character. There is a significant contrast in the improper types of nutrition offered to Oliver in the workhouse and in the

[67]Ibid., 32.
[68]Galia Benziman, 'Who Stole the Child', 2015, p.33.
[69]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol:1, p.184.

house of the undertaker Mr. and Mrs. Sowerberry, and on the other hand, by the gorgeous food served with love by Mr. Brownlow, Mrs. Maylie and Fagin. In each house, Oliver is influenced by the sympathetic love of the adult alongside adequate nutrition. Dickens's reform focuses on the kindness of the supervision. He discouraged types of behaviour that depress children and thus reduced some forms of anger. A child, like the character Oliver, should not have to worry food supplies and life skills or about anything else other than the pleasure of feeling loved and made to feel secure by adults. Oliver cannot be well-skilled if he receives poor food. In this case, *Oliver Twist* suggests a link between workhouse and social mobility. It considers the ways in which society and social institutions drove children to complexities that inscribed the identity of the gentlemen in *Oliver Twist*'s workhouse and these will be considered with reference to the Victorian middle classes. It is important to notice here that this novel shows bitter anger towards the society who becomes rude by paying no respect or sympathy to any person who was from the lower class or even to those who born from middle class such as Dickens and Oliver. They are examples like those of many other children who are treated badly because of the law. Just like Dickens's father being in debt, and the illegitimate marriage of Oliver's, their problems were made worse by having no support from their parents and none from the government either. As a result, Dickens raises questions about the benefit of all children of every class. The irony is that Oliver belongs to middle class but is living in the poorest areas, deprived with no support from government and family.

Dickens highlights the problem of expecting children to work hard whilst being underfed in his depiction of the workhouse children picking oakum. Picking oakum was common work for both poor adults and children. It is crucial to bear in mind the nature and the function of such work. It is a routine hard work and has no rewards or creativity and does not develop knowledge. The solid ingredients of the ropes require a high level of skill and strength from the maker which does not suit children. It is tough work which is associated with death if the worker lacks food and rest. In return for little food, Oliver and other workhouse children worked as hard as adults in picking oakum. A newspaper article which was published in *The Times* in 1838 reported how the New Poor Law forced the poor children to

work, asking 'do they prefer theft to starvation?'.[70] Similarly, Philip Collins's *Dickens and Crime*, provides an interesting examples of a poor child who said that because of the food he preferred prison to the workhouse. The child said because 'they gives us four pounds of oakum to pick in the [work] house in the day and it scrubs our fingers and we can't do it, and in the prison we only get two pounds and far better vittles'.[71]

Oliver ran from the workhouse to the house of Sowerberrys to whom he was to be apprenticed as an undertaker. The Sowerberrys can be seen as another example of the social system in which Oliver is abused. He joined the business as apprentice undertaker. But Mr. Sowerberry did not care about Oliver instead he left him at the hands of the worse model of apprentices such as Noah and Charlotte. Inside of this house the wrongs that are happening to Oliver led to the problem to turn him into one of street children. So Oliver's situation had no improvement because he is placed under the care of a hard superintendent and ineffectual way to gain money. There, however Oliver is obedient and thankful. The Sowerberrys have not learned to practice parenthood and themselves fear poverty. Thus, within this house, Oliver had little knowledge of his apprenticeship and gained many lessons in immorality. However, such apprenticeship was common, it had no practical means of relief. For this family, Oliver was a'dreadful' vagrant.[72]

The apprentice master would train the child and pay for his work; the amount of knowledge and skills gained by the child depended on the moral and responsible nature of the master. According to Benziman, in the mid-nineteenth century, dangerous work such as that performed by chimneysweepers and coalminers was preserved for 'the youngest and slimmest children' was still popular with 'indigent parents and brutal masters'.[73] The horrible action that was practiced towards children through the apprenticeship system that added intensity to the plight of Oliver. Dickens attempts to show how Oliver, as an orphan suffers because of the apprenticeship policy is continued to harm children. Poor children and specifically workhouse children became subjects for the heartless and

[70]Thomas Rogers, 'New Poor Law', *The Times*, 15 March 1838, p. 6.

[71]Philp Collins, *Dickens and Crime* (London: Macmillan, 1964), p. 74.
[72]Ibid., p.100.
[73]Galia Benziman, 'Who Stole the Child', p.29.

greedy apprentice system. The employers consider that workhouse children deserve the miserable conditions they get and all what they need is to be employed by others whatever the condition was. It was Mr. Gamfield the chimney sweeper who was one of those dangerous apprentice masters because he used to apprentice poor children for too much hard work which caused death to many of them. Oliver could have easily suffered this fate.

Though the novel described the lives of children that points to a real and specific time and setting, it was Oliver the orphan child who played the protagonist and is shown as a sympathetic figure. *Oliver Twist* is sentimental as a part of melodrama to propose Dickens's ideas about the outcomes of the poverty. While melodrama is related to a genre associated with theatre and literature or a form of writing, sentimentality is produced alongside of melodrama. Sentimentality daws the attention to social concern in society. In melodrama there is sentimental sadness, sentimental grief and sentimental pain. Sentimentality is very influential in invoking in the reader feelings of pity by describing the causes of grief by placing the victim in certain condition. For example, the melodramatic feature in the scene of Oliver and Dick which uses sentimentality plays a major role to show the plight of poor and the innocence of children. Oliver is a child with a purified heart; his heart is full of love and pity for his friend Dick. He could not walk to London without seeing him, so he went to the workhouse. Here in chapter seven Dickens writes; 'Oliver felt glad to see him before he went…they had been beaten, and starved, and shut up together, many and many a time...Dick I am running away…How pale you are! I heard the doctor tell them I was dying' replied the child with a faint smile' ...kiss me said the child, climbing up the low gate, and flinging his little arms around Oliver's neck. Good bye, dear! God Bless you!'.[74]Oliver never forgot this blessing, and in chapter fifteen, he remembered his friend Dick and 'how much he would give for only one look at poor little Dick'.[75] More generally the novel shows surprising emotional depth as Benziman claims, this novel 'involve[s] a genuine interest in that child's sense of being treated unjustly, with insufficient attention, care or sympathy'.[76] Also, this is essentially an

[74]Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol:1, p.114-115.
[75]Ibid., p.245.
[76]Galia Benziman, *Narratives of Child Neglect in Romantic and Victorian Culture* (London: Macmillan, 2012), p.144.

aspect of melodrama in novel writing because as Rohan McWilliam points out, melodrama which is used by Dickens was popular and treated social issues and 'blamed problems on the failings of bad individuals'.[77]

In the scene of apprenticeship in *Oliver Twist*, Dickens shows his interest in one of the most emotionally touching melodramatic scenes. The fact is Oliver needs to be sent out of the workhouse, as a punishment in the name of apprenticeship. The plan of Bumble was not to allocate a suitable labour for Oliver, instead they were working to reduce the number of the children. Their response was unsympathetic and irresponsible thus Oliver's anxious became more complex. As a child Oliver noticed the 'dreadful' nature of the chimneysweeper master, Mr. Gamfield, and turned pale with fear.[78]

In *Oliver Twist* books are repeatedly presented as cultural nourishment, potentially also for the poor. Although later in the text Oliver takes advantage of this, books are not seen in the workhouse. For Dickens, the importance of formal education and the value of using 'books' to enhance the child's imagination and his childhood and the need for reading is significant in *Oliver Twist*. Dickens used books for constructing melodramatic scenes. Books are represented in two houses, Fagin's and Mr. Brownlow's, but they are not seen in the workhouse. It can be argued that in the workhouse children are taught the basics. Books can be seen as a self-educating system; Oliver absorbs any book he reads. Through books Oliver is introduced to the visual world of crimes which is seemed not far from the world he lived in now. It was through the theft of a book that Oliver, when dragged before a magistrate's court, becomes acquainted with Mr. Brownlow, his saviour. The embodiment of kindness and philanthropy, Mr. Brownlow sits in a room lined with books. Mr. Brownlow claimed that 'there are a good many books' in the room and Oliver 'shall read them[79]. To be a good gentleman, he 'would rather read them'.[80] When Oliver, much later in the narrative, lives with Mrs. Maylie, another benefactor, he studies hard to improve his reading and writing to fit in with his new social circumstances. Dickens wrote, 'He laboured so hard that his quick progress

[77]Rohan McWilliam, 'Melodrama and class' in Carolyn Williams (ed)*The Cambridge Companion to English Melodrama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2018), p.166.
[78]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 1, p.48.
[79]Ibid., p. 218.
[80] Ibid.

surprised even himself'.[81]. He believes that education will make him a better person. In chapter sixteen of *Oliver Twist*, Oliver wants the books returned back to Mr. Brownlow and Mrs. Bedwin, not because he did not want to be regarded as a thief, but he did not like breaking the hearts of 'the good kind friends'.[82] For Oliver, sending him to return the books back with the five pounds payment, provided him also with moral education.

Ironically, it is Fagin, the criminal, who is the first to take time to teach Oliver anything at all and amusingly; Fagin appears to be an excellent teacher, employing role-play, confidence building and rewards[83]. Fagin also gives Oliver a book to read, and carrying the inverse morality of Fagin's underworld, the book is one of famous criminals.[84] Fagin emphasises the importance of play and using entertainment that teaches the children to be happy. John Manning describes the correct methods behind Fagin's instruction as utilizing 'activity, play, interest, motivation and a situation from real life'[85]. Fagin, being a good teacher, provides his new pupil Oliver with advice and instruction. For Fagin, all of the pupils are the same; there is no distinction between them;

> make 'em [Charley Bates, Artful Dodger, Nancy] your models, my dear. Make 'em your models, do everything they bid you, and take their advice in all matters –especially the Dodger's, my dear. He'll be a great man himself, and will make you one too, if you take pattern by him.[86]

Thus, Fagin's system, as depicted by Dickens, is a system of rewards with no punishment. On one hand, ironically Charles Dickens chose Fagin to be a successful and good teacher who has the ability to enhance his boys' understanding, despite his evil deeds. Therefore, as a father or a teacher, Fagin could condense his life experience by giving Oliver certain advice that 'if he kept himself quiet, and applied himself to business' providing the opportunity in Oliver to communicate with others and gain many friends.[87] In addition, Patrick Brantlinger argued that despite Fagin

[81]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 2, p. 258.
[82]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 1, p. 290.
[83] Ibid., 144.
[84]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol:2, p.3.
[85]Manning, *Dickens on Education*, *Dickens on Education* (Canada: Toronto UP, 1959), p. 138.
[86]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol:1, p.146.
[87]Ibid., 293.

'teaching vice instead of virtue', 'by making his criminals readers', thus Fagin and boys are 'outsmarted' and well- 'educated criminals'.[88]

Unlike the realistic image of the urban context, in her work on Dickensian children, Rosemarie Bodenheimer finds that Dickens's child characters were not actually completely childlike, although they were recognisable as children. For example, when Mr. Bumble comes to take Oliver from the workhouse, Dickens's construction of Oliver's compassionate response to Mrs Mann is not a realistic feeling. Dickens places Oliver strategically in the place of a loving child who sadly expressed his childish love to Mrs. Mann, rather than enjoying leaving this awful place, and 'was about to say that he would go along with anybody with great readiness'.[89] According to Bodenheimer, Dickens presents Oliver at this time as 'innocent and non-judgmental' boy.[90] Like a normal child, Dickens creates Oliver to be 'innocently loving'.[91] Oliver asks Mr. Bumble 'will she go with me' to which the narrator adds 'this was no very difficult matter for the boy to call the tears into his eyes'.[92] However, this scene shows that despite the dark and twisted society in which these children lived, the one shred of kindness showed by anyone made them feel happy, as this is what these children were yearning for. Bodenheimer explains that whether pretending or not, it is true that in some cases children are protecting themselves from the adult who 'threatened' 'with violent inclinations'.[93] She explores how those children such as Oliver are able to keep their innate feelings covered to avoid adult punishment. She gives another example of when Oliver hid his knowledge of Fagin's secret. Fagin roughly used a knife as a way to threaten Oliver of not disclosing what he sees. However, Oliver was sleeping and tired, so Fagin was not sure if Oliver had discovered his treasure box or not.

So far, in Bodenheimer's opinion then, Dickensian children are fictional children but act and are treated like adults. She writes 'if children

[88]Patrick Brantlinger, 'How Oliver Twist Learned to Read', in Patrick Scott and Pauline Fletcher (eds), *Culture and Education in Victorian England* (London: Bucknell UP, 1990), pp.64-66.
[89]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 1, p.19.
[90]Rosemarie Bodenheimer, 'Dickens and the knowing child' in Peter Merchant and Catherine Waters (eds), *Dickens and the Imagined child* (London: Ashgate, 2015), p16.
[91]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol:1, p. 16.
[92]Ibid., p.19.
[93]Rosemarie Bodenheimer, 'Dickens and the knowing child', p17.

are helplessly subject to the whims of the adults who control them, they are given a reciprocal power to make adults feel, or seen to be threatened or accused'.[94] It can be argued that although living with Mrs. Mann is a terrible experience for any orphan child, Oliver's emotions are those of parentless child as, he shows his gratitude to her. This happens because Dickens claims her to be looking aware of how those children contribute to her income. Thus she runs tough programme in her farm of poor eating and feeding practices. While foster children are important for her business as credits to keep her away from poverty, poverty was the common challenge for her. This is one example of Dickens's irony, drawing attention to the exaggerated emotions represented by Mrs. Mann and her foster child Oliver. Miss Mann has her own way of disguise that Dickens used to reveal her lack of sympathy.

In *Oliver Twist*, characters identify Oliver according to their emotions, Fagin says, 'you are a brave boy...you are a brave boy' for coming to London, and 'you are a clever boy my dear'.[95] Clever and brave are substantial behaviours for Fagin's work, while Mr. Brownlow says, 'poor fellow' , or 'poor boy, poor boy'.[96] Regarding the robbery event, Fang said 'a poor boy' while the library owners said Oliver 'was perfectly amazed and stupefied by it [robbery]' , the old lady Mrs Bedwen said with warmth heart, 'bless his sweet face'.[97]On the other hand, Mr Grimwig warns Mr Brownlow that Oliver 'is deceiving you' and 'he will join his old friends the thieves and laughs at you'.[98]With selfish inner emotions, Mr Sowerberry looks at the value of Oliver as 'a very good-looking boy'.[99]

In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens considers the ways in which the novel portrays the problem of lack of peace and security. The dreadful style of melodrama is suited to the imagined world of violence which mirrors the Victorian underworld. For example, one scene shows Nancy speaking to Mr Brownlow beneath London Bridge. The scene shed light on the plight of the girls and women, especially the case of prostitutes. Nancy did not forget that in her situation as a homeless girl no legal system considered her a valuable

[94]Ibid.
[95]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, vol:1, 139.
[96]Ibid, 156-173-174.
[97]Ibid, 173- 172-233.
[98]Ibid, 230.
[99]Ibid, 100.

person and secure her safety thus, she has to take her own precautions when she reported to Mr. Brownlow about Oliver's dangerous situation. Thus, Mr Brownlow asks Nancy about why she chooses this 'strange place' to meet them and why they are not talking 'above there', she said, shuddering, 'I was afraid to speak to you there. I don't know why it is but I have such a fear and dread upon me tonight that I can hardly stand', 'horrible thoughts of death, and shrouds with blood upon them, and a fear that has made me burn as if I were on fire, have been upon me all day'.[100]Although she wants to save Oliver from Monks, she presents her feelings of fear in a passionate way so that Mr Brownlow 'seemed to pity her'. She is conscious of the dangers of 'home' and life: 'I shall be watched or seen', and she refused the help and money offered by Mr Brownlow. 'I must go home', she says. She wants to satisfy her hopeless emotions with home, which must be the meaning of secure and safe to her.

The second section of this chapter draws upon the uses of melodrama in illustration. It will consider the works of George Cruikshank in *Oliver Twist*. It will examine Cruikshank's images that portrayed melodramatic form and their rhetorical function.

1.2 Illustrations:

George Cruikshank visualized important scenes from Dickens's fiction *Oliver Twist*, providing twenty- four illustrations for the monthly serial. Cruikshank's illustrations of Oliver supported the text's views of children's suffering, ignorance and starvation caused by cruel and selfish adults. His illustrations focus on particular cases where Oliver requires relief and support. In, 'A Sketch of the Life', Michael Allen suggested that in order to attract the attention of a middle-class Victorian audience, Dickens published the novel 'including illustrations by the popular engraver George Cruikshank'.[101] Richard L. Stein claims that among Cruikshank's illustrations Oliver 'is shown more frequently' than other characters.[102] For Dickens, Oliver is very important, therefore many of Cruikshank 's illustrations show Oliver in vulnerable situations which are often melodramatic. This is because, as Frederick G. Kitton argues,'Cruikshank

[100]Dickens, *Oliver Twist,* Vol: 3, 164-166.
[101]Michael Allen, 'A Sketch of the Life', in David Paroissien (ed), *A Companion to Charles Dickens*, (Oxford: Blackwell,2008), p.8.
[102]Richard L. Stein, 'Victoria's Year', p.162.

has realised every feature of the dramatic scene'.[103]Throughout the illustrations of Cruikshank, Oliver's hunger, loss, and fears can be seen and can be felt.

Cruikshank's illustrations interpret the emotional description represented in the original text into physical expressions. This section focusses on seven of Cruikshank's illustrations: Oliver's grim experiences in the workhouse and at the Sowerbery's house, and a compassionate illustration of Rose Maylie with Oliver, and two impressive illustrations of Fagin's 'old den'.[104] In each one, Cruikshank follows Dickens's melodrama so the reader can imagine Oliver's dramatic encounter with his masters.

It can be argued that Dickens's three significant views are central themes of Cruickshank's illustrations. The first, involves how food is important to create a positive childhood. The next, shows the unfair methods of education used in the workhouse and apprenticeship. Both systems are not generous and their harm for children was inevitable. The last, focuses on the teacher-student relationship and the importance of teaching poor children with faith. Children can learn life skills from their teachers before any other subjects. Adult-child discussion, appropriate guidance, reading together and the adult's advice are useful in developing the child's knowledge. Dickens and Cruikshank focus on this through Oliver and his reaction with adults.

Dickens's dramatic strategy of comedy functions effectively by making the audience laugh, whilst highlighting important and serious themes. Each illustrated scene portrays emotional and social meanings. According to Richard L. Stein, Cruikshank's melodrama also is a piece of 'cartooning' because of his 'satiric language'.[105] This is accurate because Cruikshank's use of specific comedic technique is to confirm the visual equivalent of poverty, the novel's powerful theme. For example in the second chapter, when Cruikshank designs the image of the children's spoons being 'large as the bowls' and bigger than their users in size, he provides the reader with a picture of poverty from which to view attitudes of

[103]Frederick G. Kitton, *Dickens and His Illustrators*: *Cruikshank*, *Seymour*, *Buss*, *Phiz*, *Cattermole* (London: George Redway, 1899), p.12.
[104]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol:2, p.77.
[105]Richard L. Stein, 'Victoria's Year', p.162.

uncommon misery.[106] This illustration about children's spoons satirises the falseness of the workhouse system and attacks those who were responsible for nurturing poor children as well as for filling their stomach of adequate food. This reveals that the children lived difficult lives and that their meals were not enough. While food is very important to the growth of children, the bodies of workhouse children were more affected by the starvation. So as Stein argues that through this melodramatic scene, Dickens and Cruikshank can show the ' the visible results' of starvation. [107]Another example is the representation of Fagin as the welcoming host, suitable to be addressed as 'a spectable old gentleman' by the children. [108] Thus, for Cruikshank, it is important to use Fagin as funny with less sense of him as a horrible criminal and to show his ability to take care of those for whom he is responsible.

Pictured in each scene are both the helplessness of Oliver and the cause of his troubles. The adult plays the role of the attacker to Oliver, especially when this adult is poor such as the workhouse's workers and the Sowerberrys. The fact that Cruikshank developed the theme of the dominant outcomes of social depression through certain selective adult characters who are equally important as the children. He compared the behaviour of poor adults with the behaviour of rich ones and has shown that in poverty the relationship between adults and children is affected when for example they have no free time for them, whereas adults with a comfortable income can share time with their children by playing, reading and eating. Indeed, he has demonstrated clearly how the relationship between adults and children is interrupted by poverty. Cruikshank's three illustrations of Fagin and Rose give an impression of less misery. This means that adults who paid more attention to children and look for the best ways to help them, are economically stable. Their responsible feelings get acted out in sharing with Oliver a love of reading and of work.

[106]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 1, p.27.
[107]Richard L. Stein, 'Victoria's Year', p., 136.
[108]Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 2, p. 126.

FIGURE 1 OLIVER'S ASKING FOR MORE, BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

FIGURE 2. OLIVER PLUCKS UP A SPIRIT, BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

(SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

In Figures 1 and 2, each image fills the reader's heart with deeper pity for Oliver. Both show Oliver attempting to find a chance to live. They depict sentimental pain and an emotion which required a cure. In both images Oliver is depicted as in trouble, however, in figure 2 of George Cruikshank, Oliver with his grim facial features showing Oliver is attacking Noah. This suggests even the people with the noblest of natures, can be turned from a good human being to becoming mere brutes, they are mistreated by others. However, it is not a matter of immorality or ignorance to defend the illtreated. Oliver has been usually emotional and patient. He warned Noah and told him to stop before it was too late. Oliver's sudden violence was a result of

symptoms of extreme fear. In figure 1, in the illustration of the workhouse scene, Cruikshank uses expressive melodramatic language to access the reader's heart. Cruikshank focuses on the setting of the scene to make the reader disappointed about the services of the workhouse. The terrible poverty is emphasised; there is no warm hospitality, there is no cheerful face. When they are shown quietly standing around the table, children show their obedience and follow the orders.

As I have shown earlier in the chapter, food plays a crucial role while education also is one of Dickens's high priorities. The picture was not about a classroom but a workhouse eating room. It is a mealtime which children would usually enjoy but the children here are not looking happy. The food hall in the workhouse was in bad repair. A large number of children physically were poor and look ill, while the cook of the workhouse is healthy. Instead of holding a book and pen, Oliver is holding his empty bowl and is asking for more and the picture recalls the emotion of the scene. Richard L. Stein noted that 'the master's face is almost bestial'.[109] His features are obviously insatiable which caused by eating too much and doing too little. The achievement of the workhouse reflects the belief of the New Poor Law commissioners that 'the institution was therefore to be both a refuge and a prison'.[110] The expression of the workhouse cook is shocked; he is angry and aggressive. He will not forgive Oliver for such a horrible act. All the children are looking at the cook with horror. Their fear revealed as a visual interpretation of the violence of the officials. The illustration shows Oliver alone making this forbidden request, with all the children gathering around the table, looking with their fearful eyes at this horrible scene. They also were starved, but because they knew that if they complained, they would be punished, they were too afraid to complain. This scene invokes all types of child-abuse as well as serving the novel's purpose. The workhouse was established to help the poor; however, this image suggests the reverse and reveals how those children were not welcomed. Cruikshank's viewpoint shows the workhouse through the figure of the beadle lacking any consoling emotion towards Oliver and other children. J. Hillis Miller and David

[109]Richard L. Stein, 'Victoria's Year', p.136.

[110]M. A. Crowther, *The Workhouse System* 1834-1929, *the History of an English Institution* (Athens: Georgia UP, 1981), p.84.

Borowitz argued that 'the relation between text and illustration is clearly reciprocal. Each refer to the other'.[111] The reader can understand the meaning of the illustration in the light of what he reads.

In both Figures 1 and 2 there are three female characters of whom Oliver is terrified because they lack the merciful nature of the motherhood and the standard of morals required to be a good teacher. The first woman in figure 1 looks at Oliver as if he is committing a taboo and she is waiting for Oliver to be punished. Her threatening eyes increase Oliver's fear. The lack of sympathy sets her at the back of the illustration. She can see and hear but she did nothing to protect Oliver because she is one of the inhuman characters who ignores child welfare. When the beadles stand between her and Oliver, Cruikshank creates a distance between the lady and Oliver.

Charlotte is another example of a lady who wishes to put Oliver's life at risk. Her expression while beating Oliver shows no act of kindness. In the tragedy and empathy represented in figure 2. Cruikshank shows how Charlotte used all her powers to severely beat Oliver by raising her hands up in order to harm him. Charlotte shows a negative side to her character when she helps the attacker Noah. In figure 2, Cruikshank depicts Oliver's behaviour as that of any person when he finds himself surrounding by enemies.

The third woman is Mrs. Sowerberry. The scene is a complete surprise for her. She stands at the door ignoring her responsibility to her guardian apprentice. She wants to see him hurt. Later, her decision to share in beating Oliver, represents her abusive supervision.

[111]J.Hillis Miller and David Borowitz, *Charles Dickens and George Cruikshank* (USA: California UP, 1971), p.45.

FIGURE 3. OLIVER INTRODUCED TO THE RESPECTABLE OLD GENTLEMAN, BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

(SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

FIGURE 4. OLIVER'S RECEPTION BY FAGIN AND THE BOYS, BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

(SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

FIGURE 5. ROSE MAYLIE AND OLIVER, BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

In both figs.3 and 4 of Cruikshank's illustrations, the two scenes are based on melodrama. Although Fagin is a poor thief and his appearance is wretched, he successfully committed his role as a kind master by feeding his crew and is involved with them in the same room. He is ready at any time to serve them. Robert Newson interprets Oliver's compassionate feelings towards Fagin's help. Newson notes that 'Oliver sees him [Fagin] a generous provider' because he 'gives him [Oliver] his first really tasty meal'. [112]

[112]Robert Newson, 'Fiction of Childhood', in John O. Jordan(ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Charles Dickens* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001), p. 96.

In both figures 3 and 4, the scene is in Fagin's house and all the characters, Fagin, Nancy, Bill Sikes, gave Oliver a very warm welcome; they gave sympathetic love. The two illustrations contribute to a clarification of Dickens's views; that Fagin's help was the only choice for poor children and that his help was attracted by children. According to Jeanine Duckworth, Fagin's help 'was a welcome relief to them [poor children]'.[113] Although the characters belong to the criminal world, they are looking at Oliver as if they are a family enjoying watching a beloved son. Always Fagin stands among his boys giving them his love and his loyalty. His face and behaviours show his tenderness. Figure 3 shows Fagin among his children, preparing their dinner. Fagin is holding a big fork as a skilled master. According to James Reitter, Cruickshank depicts Fagin more compassionately and 'he does not have the brutish characterisation'.[114]

In figure 5, Cruikshank gives the reader a standard representation of a mother or the guardian who depicts exactly what Dickens saw as an ideal. In the illustration, Rose's position besides Oliver and by putting her hands on Oliver's shoulder, symbolises the loving home, a sentimental teacher and a secure future; her efforts are represented as the relief to Oliver.

FIGURE 6. FAGIN IN THE CONDEMNED CELL, BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

[113]Jeanine Duckworth, 'Fagin's Children: Criminal Children in Victorian England', p.25.
[114]James Reitter, 'Dickens and three Stages of Illustrations Evolution', *Interdisciplinary Humanities,* Vol. 25. 1 (2008), pp.33-53(p. 44)

FIGURE 7. FAGIN, BY CHARLES PEARS (1912)
(SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

In his writing, Dickens highlighted the worst aspects of Criminal Laws. In particular, within Victorian society, many poor people became thieves or murderers because of their social position and lack of alternatives. It was the industrial era which created a strict life of social and economic relations where London became brutal. The scene of Fagin in the cell is very important in the discussion of Dickens's melodrama. The irony is that Fagin is charged with crime and sadly is sentenced to be hanged. He was sent to Newgate prison. It was 'dark' and 'dreadful'.[115] In fact, he was not a killer and he has the right to receive a reprieve to reform. The miserable Fagin and the dark prison are represented in the two figs. 6 and 7, show the legal 'system was so inefficient'.[116] Thus, the two illustrations by Cruikshank and Charles Pears express sympathy at what they considered as the misery of Victorian prison in Dickens's melodrama. They brought Dickens's melodramatic view of prison into focus. Charles Pears who was a British illustrator, and the official illustrator of the Great War official, followed Cruikshank's depiction of Fagin.

Accordingly, Harvey claimed that the illustration which shows Fagin in the cell comments on two important facts about the 'bad Law' of

[115]Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Vol: 3, p. 296-299.
[116]Philip Collins, 'Dickens and Crime', p.3.

the nineteenth century.[117] First it shows the miserable conditions of the prison. Second 'Fagin's head and hand does not seem criminal'.[118] Although this view made sense during this time, it can be argued against, because Dickens focuses on Fagin as providing a criminal type of education, and so although Fagin cared about his children gangs, his criminal education and knowledge account for his presence in the prison. In this depiction we can see that there is a relationship between education and prison.

1.3 Conclusion:

From the discussion of melodramatic scenes and their illustration, it is possible to identify Dickens as a deeply empathetic social commentator, who helped to raise the sympathy of the reading public towards the unjust and terrible conditions in Victorian workhouses and its educational system. Dickens observed the societal problems alongside the New Poor Law and was particularly concerned with all aspects of the social: family, workhouse, prison, education, the working class, childhood, schooling and poverty. In particular, Dickens had a keen interest in education, and viewed it as a path to a moral and good life as shown earlier. He supported the idea that the workhouse system was not enough to remove the problems facing English society, especially in London. Dickens suggested that the workhouse school and the inhuman practices of the apprenticeship system could not help poor children.

In this respect, *Oliver Twist* is a story of demands for reforms to the social treatment of children. The child's life is affected by the social and educational institutions: workhouses, apprenticeships or street gangs. By expressing social problems though melodramatic scenes, language and content, Dickens brings the public to share his experience, knowledge and philanthropy. Dickens is trying to tell us that poor children's survival is ultimately secured when they receive education. It is argued that Cruikshank's illustrations help to understand and develop Dickens's melodrama. The text of *Oliver Twist* and its illustrations give the reader a view of the actual life of poor children through a melodramatic story, but the illustrations create additional possible opportunities for understanding

[117]John Harvey, 'Victorian Novelists and their illustrators', p.208.
[118]Ibid., 210.

Dickens’s point of view. Illustrations can increase the emotions in reader’s heart, immersing them more fully in the situation and reminding him or her of their duty.

Chapter 2

2.1 *Hard Times* (1854)

Melodrama is highly significant in Dickens's novel *Hard Times* (1854) as it permeates the themes, characters, setting and style in a way that helps Dickens invoke strong emotions in the reader. There is a melodramatic contrast accompanying every scene of the novel to serve as a reminder that a restricted Utilitarian education was more likely to be a route to a criminal career or at least to moral deficiency. The comparison of middle-class and working-class children in *Hard Times* helps readers understand Dickens's views that education, as represented by the Gradgrind parents, could endanger a child's development and its emotional needs, at the same time leading to the child's immorality. This specific feature of melodramatic contrast has a particular purpose of arousing the reader's attention and sentiments.

Hard Times satirises nineteenth-century Utilitarianism and its approach to education, highlighting the issues that surrounded this movement. Satire, alongside melodrama and realism help portray these issues with more clarity. The colourless world of Coketown, where the novel is set, with its regulated and straight black and white lines, serves to convey the rigid influence of Utilitarian thought on children, families and education. Utilitarianism was the philosophical system formed in the late eighteenth century that focused on economics and business development. Gradually these ideas affected the educational system in Britain in the nineteenth century. The text also offers the imaginative and colourful world of the circus as an alternative approach to treating children fairly and well. So, throughout the novel, Utilitarian approaches to education are portrayed as a difficult tool to work out and children's emotions and morals are at risk. At the same time, the novel's depiction of the circus world, especially its treatment of young children, draws on the melodramatic conventions of a popular culture of entertainment and joy.

The themes I will analyze and focus on first are nurturing, love and compassion and the importance of family. These are used to reflect the relationship between Louisa and Tom, Sissy and her father, where the dark house of the Gradgrinds is contrasted with the bright tent of the circus

group. By comparing the methods of learning in the factory school and in the circus, the novel refers to Dickens's view of the type of schooling which he wants to bring to light. This offers the reader a specific focus of the two types of education and training in classroom and circus as a convenient and supportive environment for children. The terrible consequences of Utilitarianism experienced by Tom and Louisa in *Hard Times* are clearly conveyed through distinctive words and scenes. The first section in this chapter seeks to explore the impact of Utilitarian approaches on children. It also attempts to demonstrate how and why the circus children achieved a more successful and nurturing form of education and emotional development.

The second section will move on to focus on later editions of the text which were illustrated by Harry French, Harry Furniss, Sol Eytinge and Charles S. Reinhart. It is evident that the illustrations help the reader understand how industrialists' children are taught. Each illustrator has his own specific technique to explore the experiences and education of Louisa and Tom as children of the factory-owning class and Sissy as a worker's child. The illustrations form an integral part of *Hard Times* and, together with the text, they vividly bring Louisa and Tom's schoolroom to life while also offering a specific melodramatic contrast to the reader, but they primarily depend on whether they were produced contemporaneously with the text or were published later. The illustrations produced in the Victorian period tend to show Dickens's own ideas about education and children's imagination. However, later illustrations rendered Dickens's concern about children but depict his characterisation differently as will be discussed later. Therefore, in this chapter I will focus on specific parts of the novel and its illustrations to draw a clearer distinction between informal and formal education as well as between a rigid industrial family and a loving circus family.

In *Hard Times*, the name Coketown is symbolic of industrialisation, a town of industries where there is no room for entertainment and peace, only a filthy atmosphere and the horror of economic pressures. The setting of *Hard Times* is a place where a happy childhood does not exist and Dickens constructs Coketown with its 'wilderness' too, writing, 'Time went on in Coketown like its own

machinery:…so much fuel consumed, so many powers worn out, so much money made'.[119] At the same time, Dickens presents the circus, which was considered by Victorians as a "low" type of popular entertainment for middle and lower class families in London, and according to Dickens, those people who work there are deserving respect because they are passionate about others and they can freely discipline their children. Because these things are connected to Sissy's emotions when she has grown up sentimental influences. These are important for her because she is a circus girl and had a compassionate family. She is the daughter of a clown, who grows up in Sleary's circus and who is described as ''extremely slow in the acquisition of dates, unless some pitiful incident happened to be connected therewith''. Mr. Gradgrind informs Sissy not to mention a word about her father's work as a circus performer or horse-rider but describe him instead as 'a horsebreaker' or 'veterinary surgeon, a farrier'. Mr. Gradgrind describes the circus as a 'degraded position' which is not proper for Louisa to communicate with its people. He is also upset at what his friends will say. The words spoken by Mr. Bounderby to Mr. E. W. B. Childers, Sissy's father, 'we are the kind of people who know the value of time, and you are the kind of people who don't know the value of time', aptly express the social laws of the Gradgrind world.[120]

In *Hard Times,* Dickens represents the education of industrial children in a utilitarian family as causing social problems because it focuses on the economic interests at the expense of imagination and humanity. On the other hand, the freedom of imagination and the compassionate relationship of the family are the principles necessary to give a child happiness, peace and encouragement according to Dickens. The Gradgrind family resembles the image of Coketown, as it is 'a piece of machinery which discouraged human interference'.[121] It is developed into a series of mistakes because every element of sweetness in Tom's and Louisa's childhood turns to darkness and insanity. By making Mr. Gradgrind a significant element in the novel, Dickens highlights the problem of the unsympathetic schoolmaster and the great father of knowledge. Family is, to the educated Tom and Louisa, the unsympathetic logical trainer of facts and

[119]Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854),p.33.
[120]Ibid., p.11.
[121]Ibid., 20.

anxiety. Instead of guiding their children in the right way when they commit mistakes and allowing them to learn what they like to learn, this family is brought up with the idea of no allowances, no rebellion and no errors.

The Gradgrinds are full of good intentions in preparing their children to enter the world of Coketown. However, because of their extreme interest in factual knowledge and social status, they do not notice the feelings of their children. Later, they recognise that their work failed dramatically, as knowledge threatens and ultimately destroys their children's personal, and emotional life. The hyperbolic character of M'Choakumchild, the teacher who strictly follows Mr. Gradgrind's educational beliefs, is also obsessed by the importance of teaching facts to the preschool children. In chapter 15, M'Choakumchild says to Mr. Gradgrind: 'bring to me yonder baby just able to walk, and I will engage that it will never wonder'.[122] Thus, for Dickens, the problem is that the goal that both the school teacher, M'Choakumchild and the parents Mr. and Mrs. Gradgrind pursue, focuses on offering children a long- term factual education. The problem is not that there is an absence of education, rather it is the nature of education given to Louisa and Tom, which drives Louisa and Tom into a tragic despondency.

Louisa has a lot of knowledge but she has 'nothing' which makes her life colourful or has the principles of life which allows her to decide when to deny loving feelings and when to express them. When her brother Tom says that he has to work with Mr. Bounderby, Dickens shows how she accepts Mr. Bounderby's proposal despite knowing that he is not attracted to her and she has not experienced feelings of love before. As she wishes to provide a better life for her brother, Mr. Bounderby now becomes a fact that she has to open her mind to and close her heart to, but fact and reason lead to their ruinous marriage and the loss of her brother. Louisa's greatest love for her brother makes her selfless, ready to sacrifice herself to Bounderby. George J. Worth argues that in depicting her suffering as a helpless child, 'Louisa's situation does contain melodramatic elements'.[123]

[122]Ibid., 18.
[123]George J. Worth, *Dickensian Melodrama*: *A Reading of the Novels* (USA: Kansas UP, 1978), p.130.

According to Worth, the elements of melodrama can be seen in the description of Louisa's life. This means that Louisa whose her emotions are never expressed effectively, married Bounderby. Thus, the melodrama is revealed in satirical way. In a representative dialogue in chapter eight she painfully talks to her brother about her boring world where she 'never see[s] any amusing sights or read any amusing books that it would be a pleasure or a relief [to see]'.[124] This is a sentimental confession. In her complaint about the absence of literature, she believes that such education would bring her relief.

Also, in the same chapter Louisa's melodramatic speeches prompt sympathy. She says to her brother 'I can't reconcile you to home better than I am able to do. I don't know what other girls know. I can't play to you, or sing to you'.[125] This conveys a specific idea to the reader. The feeling of hopelessness reflects the hollowness of the educational system the siblings were subjected to and Louisa realizes that she lacks something essential and her words represent her deep pain and passions, her sincere apologies, her failure and feeling of inadequacy. Instead of expressing her love for Tom, through childish activities, Louisa finds emotional motives in 'self-sacrifice'.[126] Martha Vicinus makes use of the theme of self-sacrifice and its effect on the reader, noting that 'self- sacrifice is central to melodrama'.[127] Louisa rebels against her heart, searching for a consolation in the unhappy marriage. Self-lamentation is visible when she begs Tom for his forgiveness 'I don't so much mind knowing better. Though I do know better, Tom, and am very sorry for it'. She came and kissed him'.[128]

As regards Louisa and Tom's childhood, they are portrayed as mature individuals, behaving like adults and never confronting their parents' philosophy. Later as a young adult being offered marriage proposal, in chapter fifteen, Louisa's passionate speeches demonstrate her obedience and her love to her father despite her depressed heart, for example when she

[124]Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854), p.19.
[125]Ibid.
[126]Catherine Gallagher, *The Industrial Reformation of English Fiction: Social Discourse and Narrative Form 1832-1867* (U.S.A: Chicago UP, 1985), p.152.
[127]Martha Vicinus, 'Helpless and Unfriended': Nineteenth-Century Domestic Melodrama', *New Literary History*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1981, p. p136.

[128]Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854), p.19.

says: ‘you have been so careful of me, that I never had a child's heart. You have trained me so well’.[129] The most shocking part, and the most melodramatic, is when her father agrees with her by saying ‘quite true’.[130] He did not expect that he might agree with this sad fact. George J Worth argues that Louisa’s father considers her views as ‘a compliment’ for him.[131] This is a satirical melodrama in the way it shows the dangerous impact of Gradgrind’s education that denied his fatherly emotions. He is incapable of seeing how her daughter is suffered.

Throughout their life, Louisa and Tom sympathised with their parents despite knowing that they were not allowed to have small pleasures and fun, such as watching the circus or reading literature. While love and empathy between a mother and a child is the foundation of happy childhood, Mrs. Gradgrind followed her husband’s philosophical course in the upbringing of her children in a restrictive environment. Here the novel hints that such pain and grief become dangerous and dominant if the mother role-model is reduced to the level of coldness and mercilessness. It is not surprising, then, to see Mrs. Gradgrind still unable to comprehend why her children went to the circus. Dickens presents Mrs. Gradgrind’s overanxious response to them visiting the circus comically in her hyperbolic reaction that one day they might be seen ‘reading poetry’.[132] The patient and modest mother figure who has won the love of her children and the sympathy of the reader is the opposite of Mrs. Gradgrind. Her character represents the emotional void, lack of womanly tenderness or pride in her children. Instead, she hurts them by wishing she ‘had never had a family’.[133] She seems to be absent and Dickens writes ‘so she once more died away, and nobody minded her’.[134] It is worth noting that Louisa and Sissy, who provide insight into the importance of passion, might be relieved by this because they their humanity and emotions will not be stifled. In short, as David

[129]Ibid, 37.
[130]Ibid, 37.
[131]George J. Worth. *Dickensian Melodrama*, p.131; Dickens, *Hard Times*, p.20.
[132]Ibid., 6.
[133]Ibid.,20.
[134]Ibid.,7.

Sonstroem notes aptly, Mrs. Gradgrind is one of Dickens's characters that failed to receive his sympathy.[135]

In chapter eight Louisa, when talking to her mother, is exhausted by her gloomy ideas and while she is looking at the fire, she uses an effective melodramatic metaphor, comparing the short life of the fire to her own. This is a significant scene when she is wondering about the sparks as her emotions, her words demonstrating how hopeless she feels, and how she is close to madness. Mrs Gradgrind warns Louisa that her father should never hear these 'nonsense' words.[136] Her attitude towards Louisa shows her satisfaction and represents her as a Coketown mother employing the schoolmaster's instructions to keep order in the class.

In her last moments, Mrs. Gradgrind notices her daughter's 'pain' but she is unable to offer her relief. However, she notices, 'There is something', which might be connected to the education which her father 'has missed, or forgotten'.[137] Mrs. Gradgrind in this moment is quite close to discovering the source of her children's suffering but she does not have the time. Still, she understands that Sissy possesses what the family lacks. She does display sensitivity and sentiment when she is trying to write a letter to Mr. Gradgrind asking him to look at the missing and the forgotten. Here is the final help, or it is perhaps an urgent offer from an inexperienced mother who spent her life believing in the mistaken idea that her husband was more experienced in the education of their children than herself.

On the other hand, with his portrayal of a model of an alienated child, and later of a villain, Dickens implies that Tom is 'sick' because of his hate emanating from the 'Jaundiced Jail' where he lived.[138] He is only a child but his wish to burn 'all the figures, and all the people who found them out' shows how his mind is corrupted and how his heart is filled with such brutal 'revenge'.[139] Dickens represents Tom's inner hurt physically, and shows how he tries to escape from a world of terror to a world of crimes. Facts have made him an indifferent rebel.

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[135]David Sonstroem, 'Fettered Fancy in *Hard Times*', *PMLA*, vol. 84, no. 3, 1969, pp. 520–529.
[136]Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854), p.20.
[137]Ibid.,73.
[138]Ibid., 18-19.
[139]Ibid.

The experiences of disappointment and discomfort make Tom describe himself as 'a donkey' and 'a Mule'.[140] This demonstrates that he is powerless and emotionless with no smart features. Tom's speech is melodramatic. He refers to himself as a 'stupid' animal.[141] In fact, Tom feels self-pity whereas he should be proud of himself and his successes. Instead of finding value and meaning in his life, in this scene such unsatisfied feelings express Tom's hopeless situation, corrupted feelings and his emotional sensibility by comparing himself to the animal world. In his article 'Fettered Fancy in Hard Times', David Sonstroem defines Tom's behaviour as a 'humiliating disguise' act because he fails to compare with the circus animals 'clever and quick'.[142] The unaware adult has ruined Tom's personality and his heart. For Dickens, 'the teacher not the child is then in fault'.[143] This sympathetic image of Tom in his hardest times shows the way Dickens reveals his deep passions and pity for children at a time when the world shows its blindness.

At the same time, in *Hard Times*, the likeable circus family represents the working class; they create a world of fun and virtues and offer a healthy environment for their children. Children require what the circus family can offer as education: family reading and entertainment. David Vincent argues that in a Victorian working-class family, 'every parent was a teacher'.[144] Children were taught morals and skills. It can then be argued that even for family workers, children's education was important and that is why Sissy's father sent her to gain formal schooling. Through the circus, Dickens attempts to depict 'good English homes and families'.[145] Elaine Ostry has pointed out that Dickens was aware that 'fancy allows the child to develop scientific skills naturally', which can be observed in Sissy, the girl from the circus, while 'a mechanical approach to education merely turns

[140]Ibid.
[141]Ibid.
[142]David Sonstroem, 'Fettered Fancy', p.522.
[143]Dickens, 'School- keeping', *Household words,* 8(200), (1854), p.501.
[144]David Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture England 1750-1914*(Cambridge: CUP,1989), p.54.
[145]Lydia Murdoch, *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, And Contested Citizenship in London* (USA: Rutgers UP, 2007), p.42.

children into machines' and this attitude can be seen in Mr. Gradgrind's children, Tom and Louisa.[146]

Fancy might be an emotional comfort for the adults as well. Sissy reads stories to her father 'to cheer his courage, and he was very fond of that'.[147] Living in a depressing city like Coketown, when families read about fairies, it is a significant sentimental moment. Paul Edward Gray claims that the reader may have noticed why and how Coketown features as a 'joyless place'.[148] Indeed, according to Dickens, treating people, specifically children, as non-human machines or as factory tools results in an aggressive and immoral society.

The triumph of fact over imagination emerges in the first scene in two particular moments: first when Bitzer gives a definition of the horse using statistics while Sissy sees the horse as a creature used for riding and racing. Second, when Sissy defines the floral carpet from her point of view, she offers a proof of her knowledge. She can distinguish the difference between flowers in nature and when they are pictured in carpet. However, for her, whether real or depicted, flowers are delighted and beautiful. For Gradgrind, the concept of a flower is the same in a carpet and as in real nature. In her article, 'Walking on Flowers: The Kantian Aesthetics of '*Hard Times*'', Christina Lupton studied Dickens's philosophy of fancy and fact in relation to the flowers in *Hard Times*. She found that the flowers played a very important role in the plot of the novel about fact and fancy to suggest Sissy's success in combining the truth of fact and the truth of imagination. Lupton argues that Sissy's response about the beauty of flowers and how she seems fanciful here, is not Sissy's own argument, instead it is a fact of life: indeed, the flower itself is beautiful. For Lupton, Sissy's attraction does not refer only to the flowers themselves but to the 'representation' of flowers in the world.[149]

On the other hand, in the mathematical schoolroom, Dickens's characterisation of the two children, Sissy and Bitzer, represent of the 'child

[146] Elaine Ostery, 'Social Wonders': Fancy, Science, and Technology in Dickens's Periodicals', *Victorian Periodicals Review* 34, no.1 (2001), p. 68.
[147]Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854), p. 22.
[148]Paul Edward Gray, *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Hard Times, A Collection of Critical Essays.* (London: Prentice Hall, 1969), p. 4.
[149]Christina Lupton, 'Walking on Flowers: The Kantian Aesthetics of 'Hard Times', *ELH*, vol. 70, no. 1, (2003), p.155.

of sentiment and the 'child of fact'. Sissy who has grown up in the circus, is 'possessed of no facts', and her representation is marked by a certain lively qualities.[150] She is a girl with a'blushed' face.[151] She is'irradiated' by the sunbeams pouring into the classroom.[152] She is 'very fond of flowers'.[153] Her attitude to life and her experiences have been connected to 'fancy'.[154] Even later when she is taken to live with the Gradgrinds, she is still 'an affectionate, earnest, good young woman'.[155] Mrs. Gradgrind used to call her 'my good girl'.[156] She is humble and faithful to both families, the one in the circus and the Gradgrinds. Of her circus family, she cries, 'O my dear father, my good kind father, where are you gone? You are gone to try to do some good, I know…and how miserable and helpless you will be without me, poor, poor father, until you come back'.[157]

Although she enjoys her sentimental memories of her missing father, especially when she reads imaginative stories for him and the dog, Merrylegs, she obeys Mr. Gradgrind's words that she should consider all these events as being from the past and she should never mention them in his house. Later, in chapter nine, in a scene which represents how much more flexible, careful and rational Sissy is, she describes these books as 'wrong' and how she is 'never to speak of them here' in front of Louisa, however, in her deep heart they relate to her 'happiest' times.[158]

Sue Lonoff notes that in the Victorian period, family reading was a very popular activity where the Victorian family 'gathered to listen to the stories and make the acquaintance of the characters'.[159] Dickens portrays Mr. Gradgrind as not encouraging Sissy in her pleasure of imaginative reading, instead it was her father who raised her with love and care. The circus members witnessing how 'the two were one' lived and travelled together reflects how intimate a family they are[160] Sissy is pleased when she

[150] Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854), p.2.
[151]Ibid.,2-3.
[152]Ibid.,2.
[153]Ibid.,3.
[154]Ibid.
[155]Ibid.,33.
[156]Ibid.,72.
[157]Ibid.,14.
[158]Ibid.,18.
[159]Sue Lonoff. *Willkie Collins and His Victorian Readers: A study in the Rhetoric of Authorship* (New York: AMS Press,1982), p.8.
[160]Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854), p.12

is describing her father to Louisa, how he was 'always kind', how he always 'loved' her.[161] However, her father has 'little' education while her mother is a 'dancer'.[162] It is her father's own parental philosophy in letting his feelings pour into his daughter's heart with love, 'kissing' and the melodramatic speech 'My darling; and my love!'[163] As a child who has been abandoned by her father, Sissy 'believed that her father had not deserted her; she lived in the hope that he would come back, and in the faith that he would be made the happier by her remaining where she was'.[164] Dickens uses Sissy to demonstrate that other type of children are influenced by their family's system, showing that she is a follower of fairy tales. She is aware that her father did not abandon his daughter but instead wanted her to live a perfect life in the Gradgrinds' house.

Dickens emphasises how Sissy's virtues dominate her character. He melodramatically uses her emotional viewpoint in chapters twenty nine and thirty. In this chapter, a successful example of a melodramatic scene is effectively visualised through Sissy' character. Her angelic features remind the reader of her innocence. When Louisa is in the depth of suffering, 'so confused and troubled', it is no wonder Sissy is her survival.[165] She provides her with what the parents are supposed to give. She has 'a loving heart' thus her attention to Louisa, noticing indeed that what has happened to Louisa should never happen again.[166] She goes to speak to Mr. Hearthouse with 'modest fearlessness' and advises him not to see Louisa again.[167]

2.2 Illustrations of scenes focused on children

This part of the chapter traces the impact of illustrations that accompany later editions of the novel, and the ways in which they shape the reader's understanding of Dickens's representation of children. As a visual aspect, the illustrations in Dickens's text suggest possible clues to the complex plot and cultural context of an English city during the Industrial Revolution. Grahame Smith asserts that 'it is within the city that Dickens lives, moves and has his being, not merely in terms of his novels' subject matter, but in

[161]Ibid.,22.
[162]Ibid.,21.
[163]Ibid.,22.
[164]Ibid.,20.
[165]Ibid.,82.
[166]Ibid., 83-84.
[167]Ibid.

the pulse of their language and form'.[168] Thus, illustrations offer the reader the visual information about the context, characters, themes and the cultural information of the text. Sometimes an illustration produces the same momentum of melodrama as in the text and sometimes it expresses it more vividly. When the illustrator fully understands the details of family and conditions of children, his own views contribute to the melodrama. He dramatizes the emotional scenes which serves the textual meanings and invokes more emotions in the reader.

This section considers the skills of the artist and the language of melodrama in rendering Dickens's description which successfully catch the reader's attention. Here I will focus on the issue of melodrama and the visual description of several passionate speeches and impressive moments from the text. Four questions will be answered: does the illustration support Dickens's melodrama about children, family, and education? Does the illustration show any evidence of suffering children? Does the illustrator make an equivalent point to that of the novel? Is there any communication between the illustration and the text at the level of melodrama?

[168]Grahame Smith, *Dickens and the Dream of Cinema* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2003), p. 3.

FIGURE 8. GRADGRIND BY HARRY FURNISS

(SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

FIGURE 9. THOMAS GRADGRIND, BY SOL EYTINGE (SORCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

Mr. Gradgrind is selected for illustration by the artist Harry Furniss in 1910 (figure8) and by Sol Eytinge in 1867 (figure9). In both figures, Mr. Gradgrind represents almost a supernatural man, posing with a grim face and sharp eyes. The drawings make the features of the father peculiar in order to affect the Victorian audience and enable them to understand how the industrialisation changed humanity. Thus, the illustrators observed and imagined what the industrial man looked like. He lacks comfort and is not pleasant to look at. His gothic features indicate relentless evil and the reader knows that figure does not support Dickens' point of view. There is no doubt that the character is a father of 'mathematics' and philosophy.[169] Throughout the novel, despite his philosophy of education, Dickens represents him as a good-looking gentleman, who is a faithful husband, and a compassionate father. Dickens argues that, as Gradgrind pities Sissy and adopts her, he performs a remarkable moral act. A man with this compassionate heart does not indeed appear in such illustrations as those presented above and could barely arouse the reader's emotions as in the text. For Dickens, the problem was not in his

[169]Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854), p.3.

heart but in the complicated relationship between him and his children because of his concern with education as a type of public competition. The two illustrations would not allow the reader to sympathise with his family.

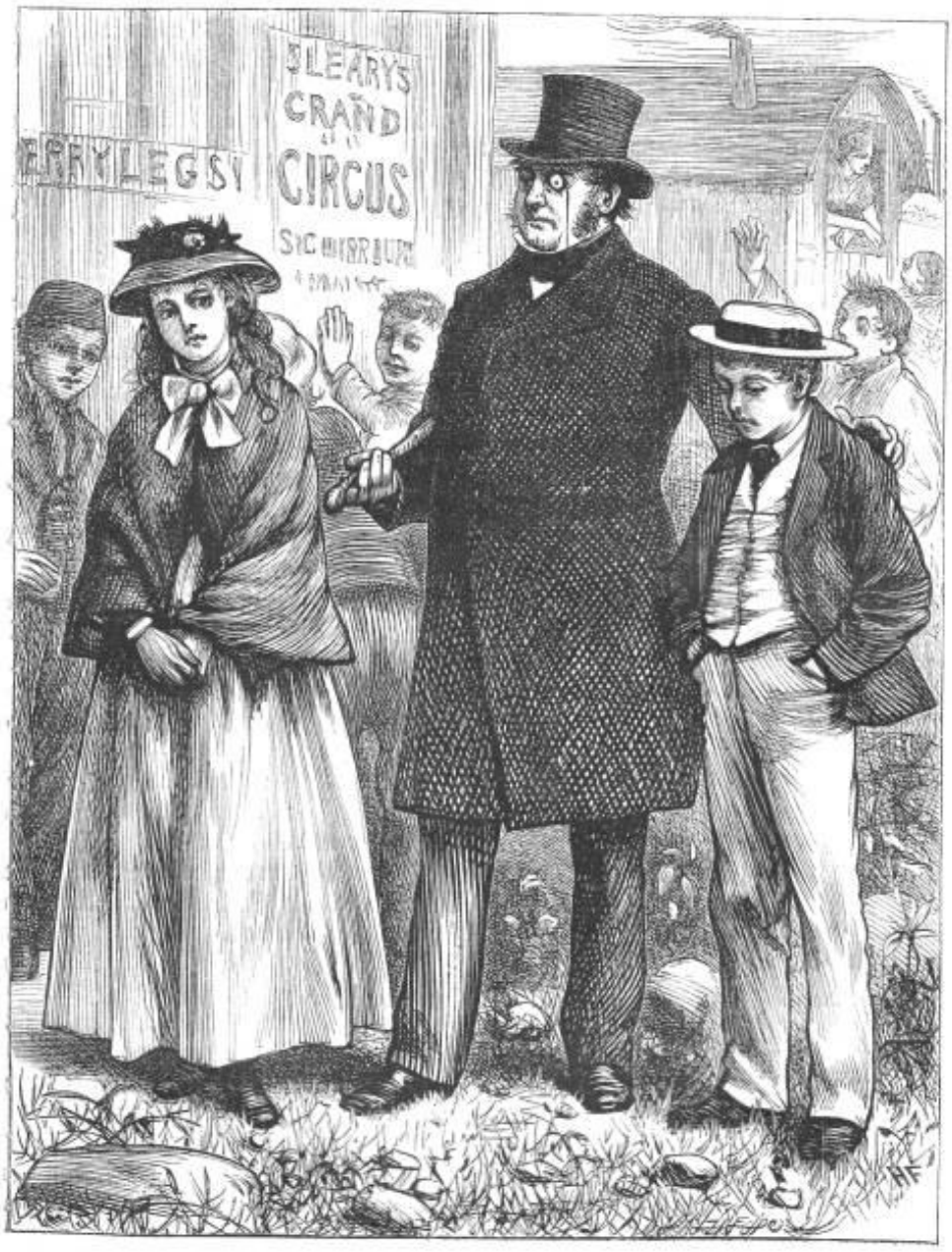

FIGURE 10. THOMAS GRADGRIND APPREHENDS HIS CHILDREN LOUISA AND TOM AT THE CIRCUS, BY HARRY FRENCH (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

Figure 10 is by the British artist Harry French in 1870. This illustration indicates French's close connection to Dickens's understanding of the family relationship in the text. French's melodramatic illustration of Louisa and Tom complements the theme of the text which leaves the reader pitying them and thinking that the children do not look happy. The reader

ponders whether those children are in need of help and whether their father possesses the emotional heart of a parent. French creates an effective scene depicting the impact of the Industrial Revolution on one of Victorian rich family, and particularly on its children. In fact, this illustration represents both the possible failure and success of industrialism. On the one hand, the appearance of Louisa, Tom, and Mr. Gradgrind, is intended to suggest gentility and fashionability, on the other hand, the physical impressions show the distorted inner life of Louisa and Tom. The illustration shows the place is busy with people who have come for entertainment. Having hidden his hands in his pocket and gazing at the ground, like a man, Tom attempts to remove himself from any ties between him and the surrounding pleasure. Nothing attracts Louisa's attention except her brother and she appears as a mature mother whose heart and eyes follow her son. Louisa's and Tom's emotions are muted because of their rational education. This illustration presents French's close connection to Dickens's imagining of the unsympathetic social systems. However, French depicts Mr. Gradgrind as a huge, very proud figure, carrying a stick between his arms, putting his hand at his son's shoulder, an illustration pointing towards his false emotional appearance.

FIGURE 11. MRS. BOUNDERBY AND SISSY, BY SOL EYTINGE (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

FIGURE 12. FORGIVE ME, PITY ME, HELP ME BY CHARLES S. REINHART

Both Figs. 11 and 12 are illustrations by American artists. Figure 11 was created by Sol Eytinge in 1867 while figure 12 was illustrated by Charles S. Reinhart in 1870. Charles S. Reinhart completed sixteen plates for the American edition of *Hard Times*. Both illustrations convey the same sentimental scene which depicts Sissy as a symbol of 'Louisa's savior' or 'a surrogate mother'.[170] In social terms, both images represent Sissy, who is looking down while Louisa is looking up, releasing all the barriers between classes. However, the melodramatic theme of this scene in Eytinge, too, seems different. In Eytinge, the image shows Louisa who is surrounded by Sissy' love and care. In terms of emotions, Louisa catches Sissy's eye seeking peace while Sissy is embracing her as the mother holding her loved child. In this dramatic illustration by Sol Eytinge, Sissy possesses the features of the compassionate family member who always provides support. Although there is no blood relationship between Louisa and Sissy, Sissy's presence offers consolation and thus comforts Louisa. Eytinge uses emotional body language to draw the reader's attention to the importance of feeling and his depiction of both Louisa and Sissy is

[170]Ibid.,156-157.

extremely convincing. Louisa's eyes seem unhappy and lost while Louisa is dressed in white suggesting her innocence. Sissy is represented as a respectable lady, whose closed eyes show that all her senses are with Louisa.

In contrast to the work of Charles S. Reinhart, Sol Eytinge's illustration from figure 11 appears optimistic. Eytinge adds a white window in front of Sissy. As in the text, by using the symbolic window, Eytinge produces a realm of hope and light which has opened for Sissy. His attention focusses on the girl who was never allowed tenderness and whose morals are affected by materialism and the illustrator makes it visible to the Victorian reader. Then too, in both illustrations, Sissy seems to be entering the world of fairy tale, which serves as a visual comment upon the relationship between the importance of compassion for the Fairy Godmother character and Sissy. Indeed, according to Martha Vicinus 'much of the emotional effectiveness of melodrama comes from making the moral visible'.[171]

2.3 Conclusion

Lessons based on learning facts crushed the imagination and independent thought of the children in *Hard Times.* Using the elements of melodrama in *Hard Times,* Dickens attempts to offer fancy as a strategy for the educational system in order to avoid the chaos which accompanies industrial modernity. By making marriage and love a significant element in the plot, Dickens shows several representations of the impact of Utilitarian education versus the compassionate family.

The most successful melodramatic scenes in *Hard Times* are those in which there are dramatic and compassionate speeches between the Gradgrinds. The main function of those scenes is to show the fundamental role of the family for children. Education, wealth and gentility are not sufficient for the child. For Dickens, the family has emotional effects on children's feelings and the quality of the family engages not only in economic life but also plays a large part in the fanciful nature of childhood. Families cannot fail to understand that children have the right to play, to laugh, to fancy, to learn useful education and later they have to choose their

[171]Martha Vicinus, 'Helpless and Unfriended', p. 137.

future life. Dickens upbraids economic society for its involvement in the failure of Mr. Gradgrind's children. Their constant loneliness is undeserved, and this leads to melodramatic scenes when both of them are compassionate and sensitive in expressing their emotions. With their loving looks from their innocent hearts, Louisa and Tom are shown as helpless children.

The selected melodramatic illustrations show the most significant metaphoric scenes and characterisation. Such illustrations allow the reader to follow Dickens's view of melodrama. Each illustrator has his own specific technique to bring specific emotions. In addition to the novel, those illustrations are another method of protesting against what represents the brutal system of education which dominated the Victorian middle class.

The illustrations in *Hard Times* help the reader to concentrate particularly upon Dickens's imaginative ideas and theories about the healthy development of human being and society. They primarily depend on whether the illustrators are familiar with the context or whether they attempt to present Dickens's work as iconic of Dickens's time. Nevertheless, they provide the reader with a remarkable clarification of the author's vision, providing symbols and visual reading which participates in the construction of Dickens's philosophy.

Chapter 3

3.1 *Great Expectations* (1861)

Great Expectations explores the experiences and education of the children of the common people, comparing the education of the orphan Pip, raised by his uncle a blacksmith, Magwitch who once was a vagrant child, and Estella, who has been brought up to marry a gentleman, although unknown to her, she is actually the daughter of convicts. Through the mysterious circumstances of her adoption by Miss Havisham, Estella will become heiress to an old brewery and has the privilege of class status. There is a contrast between Estella's fashionable education and Pip's common upbringing by his fierce and punitive sister, and her husband Joe, the loving blacksmith. Also, there is Magwitch, Estella's father, who as the novel will reveal, has learned the manners required of a gentleman, after his transportation following a criminal career which began in childhood when he thieved as an abandoned and hungry child. And yet, though brutalised by poverty and social injustice, we discover that Magwitch sympathised with those who helped him such as Pip. Thus, in melodramatic form this novel represents a social critique of the conditions in which some children found themselves in relation to class mobility and the hypocrisy of charity. At the same time, *Great Expectations* uses sentimentality and gothic melodrama to make its points engaging to the reader.

Great Expectations seeks to reshape the social consciousness of English society to be more generous and sympathetic towards vulnerable children. This is presented in melodramatic ways. There is a realistic depiction of the influence of the society on how children are taught their place in society. Through their encounters with criminals, both knowingly and unknowingly, the novel gestures to the ways that children like Pip and Estella, can be damaged by criminal associations and the need for careful nurturing and education to avoid such dangerous influences. The failures in their moral training, at the hands of Mrs Joe and Miss Havisham in particular, are shown through the gothic atmosphere and symbolic realism of revenge, pain, guilt associated with Satis House and graveyard settings.

The need to educate children equally throughout the country was important to Dickens, as he showed that schools in the countryside adopt

informal and alternative models of education, for example, the school which is run by Wopsle's Great Aunt. Here the quality of teaching is depicted as haphazard and excitable rather than scholarly. At the same time, the formal education, such as the finishing school on the continent whereEstella is sent, is shown to be affordable only to rich and genteel families. In the case of this education, the required fees meant that it was impossible for common people to get their children into these schools, and so children like Pip were excluded. Estella's education in how to be 'a lady' is shown to be focused on manners and refinement rather than sympathy and fellow-feeling, leading her to be confused and heartless. Despite Pip yearning for the schooling of the privileged, by the end of the novel he has come to regret it.

In this chapter, I will briefly explore the biographical, historical and social context of the novel. *Great Expectations* does not only refer to Pip and Estella but also to Dickens's own past life and to the wider condition of England. A textual analysis of specific melodramatic scenes in respect to child labour and child poverty as well as education, home and legal systems will also be examined. Then I will discuss the ways in which the novel's illustrations enhance the reader's understanding of Dickens's melodrama and his examination of childhood. At the end of this chapter, I conclude that Dickens was showing intense sympathy and concern towards children who are emotionally neglected, manipulated or abused.

3.2 Great Expectations and its Autobiographical Connections

Evidence suggests that Dickens's childhood experience is among one of the most important themes in his novel *Great Expectations*. There are notable studies which have attempted to establish layers of Dickens's personal life to the content of the novel. Critics have observed that when it was getting harder for children to achieve their dreams of education, Dickens was able to draw from his early days, to enrich the narration to make it intrinsically realistic. For example, Michael Slater and David Nicholls argue that *Great Expectations* is an autobiographical novel.[172] The

[172]Michael Slater, 'Dickens, Charles John Huffam (1812–1870), novelist'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Sep. 25, (2014), Oxford University Press, https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-7599 [accessed: 15 May. 2018], David Nicholls, Adapting Great Expectations for the screen, *The Guardian*, 2012, http://theguardian.com/books/2012/nov/16/adapting-great-expectations-david-nicholls>

personal evidence is based on what childhood needs are, and what children lacked. The young Dickens and Pip suffered no harshness from poverty, but the low parental income diminished the chances available for their tuition. David Nicholls pointed out 'there are two Pips in the novel; the boy who meets the convict in the graveyard and the man who tells the story of the boy'.[173] Clearly Dickens has found his voice in Pip's childhood when their family could no longer be able to afford the education fees. Hence, they could not receive proper education, but Dickens believed largely sin elf-assistance with the jobs he did and arranged for his fees while Pip was sponsored by another family, which gave him access to the world of honour and gentility. *Great Expectations* is designed to entertain his readers by making them want to laugh or being moved to tears. So, it is part autobiography, part history and part fiction. The aim is to spread the message of the sufferings of the neglected child, by making the readers feel its emotional impact on the children.

Great Expectations, according to Jerome Meckier, is written 'from the pen of a middle-aged autobiographer bent on fashioning his melodramatic life into a timely admonishment'.[174] Meckier argues that by using his own life in writing *Great Expectations* Dickens helped to create a compassionate emotional vision of nineteenth- century children by making the Victorian reader aware of the damage often done to children across the socially classes, regardless of whether they came from struggling or privileged families. Dickens considered himself as one of those deprived children. Both Dickens and Pip suffered from neglect. Following Dickens's death in 1870, John Forster recounted his conversations with the author in the first posthumous biography of the writer. Only then would readers come to know of Dickens's experience of poverty and vulnerability, when he was sent to work at the Blacking factory and live alone in lodgings, when his father was imprisoned in Marshalsea for debt '[M]y whole nature was so penetrated with the grief and humiliation' Dickens had recalled and these

[173]David Nicholls, Adapting Great Expectations for the screen, *The Guardian*, 2012, http://theguardian.com/books/2012/nov/16/adapting-great-expectations-david-nicholls>
[174]Jerome Meckier, *Dickens's Great Expectations Misnar's Pavilion Versus Cinderella*. (USA: Kentucky UP, 2006), p. xix.

feelings remained with him throughout his life; 'I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear wife and children'.[175]

Catarina Ericsson argues that Dickens experienced feelings of injustice when, 'rather than supporting his father, Dickens had to support himself'.[176] He was not at an age to be responsible for others. Familiar with the psychological problems of self-reliant children. The self-reliant children in *Great Expectations* face the psychological problems young Dickens had experienced and many scenes in the novel are associated with the author's own childhood, such as the 'the Blacking warehouse' - the first place Joe saw when he visited London.

In *Great Expectations*, therefore, Dickens draws on his own experiences but recasts these in melodramatic scenes to encourage the reader's imagination. Lyn Pykett notes that the tone of *Great Expectations* is 'elegiac' and 'nostalgic', aluding perhaps to the author's lost childhood as well as those of Pip and Estella.[177] Juliet John suggests that 'nostalgia involves a keen, even intensified sense of the value of what has been lost' and this feeling, which is represented in the novel through its emotional tone 'does not always lead to a sense of adequacy of melodrama but as often to an awareness of the paucity and corruption of the real world'.[178] While Dickens felt his own childhood to have been cut short by the fecklessness of an irresponsible father, he gives young Pip two alternative fathers to the paternal father he had lost in infancy. Despite Pip being terrified and corrupted by his own sister, he is lucky to be surrounded by true parent figures such as Joe and Biddy and his inspiration and his future guidance Miss Havisham and the benefactor Magwitch, who individually work to fulfil Pip's emotions, morals and his dream of becoming a gentleman. Joe was the first who brought up Pip by his hand and Magwitch was his 'second father'.[179]

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[175]John Forster, *Charles Dickens*, Vol: 1, 1872, p.33.
[176]Catarina Ericsson, *A Child is a Child, You Know: The Inversion of Father and Daughter in Dickens's Novels* (Sweden: Stockholm UP, 1986), p.4.
[177]Lyn Pykett, *Charles Dickens: critical issues,* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2002), p.165.

[178]Juliet John, *Dickens's villains: Melodrama, Character, Popular Culture,* (UK: Oxford UP, 2001), p.87.
[179]Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (London: Chapman and Hall 1861), Vol:2, p.341.

3.3 The Influence of Social Rank and Class on Children

While *Oliver Twist* focused on the plight of destitute and abandoned children, *Great Expectations* is concerned with the effects of class status, hypocrisy, and victimisation more than poverty itself. In its depiction of children from different social classes, Laura Berry notes that the novel examines the desire 'not just for food but for a place at the table, and finally for a position in a society'.[180] Early in novel, our attention is drawn to Magwitch's desperate plight as a child which had drawn him into thieving but the narrative focuses on the effects of his criminalisation and his brutalisation and dehumanisation by punishment. Pip is acutely aware of the injustice he feels he has suffered but he also speaks for all children who were routinely treated badly: 'In the little world in which children have their existence, whosoever brings them up, there is nothing so finely perceived and so finely felt as injustice'.[181]

In the melodramatic opening scene, Dickens introduces Pip as a little orphan child, alone in the graveyard, effectively urging the reader to sympathise with Pip. Such compassionate feeling needs to be strong to make the reader follow Pip to the end of the novel. It was Christmas Eve, a precious time for family celebration and enjoyment, yet Pip is in the graveyard with his missing parents. Moreover, the graveyard scene highlights the impact of loss and grief on young Pip and his need to retain a connection with his family by imagining their features prompted by the lettering on their gravestones, [182] Lyn Pykett observes that Pip's identity 'is taken out of the forge', and written on the inscriptions of his family's grave stones.[183] When the prisoner is asking Pip about his mother, the boy says 'there', pointing to the graves.[184]

Philip Collins argues that by centring pathos on a child, Dickens's work alerts the reader's sympathy to their maltreatment, [185] Both Pip and Estella are unhappy and 'suffer much loss and disappointment'.[186] Miss Havisham adopts Estella and educates her in France as an aristocratic

[180]Laura C. Berry, *The Child, the State and the Victorian Novel* (Charlottesville: Virginia UP, 1999), p. 9.
[181]Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.131.
[182]Ibid.,2-3.
[183]Lyn Pykett, *Charles Dickens,* p.167.
[184]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, p. 5.
[185]Phillip Collins, *Dickens and Education*, (London: Macmillan, 1965), p.172.
[186]Ibid.,180.

lady. She trains her to 'deceive and entrap' and seek revenge on men.[187] In this respect, she has 'no softness there, no-sympathy- sometimes-nonsense'.[188] Throughout her life, Estella's heart is an object for Miss Havisham, uses for 'hate instead of love- despair-revenge-dire death'.[189] However, Pip's love for Estella was his main inspiration. Later when he visits Miss Havisham and Estella he recognises that he had a false hope and it was 'those wretched hankerings after money and gentility' which had troubles him and alienates him and leads him to feel 'ashamed of home and Joe'.[190]

In fact, the idea of gentility was central in the Victorian era. Juliet John remarks that the dominant fact in Dickens's novels is, how gentleman was 'employed in the nineteenth century largely as an indicator of social status' rather than of 'human moral'.[191] Thus Pip was emotionally hurt by Estella looking 'coldly' at him.[192] Estella continually reminds him that he is not a gentleman, thereby making him acutely aware of social hierarchy and his low position in it. Estella's opinion about his 'coarse' hands in chapter eight, a sign that he has to work for a living, shocks him and hurts his feelings. In addition, Pip's sensitivity became stronger when he did not feel positively towards her kiss and thought that to be kissed by Estella would not change his social status. He said, 'I felt that the kiss was given to the course common boy as a piece of money might have been, and that it was worth nothing'.[193]

Estella's rejection of Pip echoes Dickens's rejection by Maria Beadnell when he was a young man. Dickens coped, perhaps, with this rejection by directing his energies into self-improvement and industry, by writing and working, however, others like Pip were forced to seek help. Thus, as Michael Slater has pointed out 'his [Dickens] steely ambition to make a mark in the world in one way or another was given a keener edge by his passionate desire to make her his wife. He sought to improve himself by reading in the British Museum (Shakespeare and the classics, English and

[187]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol:2, p.324.
[188]Ibid., 165.
[189]Ibid., 170.
[190]Ibid.
[191]Juliet John, 'Dickens's Villains', p.145.
[192]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.200.
[193]Ibid., 194-195.

Roman history)'.[194] Pip, by contrast, looks to others to get help him out, principally in his fantasy that Miss Havisham is his benefactor and has made him a 'gentleman'.

Juliet John argues that in Dickens's imaginative world, 'a gentleman becomes a villain when gentility ceases to be an end and becomes the means to attain power, status, and money-in other words, the means to gratify the self '.[195] Gentility includes decent morals and educated manners but as soon as the person has become obsessed with ambition for money and wealth, his sincerity and his emotions will not be natural but strongly 'artificial'.[196] Pip was one of those keen to be a gentleman: 'I had always wanted to be a gentleman, and had often and often speculated on what I would do, as if I were one'. [197] The good, nurturing family, in Dickens's imaginative world, is the antidote to these harmful conceptions of gentility and class status. may often promote discipline and gentility among its children. The family is, as Walter E. Houghton recognised, was 'at the centre of Victorian life'. And for Dickens, like many, it held almost mystical charms as 'a peaceful' and 'a sacred' place.[198]

Dickens uses the character of Joe to illustrate the incongruities of the social role of 'the gentleman'. Although Joe has no formal education, he speaks in an emotional way which reveals him as a passionate person. In contrast to Miss Havisham's fiancée, Joe as a husband acts lovingly and gratefully to his wife. Joe never loses his kindness and generosity. According to Graham Law and Adrian J. Pinnington, Joe was depicted as a 'positive figure', but his failure to protect Pip from even his sister, prevented him from being seen as 'a model of true Gentlemanliness'.[199] Joe experiences pains and does not have a perfect wife hence his response to Pip's inner dream provides no sure foundation for proper life. He is a hardworking and has no social ease to please Pip. Therefore, in eyes of novel Joe is not a true gentleman despite his kindness and dutiful. However, Joe's homey gentility comes from his sympathetic demeanour which makes

[194]Michael Slater, 'Dickens, Charles John Huffam'.
[195]Juliet John, Dickens's Villains, p.145.
[196]Ibid., 147.
[197]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.316.
[198]Walter E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind*, (London: Yale UP, 1957) pp.341-346.
[199]Graham Law and Adrian J. Pinnington, *Great Expectations* (Canada: Broadview Press, 1998), p.16.

him worthy for Pip. They make a team together. Joe has no children but is shown to have parental love. Dickens presents Joe in such a way that the reader feels sorry towards him. Nicholas Tredell suggests that competent parenthood is revealed through Joe's character, as Pip's truest and kindest father. For Tredell, 'Joe emerges as a true parent – the only kind of parent that Dickens could ever fully approve, one that remains a child'.[200]

Indeed, throughout the novel, it is only Joe who protects Pip, nurses him, and pays off the bills that Pip owes in debts. This also signifies that a true father is a true gentleman. Philip Collins argues that Pip is happy because of Joe and his 'childhood is made tolerable not by his blood-relations, his sister and uncle, but by his brother-in-law Joe'.[201] Dickens's reader accepts Joe because he tries to care for Pip. His consideration for others leads the reader to believe that he is able to be Pip's key to a happy life. At the same time, Dickens uses entertainment to convey his message by making the blacksmith behave in a manner which was not expected from him. In Victorian society a blacksmith cannot be a gentleman. Joe is a handicraftsman helped by tools. He works to feed his family. Thus, Dickens addresses two points the social standards of gentility and the admirable qualities of Joe. Gentility accompanies by rich and well-educated people, however Joe, who is not rich, and he is not formally educated is portrayed as noble husband, innocent and perfect. These attractive virtues are opposed to the common ideas about the unappreciated morals of handy man. Also, he always welcomes Pip and encourages him to be pupil teacher. Here Joe is totally different from Pip and in his concern for learning, but this is only out of his politeness. Rather he has practical knowledge as a blacksmith which enables him to be a family provider. And he appears to have an innate sense of good morals.

The emotional trauma is not limited to Pip; Estella, who is the same age as Pip is also going through a similar ordeal, and is a victim. She is a source of optimism and hope for Pip. Her presence in the life of Pip brightens his outlook a great extent. Moreover, Stella also imparts the imagery of light – as 'Stella' means star – and although she is as

[200]Nicolas Tredell, *Charles Dickens: Great Expectations* (Cambridge: Cambridge Icon Books: 2000), p.85.
[201]Philip Collins*, Dickens and Education*, p.183.

unattainable as a star, nevertheless, she is juxtaposed with the darkness in 'Satis' house, where no light enters and where time is stagnant.[202] Miss Havisham is presented as a terribly pathetic woman; in fact, she has a grief-filled destiny, similar to that of Estella. Once the reader knows the tragic life-story of Miss Havisham, it makes the reader 'feel sympathy and compassion for her desperate' situation.[203]

It could be argued that Dickens chose to write of the orphan child because, physically freed from the eyes of its parents, the child can relate his view of the world to the reader. It follows therefore that the reader will engage with the world by looking as a child looks. An orphan child must also learn to find his place in the world. Pip and Estella are frustrated by their dreams and the values of their benefactors. According to Pykett, Pip was 'disgusted' when he discovered his real benefactor and saw his expectations had been 'false', that Miss Havisham was not behind his assistance.[204] It was not easy to accept the prisoner to be as the secret guardian of Pip 'brought up as a London gentleman'.[205] He is presented as 'Pip's undesirable fairy godfather', as Jerome Meckier has pointed out.[206]

3.4 Melodrama and Satire in *Great Expectations*

Dickens uses a variety of narrative modes and techniques to convey the dangers of false expectations on children. First, Dickens's use of fairy tale themes was again essential in keeping the audience gripped by an entertaining narrative. Meckier argued that the *Great Expectations* is transformed by the 'unrealistic stories imbued with Cinderella motifs'.[207] For instance, it was Magwitch, who was the unknown benefactor, it was not Miss Havisham as Pip was expected, and it was the unexpected father of Estella whom Pip loved.

Another technique used by Dickens to draw in his readers was his creation of characters and caricatures intended to entertain the Victorian public. According to Margaret Oliphant, '*Great Expectations* is a sensation

[202]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.117.
[203]Richard George Thomas, *Charles Dickens: Great Expectations* (London: Edward Arnold, 1964), p. 34.
[204]Lyn Pykett, *Charles Dickens*, p.169.
[205]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 2, p.345.
[206]Jerome Meckier, *Dickens's Great Expectations Misnar's Pavilion Versus Cinderella* (USA: Kentucky UP, 2006), p.6.
[207]Ibid., xix.

novel', which Dickens's readership enjoyed.[208] Dickens dramatized everything used in the novel, decent characters and villains, social themes, educational opportunities offered for children living in rural areas and their lifestyles. Dickens's characters stand as rhetorical symbols of their morals and their roles in the society.

Dickens uses caricatured characters in the novel to create comic relief. For example, the scene of the Christmas dinner breaks the tension of the preceding terrifying encounter between Pip and the convict. Mr. Pumblechook the object of Pip's derision, is described as a cunning man.[209]

Dickens uses characters as caricatures in the novel to create comic relief. For example, the scene of the Christmas dinner breaks the tension of the preceding terrifying encounter between Pip and the convict. Mr. Pumblechook the object of Pip's derision, is described as a cunning man. The reason for Pumblechook being the choice of caricature is that he represents what Dickens despised: the ignorance and pomposity of the hypocrisy of businessmen. Pumblechook is Pip's uncle. The greedy welfare uncle is not supportive of Pip. He is a man who loves money and who is pleased when he takes Pip to Miss Havisham's house.

Thus, Meckier suggests that as a social commentator, 'his satire would appear excessive'.[210] It appears that *Great Expectations* was not characterised by being completely funny or completely melancholy but involves both emotions. The focus of the narrative is on the life of Pip and the aim of building the reader's compassion for Pip and in this Dickens manages to tease out the humour of the novel without undermining the tragic elements. For instance, the first scene, when Pip is in the graveyard, includes gloom and a decaying atmosphere, and it also includes a combination of comic elements and sensation. Pip was alone in a remote place with no life and 'a fearful man, all in coarse grey, with 'a great iron on his leg', threatens Pip with his 'terrible voice'.[211] On the other hand, when Pip is respected, the criminal convict addresses him as 'sir' and politely answers his questions about his name.[212] In a letter to John Foster, Dickens

[208]Norman Page, *Dickens Hard Times*, p.99.
[209]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.48.
[210]Jerome Meckier, *Dickens's Great Expectations*, p. xviii.
[211]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.3.
[212]Ibid., 4.

describes his adapted style in *Great Expectations* writing, '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'.[213]

In addition to these strategies of satire, comedy, and caricature, Dickens used symbols that would prompt the reader to look closely at society. 'Looking' is an image present throughout *Great Expectations*. The convict looks at Pip in the graveyard when they first meet and again when the convict is recaptured. Perhaps, in this last glimpse of Pip, begins the glimmer of the plan that Magwitch will follow to later transform Pip's life Dickens also highlights the importance of looking to express feeling. Another interesting aspect of the narrative art of Dickens is to highlight the significance of the act of looking in order to express feelings. In chapter five, Magwitch looks at Pip in a way that is 'attentive' and sympathetic to the needs of Pip.[214] This is the final scene between the little boy Pip and the convict Magwitch before they meet later in life. Their eyes come together and there is a quick exchange of good will on both the sides. The scene takes place in the marshes, when Magwitch is captured by the soldiers, and he is taken again to the prison ships. Pip is horrified that Magwitch will tell everything about Pip's help to the soldiers, but still he is worried and has to see that Magwitch is in a safe place. Pip is anxious about Magwitch; thus, he owes Pip money later on, his gaze becomes an act of love. Now the young boy becomes a gentleman. In chapter twenty of the second book, Magwitch expresses his affection to Pip saying, 'look'ee here, Pip. I'm your second father. You're my son –more to me nor any son. I've put away money, only for you to spend'.[215]

Food is another important symbol of the Victorian melodramatic setting that Dickens used to establish a world of plenty and injustice. Gail Turley Houston points out that: one of the important perceptions of Dickens' fiction is of Victorian society as one in which the weak support the strong, the starving underwrites the satiated, the poor prop up the rich, the children sustain the parents -and the female upholds the male.[216] Food

[213]Norman Page, *Dickens Hard Times,* pp. 92-93.
[214] Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, pp.48-49.
[215]Ibid., Vol:2, p. 341.
[216]Gail Turley Houston, 'Pip and Property: the (Re) Production of the self in Great Expectations', *Studies in the Novel*, vol.24, no.1, (1992), pp.13-25.

forms a major part of the melodramatic scenes, here, as in *Oliver Twist* . The happy family, according to Dickens, is associated with food, when there is no love or care, there is no food. Mrs. Joe, Pip's sister, according to Barbara Hardy notes, 'is an unloving mother-surrogate who feeds her family unceremoniously'.[217] Hardy argues that Pip was not emotionally satisfied when he described his sister's way of cutting the bread and putting the butter on the slices of the loaf. As a child, Pip deeply needs to feel his sister's love especially with food. Hardy noted that Mrs Joe could offer two kinds of meals; one was 'the rough meals shared by Pip and Joe', and the other which 'is the false ceremony of hospitality' shared by others like Mr. Peoplehood, Pumblechook and Mr. Wopsole.[218]

In chapter nine, Pip compares Miss Havisham to Joe: 'I thought how Joe and my sister were then sitting in the kitchen and how Miss Havisham and Estella never sat in a kitchen but were far above the level of such common things'. [219] The kitchen is very important to Dickens's melodrama. It is used in relation to its melodramatic themes on social level to promote the reader's sympathy and to imagine how such simple thing could emotionally be enough for the child. A room associated with both food and emotion; the kitchen records every single moment of happiness. When there is a kitchen, there is a family. It also reveals the family's economic and moral state. For the compassionate family, the kitchen is where they celebrate their love, and their pleasure of food, drink and gossip. Throughout the novel, the word kitchen is frequently mentioned by Pip symbolising Dickens's nostalgia for his family home. On the other hand, Pip described Miss Havisham's and Estella's house as 'so strange… so melancholy'.[220]

Keeping the reader's attention, Dicken's portrays the family using a balance of humour and sentiment, through melodramatic scenes. Essentially the problem for Pip's family was poverty. The family is represented with sentiment and humour. As Norman Page has claimed, 'the Gargery household is treated with comedy rather than with the harsh

[217]Norman Page, *Dickens: Hard Times, Great Expectations and Our Mutual Friend* (London: Macmillan, 1979) p.136.
[218]Ibid.
[219]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.151.
[220]Ibid., 124.

violence'.[221] Basic food and the principles of education are given, but not further earnings or schooling. Having three good nourishing meals a day was not enough for Pip, however. It can be argued that Dickens's sympathy focused on Mrs. Joe. Poverty was so hard for Mrs. Joe; thus, its effect was severe on her emotions and her body. Her great burden diminished her kindness and caused her to be unfriendly towards her husband and brother. Dickens wrote that Mrs. Joe was the 'strictest kind' woman, in every sense of that word.[222] She was an orphan as well as Pip. During such harsh circumstances the orphanage was not welcome instead it was 'trouble'.[223] Melodramatic scenes in the narrative characterize Mrs. Joe's emotional conflict, including how she turns from a cautious, working class woman to a pitiless mother and wife. They also show how she was highly influenced by the stereotype of society; thus, it is very important for her to celebrate Christmas evening. It can be seen that she finds her relief in integrating with the middle class families and sharing her happiest meal with invited guests. Indeed, the conflict in Mrs. Joe's character is depicted when she offers Pip the meal while she was annoyed by his disobedience. Her concern is demonstrated when Mr. Joe says 'Mrs. Joe has been out a dozen times, looking for you, Pip. And she's out now, making it a baker's dozen'. [224] The 'Tickler' which Mrs. Joe used to correct Pip's attitude is associated with fun to entertain the reader.[225]

Furthermore, in Dickens's novels, evil characters are played as an unpleasant, inhumane or dislikeable person to attract the reader's attention. For instance, in *Great Expectations* Mr. Pumblechook is a 'middle-aged slow man with a mouth like a fish, dull staring eyes'.[226] By means of these features, Mr. Pumblechook is described as a dull worthless person, and with a fish's mouth, which says nothing meaningful. Pumblechook did not allow Pip to share the adults' Christmas, by looking at Pip, and asking him to be grateful to those people who brought him up with their own hands. In addition, it was Mr. Pumblechook among the heartless adults, with the exception of Joe, who were sitting at the table of the dinner

[221]Ibid., 136.
[222]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p. 18.
[223]Ibid., 55.
[224]Ibid., 14.
[225]Ibid., 14.
[226]Ibid., 48.

takes place on Christmas Day, and who did not allow Pip to enjoy the celebration of Christmas Eve, when Mr. Pumblechook, Mr. Wopsle, Mr. and Mrs. Hubble and Mrs. Joe, Pip's sister, were busy criticizing Pip. Here Dickens used a satirical melodrama to highlight the issue of false gentility. This implies the importance of kindness for being a good gentleman. Thus, the only thing that differentiates Pumblechook from Magwitch is that he never cared for Pip.

In an impressively melodramatic scene when Pip falls ill with fever after the death of Magwitch in Book 3 Chapter 57, Dickens presents Joe as full of pity. When Pip was a child Joe was always there and supported him. No doubt, the compassionate scene introduces with Dickens's opinion that children are born to be loved and cared for. As a child or as a grown-up adult, Pip requires love and care. Joe fulfilled what Pip needed; as Martin Meisel argues, Joe was the 'perfectly loving father'[227] Pip noted:

> I fancied I was little Pip again. For, the tenderness of Joe was so beautifully proportioned to my need that I was like a child in his hands.[228]

Here the love between Joe and Pip is certainly necessary to the plot of the novel, because Dickens illustrated the key that for Joe's manner, it is not a matter of wealth or gentility to feel regret for others, but of emotion and empathetic sentiment.

3.5 The legal system and its effects on children

Dickens focusses on the legal system, which might have been important in diminishing the effects and results of poverty and participating in creating a protective environment for children through social and economic services. When Magwitch returns to London when Pip is an adult, he tells his story. The pathos is in the casual understatement of a man who is unaccustomed to talking of his life, just as the sufferer feels their story is barely worth the notice of the better-off: 'so fur as I could find, there warn't a soul that could see young Abel Magwitch, with as little on him as in him, but wot caught fright at him, and either drove him off or took him up'.[229]

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[227]Norman Page*, Charles Dickens's Hard Times*, p.127.
[228]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol:3, pp. 305-306.
[229]Ibid.,43.

Jaggers echoes the account of the reality of life for unemployed children in answer to Pip's demand for an explanation of Estella's background. Dickens describes Jaggers's involvement in her adoption by Miss Havisham, when he tells how he 'Put the case that he often saw children tried at a criminal bar […] Put the case that he habitually knew of their being imprisoned, whipped, transported, neglected [….] and growing up to be hanged'.[230]

According to Dickens, low incomes caused social violence. Similarly, James E. Marlow claimed in his book 'revenge is the major motivation of many characters in *Great Expectations*-- Miss Havisham, Magwitch, and Orlick. Even Pip wishes explicitly to take revenge himself on Trabb's boy and implicitly, perhaps on others'.[231] Moreover**,** legal systems, prison, and crime are consistently a focus for Dickens, which are represented in the novel through images of decay, disorder and the gothic. Jaggers is the lawyer defined as the lawyer of criminals who is perfectly able to release his clients. Pykett noted that this novel presents a description of 'punishment', imprisonment and surveillance' to suggest ways in which legislation is examined from its practices.[232]

Starting out as a political journalist, Dickens had observed societal problems in Victorian England.[233] Dickens, from his time studying law as an apprentice lawyer at the age of fifteen, and from his experience and work as a court reporter for the Court of Chancery, gained insight into the real practice of lawyers, not all their practices being ethical. Jaggers, personifies what was for Dickens a joyless profession. Dickens portrays Mr. Jaggers's office using melodramatically gothic symbols, illustrating the dark aspect of the law, either for the criminals or as lawyers:

> Mr. Jaggers's room was lighted by a skylight only, and was a most dismal place; the skylight, eccentrically patched like a broken head […] there were some odd objects about […] two dreadful casts on a shelf, of faces peculiarly swollen, and twitchy about the nose. Mr. Jaggers's own high-backed chair was of deadly black horsehair, with rows of brass nails round it, like a coffin.[234]

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[230]Ibid.,190.
[231]Marlow, Charles Dickens*: The Uses of Time* (London and Toronto: Selinsgrove: Susquehanna UP, 1994), p.98.
[232]Lyn Pykett, *Charles Dickens* ,p.171.
[233]Alerne Bowers Andrews, 'Charles Dickens, Social Worker in His Time', *Social work,* 57, 4, (2012), pp. 297-307.
[234]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 2, p.5.

This office is as blighted and corrupt as its owner's heart and features. Pip describes his 'large head', 'dark complexion', 'deep-set eyes' and 'bushy black eyebrows'.[235] Jaggers, we are meant to feel, had a cold heart, and Dickens details how he had successfully defended murder charges. When Mr. Jaggers asks Joe if he wanted anything to let Pip go to London, Mr. Joe replied 'no', and then said to Joe: 'very well'.[236] This section expresses the greed of Mr. Jaggers and the polite nobility of Joe. Pip said, 'I thought Mr. Jaggers glanced at Joe, as if he considered him a fool for his disinterestedness'.[237] It can be argued that Jaggers is motivated by money and would serve the person who paid the most, despite the ethics of their case. He is 'highly dictatorial'.[238] No matter what has happened to Estella's family, now they are unknown to each other, Mr. Jaggers as he is professional in his work, saved Estella's mother from being hanged and saved Estella from destruction or being 'tried at a criminal bar' or 'being imprisoned' which was the evil destiny of other orphan children.[239] Indeed, within the law, there is no solution for the rural orphan to save his or her life except being adopted, but Dickens shows that how the child grows up is not relevant for Jaggers. Mr. Jaggers believed that he saved Estella as a child. Both Mr. Jaggers and the Victorian law shared the same features and practices. Jaggers could be the image of the Victorian criminal justice law, for the criminals are frightened of him as well as the law, 'he would have their lives, and the lives of the scores of 'em. He'd have all he could get', Pip describes him as 'brutal'.[240]

3.6 Education

Education is an important theme once again in this novel and its situations and deficiencies are described in melodramatic scenes. There are many reasons why Pip does not receive proper education. His early education is very limited. His school is in a rural town; its name is the same of its owner's Mr. Wopsle's great aunt's school. It is a local school far from any education inspector. According to Berry, Pip's unprofessional education, is described by Shuttleworth as not meeting requirements. He says, 'the

[235]Ibid.,79.
[236]Ibid., Vol:1, p.294
[237]Ibid.
[238]Ibid., 228.
[239]Ibid.,225.
[240]Ibid., Vol: 2, p.421.

education of the labouring class might unfit them for the performance of their practical duties in life'.[241] Moreover, Pip's home does not support him either. A gentleman's education would have demanded an intensive level of moral education whether at home or in any formal schooling. Pip's does not.

The novel's images of inadequate educational institutions, which is not confined to the benefit of personal development, has a direct relationship with Victorian society. For example, Miss. Havisham's inhuman training of Estella, according to Richard G. Thomas, is a 'system of unsentimental education'.[242] Despite her formal education abroad being described in the novel as suitable for 'a lady'.[243] According to Francis Duke, Kay Shuttleworth and Philip Collins, if the Victorian child has a poor economic background , or if he is not largely supported by fees for education and living, his education in the period could not be satisfactory. Francis Duke has pointed out that 'in most cases they [pauper children] appear either to have received nominal instruction from an adult pauper or to have been sent out to local day school'.[244] In the novel, Dickens shows Biddy as the adult who taught Pip the basics of education, which did not make him as completely ignorant as Joe. Kay Shuttleworth argues that to liberate the child from 'misfortunes' and 'stigma' of his poor family, he needed to join 'the district school'. The 'school' run by the dramatic Mr. Wopsle's aunt, while being comically portrayed, is an indictment of the failure to provide a decent education for boys and girls. Dickens satirizes the education by describing the fiction that Mr. Wopsle 'examined' the scholars once a quarter. What he did on those occasions was to turn up his cuffs, stick up his hair and give us Mark Anthony's oration over the body of Caesar'. [245] It can be seen that Dickens remarked to the world that the dire conditions of educational standards not only emerged in the workhouse of *Oliver Twist*, but also in the private schools such as Mr. Wopsle's great aunt's school, which is an urban school of old masters for two pence per

[241]Laura C. Berry, *The Child, the State and the Victorian Novel*, p. 37.
[242]Richard G. Thomas, *Charles Dickens: Great Expectations* (London: Edward Arnold, 1964), p.34.
[243]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.247.
[244]Derek Fraser, *The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century* (London, Macmillan, 1976), p. 68.
[245]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, 91.

week. Philip Collins argued the school of Mr. Wopsle's great -aunt 'is utterly incompetent'.[246]

In the absence of a formal education, Dickens was self-taught during the period in which he worked as a clerk in a solicitor's office. John Manning claims that Dickens believed that 'self-education gave a man self-respect'.[247] This belief is evident in Dickens's portrayal of Pip in *Great Expectations* who yearned for Biddy to guide him that he might learn and become a gentleman and earn Estella's respect and love. Thus Manning believed that Dickens built up his description to be consistent with the 'spirit of fun' and the education in such a type of evening school.[248] Here this type of education is a fun learning experience. It is education with relaxation and fun activities.

Furthermore, through depiction of play and games, Dickens shows the importance of engaging the children's mind in their education. From a boy, Dickens was influenced by his childhood entertainment. He read *The Arabian Nights* and *Robinson Crusoe*. For him reading imaginative novels could entertain the child, educate and please him as well as playing games with the family and watching performances of plays in the theatre. Although this appears as a nostalgic vision of Dickens's childhood, it deals with the adult world. For Dickens, what entertained the child could please the adult. In an article *Where We Stopped Growing*, he said, "If we can only preserve ourselves from growing up, we shall never grow old'.[249]

3.7 Illustrations

In this section, I will examine the subsequent illustrated versions of *Great Expectations* that helped to draw out Dickens's views on children and poverty. This will show how melodramatic illustrations added to Dickens's representation of poverty in the period. This study will focus on the representations of the passions, emotions and dreams of the protagonist Pip and the prisoner Magwitch that were described by Dickens as well as being expressed by the illustrator. This focus covers the physical expressions of feelings of pain, corruption, sorrow and love that affect the reader's

[246]Philip Collins, *Dickens and Education*, p.94.
[247]Manning, *Dickens on Education*, p.159.
[248]Ibid.,75.
[249]Charles Dickens, 'Where We Stopped Growing', *Household Words*, Vol:6, (1853), pp.361-3.

reaction. Moreover, this section will show how the illustrator interprets the melodramatic patterns of the text in a way to supplement Dickens's ideas of reform. Thus, this section will discuss how the illustrations show the melodramatic representation of poverty, including visual representations of hierarchies, body language, facial expressions and light.

The first scenes I will consider are those which involve the soldiers, which through melodrama become symbolic of the entire legal system. Dickens conveys the soldiers as a social fact of a harsh and punitive legal system. There are three important examples in the novel showing the soldiers as unhelpful, which severely affected the protagonist Pip and terrified him. The first represents the scene in chapter five, when the soldiers arrive at Pip's house looking for a blacksmith. The second one appears in chapter sixteen when the soldiers investigate Mrs. Joe's death. And the third one is found in chapter fifty-four when they caught Magwitch.

Some illustrators exclude Mrs. Joe, for the sake of highlighting other adult characters who work to direct Pip's life by love and care. Felix O. C. Darley (1861) was one of the few illustrators to have dealt with Mrs. Joe. Darley was an American illustrator and illustrated one of the early American editions of *Great Expectations*.

Darley's image helps explain the domineering vision of the Victorian working-class female through the character of Mrs. Joe. This representation of Mrs. Joe shows how the life is hard for common class women in Victorian England. Also it tells more about the members of Pip's family. His sister, Mrs. Joe, who fosters him, though physically active, grows up hard-hearted and no smiles. Here, the house is uncomfortable despite it is so full of food and drinks, meals, and parties every Christmas. Mrs. Joe who lacks education and good breeding becomes an unhappy lady, horrible wife, and mother. As the historian Pat Thane has pointed out that, 'the policy-makers ignored or underestimated severe problems of poverty among adult able-bodied women. They also ignored much else'.[250] However, Mrs Joe is not poor, and her husband is a blacksmith, but her responsibilities does her no good. She teaches others to be aware of the duties, but she is not aware of it herself. Most of woman had

[250]Pat Thane, 'Women and the Poor Law in Victorian and Edwardian England', *History Workshop*, no. 6, (1978), pp. 29–51.

become like labourer at home and were imprisoned in it. 'Women applying for poor relief were put on an awkward position' as Marjorie Levine-Clark has claimed.[251]

FIGURE 13. MRS. GARGERY ON THE RAM-PAGE, BY FELIX O. C. DARLEY (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

Darley therefore follows Dickens in representing Pip's sister as a heartless and restricted woman. In figure 13, Darley covers the poor background of Pip and his corrupted life represented by his frightful sister. The home is 'wooden', and his sister is angry while she was looking for

[251]M. Levine-Clarke, 'Engendering Relief: Women, Ablebodiedness, and the New Poor Law in Early Victorian England', *Journal of Women's History*, 11, 4, (2000), p. 107.

Pip.[252] Darley points to a scene in the novel in which Dickens shows Pip's labouring family. Every day she 'made a grab at Tickler, and she Ram-paged out', she was so frightening that even the duck and the dog show fear.[253] In the text, Pip describes her physical features in the same manner as of Darley: 'she was tall and bony, and almost always wore a coarse apron […] she should not have taken it off, every day of her life'.[254] The absence of Pip in this illustration suggests Pip's absence from his sister's emotional concern. Darley focused on her as pitiable and deserving relief.

In the next part, I will trace how specific illustrations show the important impact of those characters on the development of Pip's character. In the absence of formal institutions or support, his development, and that of other poor children, may depend on chance or haphazard meetings.

FIGURE 14. JOE GARGERY AND PIP, BY FELIX O. C. DARLEY (1888)(SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

[252]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.13.
[253]Ibid., 14.
[254]Ibid., 13.

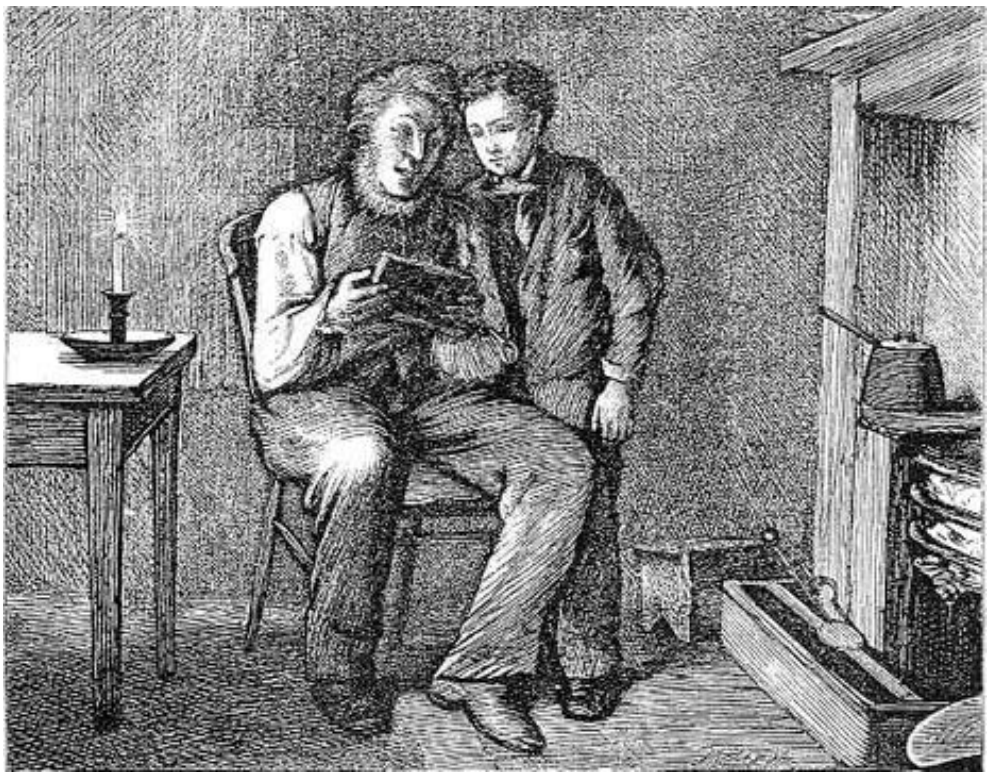

FIGURE 15. WHY, HERE'S A J," SAID JOE, "AND A O EQUAL TO ANYTHINK! BY F. A. FRASER (1877)

(SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

In Figures 14 and 15, the two illustrations of Darley and Fraser are equally effective as they represent the compassionate relationship and the deep understanding between Pip and Joe. Despite the two illustrations showing Pip in a loving position with Joe, Darley's illustration is more melodramatic and more accurate than Fraser's. Darley used his own details to visualize the scene to represent a relationship of sentiment between father and son. In a peaceful scene, Joe represents best sense of a father, while Pip embodies the act of the adorable child. This exceptional work developed Dickens's melodrama.

The two have been depicted sitting in the kitchen, looking at a book. However, both illustrators dramatize the same such setting, their view of interpreting Joe as illiterate and Pip drawing Joe 's attention to his writings are not the same. In Darley's image [figure 14] all the items in the kitchen are represented. The light seems as if it isolated them from the rest the world, giving them a warmth and precious happy moment. However, Darley draws Pip with his head leaning towards Joe; Pip looks as if he has noticed something in a book while Joe gazed on it blankly. Joe

appears very attentive to Pip's discussion. He is smiling and acting as a father who is enjoying how his child could read and write.

Fraser was a British illustrator, who illustrated ten of Dickens's novels. It is argued by Bentley that 'Fraser's characters' in his illustration of Dickens's work are 'sentimental' and 'demure' which Cruikshank is lacking in his depiction.[255] Thus, Fraser's illustration portrays Joe from a different point of view. The expressions of his face while holding a book in his hands show him as if he knows too much, as if he is lecturing Pip while Pip is silent and listening. Fraser suggested a different Joe. However, Allingham suggested that Pip is 'acting as the teacher of an adult' while Joe expressed a 'puzzlement' over Pip's knowledge. Pip describes his love feelings towards Joe saying, 'I was looking up to Joe in my heart'.[256]

FIGURE 16. THE SERGEANT RAN IN FIRST WHEN HE HAD RUN THE NOISE QUITE DOWN BY FELIX O. C. DARLEY(SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

In figure16 which was drawn by Felix O. C. Darley (1861), there is an expression of touching passion hope and sadness, love and hate, care and danger, with Pip in the cold and wet marshes carried on the back of

[255]Nicolas Bentley, 'Dickens and his Illustrators', *Dickensian,* 65(359), (1969), p. 148-62.
[256]Dickens*, Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.104.

Joe, meanwhile Magwitch is being mistreated by the soldiers. The image was published in the same year as the novel's publication. In fact, this image with its grey and white is an example of the inevitable hopeless destiny surrounding Pip, Joe and Magwitch. The full emotions of this scene are depicted. Although both Magwitch and Joe's influences operate in Pip's life, one with his love and morals and the other with filthy money, neither satisfied Pip. Pip is anxious-looking here. However, it was not only for poor Magwitch, but it was also for his own sympathy towards Magwitch that makes Pip anxious. Moreover, it was not only Pip who the hard scene of Magwitch affected, but it was Joe also whose eyes reflect his empathy. It shows how Pip is very important for Joe, as if he attempted to protect Pip from dropping into the criminal life from which Magwitch could never be lifted again. On the other hand, this illustration shows Magwitch is the needy person; that his face expressed his agony. It shows how depressed from life and how humiliated from the law Magwitch was.

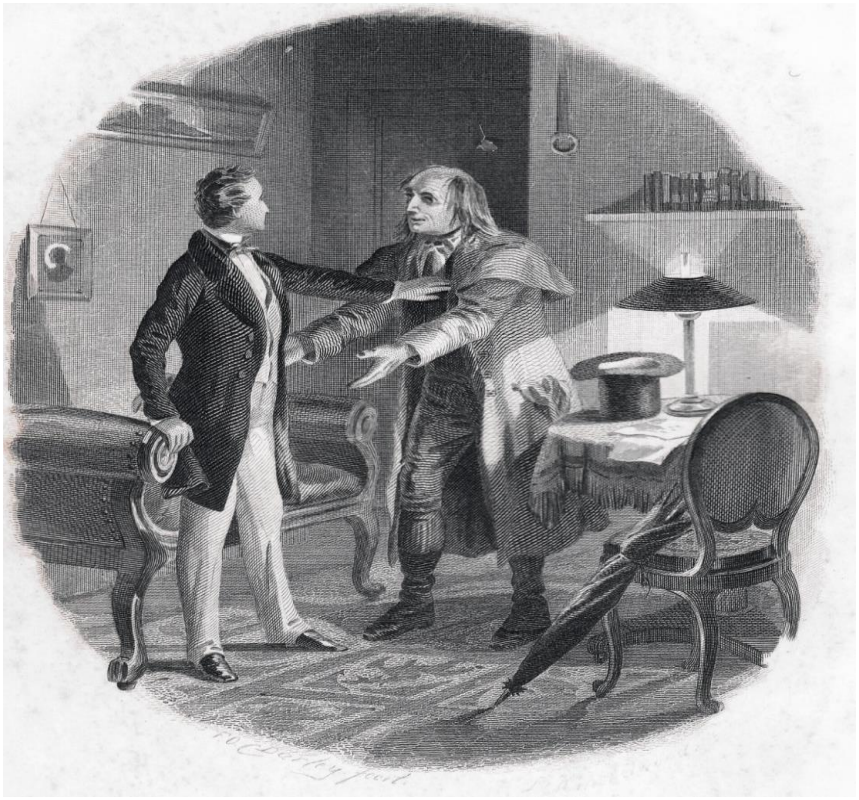

FIGURE 17. THE CONVICT'S RETURN BY FELIX O. C. DARLEY (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

Figure 17 was drawn by Felix O. C. Darley (1861). This is an illustration of the pitiful scene when Magwitch returned to see Pip. Considering the humanity represented in the novel, the illustration has a major focus in Magwitch 's attempts to be a generous man despite his

crimes. The melodramatic theme of the upper –class's lack of concern for the craftsmen, which is shown throughout the novel, emerges particularly in this scene and this image. Magwitch is represented atypical as in the novel having a 'furrowed and bald' head with 'long iron- grey hair' and wearing a decent dress and long coat.[257] Also Darley showed him a mature, impressive and delightful man. This was a form of relief provided to him within the case of reform and is a distinctive picture of melodrama. Darley makes clear the point of the social barriers between the aristocratic Pip and the poor Magwitch that their friendship could turn to hate. The new social status brutalized the sympathetic heart of Pip. Pip is described and show in the act of 'la[ying] a hand upon his breast and put[ting] him away'.[258] He draws Pip with his hand showing his particular restriction while the action of Magwitch's hands shows that he was generous.[259]

[257]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 3, p.11.
[258]Ibid. Vol: 2, p. 334.
[259]Ibid., 341.

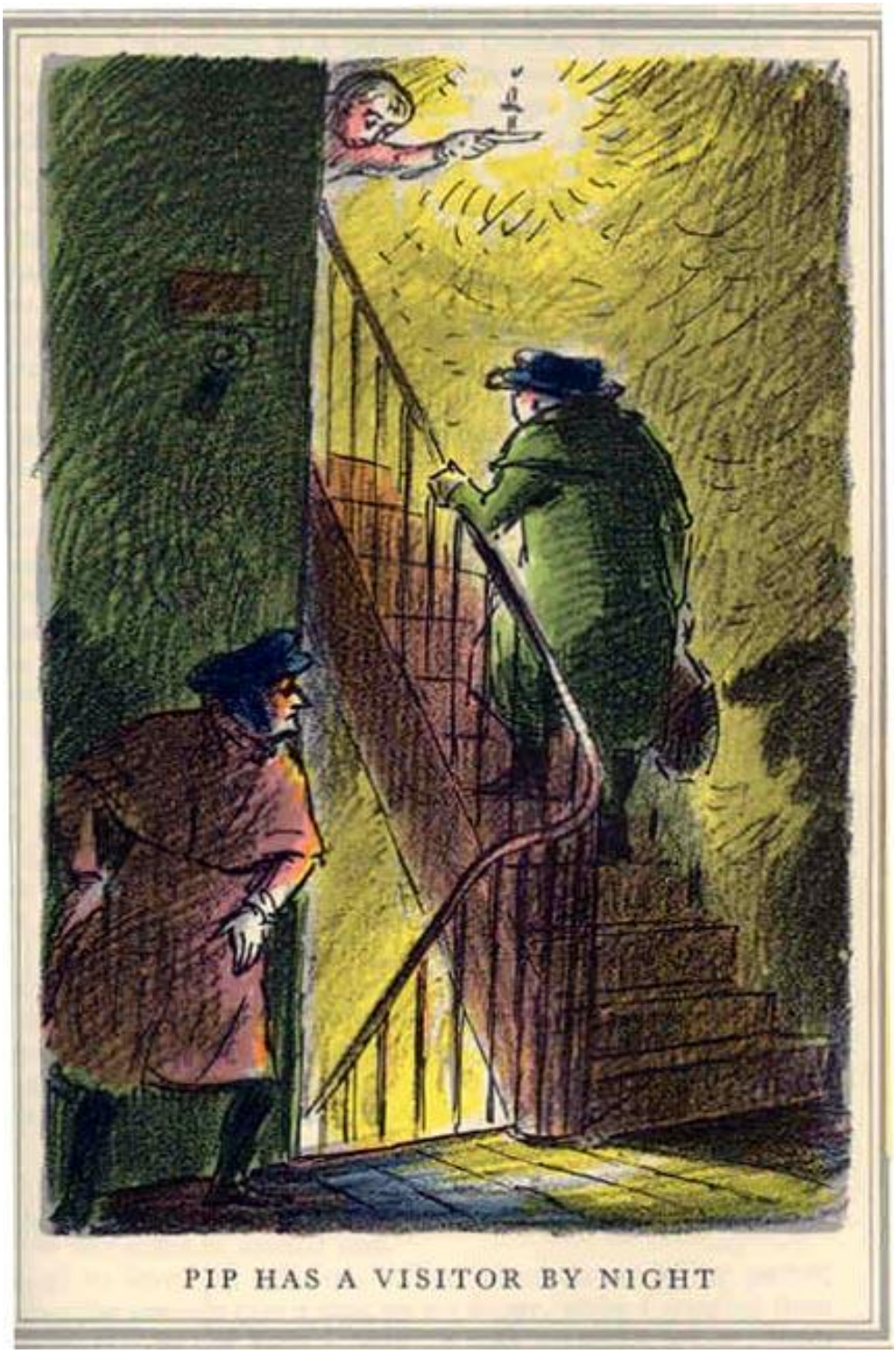

FIGURE 18. PIP HAS A VISITOR BY NIGHT (1939) BY EDWARD ARDIZZONE (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

Edward Ardizzone was the twentieth English illustrator of Dickens's novels. Many of his works were of war and children.[260] In figure 18, the illustration does not show any emotional confrontations between Pip and Magwitch. It shows Magwitch visiting Pip at night. This visit reminds the reader of Magwitch's first visit to Pip's village. Magwitch always was a

[260]William Cook, 'Forever young', *New Statesman*, 16(747), (2003) pp. 42-43.

mysterious guest. Ardizzone depicts the scene by using drama and cartoon forms. It bears the sense of an illustration for children books. However according to a review, he 'created an imaginative universe of his own'.[261] Magwitch's climbing of the stairs is a visual expression of his passionate love for Pip. In Magwitch's mind, Pip was always his favourite son. Ardizzone has given Magwitch dark clothing which contrasts him with Pip to suggest not merely Magwitch's poverty but also a symbolic representation of his sense of an imperfect society. In fact, the two figures 17 and 18 which depict Magwitch and Pip present that the educated Pip had been produced by bad education. The result of his bad education is that Pip becomes '[un] grateful' boy to the compassionate educator Magwitch.[262] This view was shared by his sister, when she always reminds him to be grateful to her.

The second example is Miss. Havisham. Marcus Stone seems to have been interested in depicting their first meeting, and subsequently revealed Miss. Havisham as a 'queen' figure 19.[263] Marcus Stone was an English painter and illustrator, who offered Dickens eight woodcuts for the novel in 1862.[264] Schlicke has pointed out that 'Stone works within the sentimental-realist tradition of the black and white graphic artists of the 1860s'. [265]

[261]Ibid., 42.
[262]Dickens, Great Expectations, Vol:1, p. 51.
[263]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, vol:2, p. 159.
[264]Paul Schlicke, *Oxford Reader's Companion to Dickens* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), p.254.
[265]Ibid.,291.

FIGURE 19. PIP WAITS ON MISS HAVISHAM (1862) BY MARCUS STONE (SOURCE: VICTORIAN WEB)

Miss Havisham played a significant role in showing society's indifference to the common children. It refers to the construction of social rank where those people with low wages move down while the rich hold on to the top. In fact, this period was a time of social disorder when humanity is corrupted in Dickens's opinion. In fact, the amount of money which is given to Joe to apprentice Pip, expressed her view of social inequalities. Here her money is not a means of relief, but it is used to keep Pip as a labourer. Her

depiction in figure 19 represents her like her society, modern but emotionless, thus Pip 'will expect no [t] other and no more' from her.[266]

Philip V. Allingham argues that 'Stone's style veers deliberately away from literal realism towards the creation of an appropriate mood or atmosphere, as we have seen in 'Pip Waits on Miss Havisham,' a plate realising not merely Stone's initial reading of the serialised in *All the Year Round*, but also the young illustrator's conversations with the author himself'.[267] There are some possible reasons why Stone's illustration of Miss Havisham in fig. 19 does not follow Dickens's description of her personal traits. First, Stone draws a beautiful lady, standing like a queen, staring at Pip. This illustration shows various versions of melodrama. In fact, the illustration is a supplement to Dickens's melodrama but from a different point of view. Although Stone's Havisham was pretty, she is still 'the strangest lady'.[268] Stone represents how Pip sees Miss Havisham by his heart and his eyes. He sees her as hard-to-reach. Both Dickens and Stone indicate how Miss Havisham's interest in Pip inspired him to be changed. She always pushes him saying 'love her, love her, love her! If she favours you, loves her. If she wounds you , loves her. If she tears your heart to pieces- and as it gets older and stronger, it will tear deeper- love her, love her, love her!'.[269] Pip says 'I awaken the heart within her , that was mute and sleeping now?'.[270]

The second aspect of the melodrama is that when depicting her as a beautiful woman in her wedding dress, Stone illustrated that Miss Havisham's beauty is as false as Pip's expectations. Stone has shown considerable innovation in choosing a young Miss Havisham as the source of Pip's hopes and at the same time stimulating the reader's passions.

The third point is that Dickens hints at her perfection when he describes her inhabiting Satis House. Dickens said, 'Whoever had this house, could want nothing else'.[271] The completeness of Satis house and his

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[266]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.216.
[267]Philip V. Allingham, *Marcus Stone, R. A. (1840-1921): Painter and Illustrator*, Victorian web, 2017< http://www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/mstone/bio.html> [Accessed: 17 May 2018].
[268]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.119.
[269]Ibid., Vol: 2, p. 170.
[270]Ibid., 178
[271]Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Vol: 1, p.117.

view of Miss Havisham contrasts with Pip's ongoing struggles again from society to become a gentleman. Dickens portrays Miss Havisham in counterpoint to the values of Victorian family and motherhood as a heartless guardian. For Dickens, Miss Havisham is a melodramatic character; a woman without female nature. She deserves the reader's passion for her unhappy life and for her role in stimulting Pip's ambitions.

Stone conveys a strong sense of 'looking', depicting both Miss Havisham and Pip attempting to identify their emotional relationship through a warmth gaze. This creates a sense of communication between characters. However, Stone avoids the eager gaze of Miss Havisham's sunken eyes as she stares at Pip. In his illustration, there is no need for her to say, 'look at me'. In terms of the novel, it is a melodramatic gesture. In his relations with other characters Pip depends on looking. From their eyes, warm, flashing, sparkling, he can understand their feelings.

The contrast between dark and light allows the reader to see Miss. Havisham as a particular image of femininity, interpreted emotionally as she is both beautiful and proud. Stone creates Miss Havisham plainly as a rational middle-aged woman with a good-looking body. Hence, this illustration shows Pip is lacking parental love and his attempts to find a little good in an adult figure. However, Dickens gives her dissatisfied, unpleasant features but still there is an invisible melodramatic understanding between Pip and her that is represented in this illustration. For Dickens, in a child's world, the adult is always neglectful and disappointing in fulfilling the child's hopes and expectations. The illustrator did not follow Dickens's sense of melodrama in representing Miss Havisham physically and emotionally as a bad 'mother'. The illustrator pitied Miss Havisham. The image has elements of sentimentality which focus on her youthful representation.

3.8 Conclusion

The major events of *Great Expectations* are closely linked to the biography of Dickens and, hence, clearly reflect his novelistic growth. His experience of injustice and the working class played a vital role in his emotional and professional life, allowing him to accurately depict several of the economic and social factors affecting children in his novels. Dickens particularly focuses on events in rural situations, where families tend to teach their children practical skills, such as blacksmithing, and cultural and moral values, including the importance of a traditional Christmas feast. He also highlights the free of costs classroom and simple learning, underlining how essential both are for the development of children's imagination. However, Dickens also articulates how problems emerge when children's ambitions inspire them to reshape their manners in terms of both life and education. At the same time, he shows that while formal education can fulfil a child's ambition for success and serve as a powerful driver of moral change, it also has potentially negative effects, particularly deference to wealth and social status combined with contempt for the values of common humanity. This is clearly seen in the case of Joe and Biddy.

The plot of the novel and its illustrations depict an ironic form of romance in which status and inequality threaten childhood and the family as a whole. They also show how snobbery, among others, stops people from seeing what is in front of them and being true to themselves and others. The novel presents Dickens's satirical views, thereby drawing the public's attention to the miserable conditions of education. Furthermore, the melodrama used by Dickens portrays an absolute morality. As a result, sentimental themes are presented in *Great Expectations* to inspire and engage the reader's thoughts, aiming to modify social problems and reduce anger and indignation.

The theme of *Great Expectations* is moral education and the upbringing of children. It portrays a relationship between the family's background and the standard of education that it has adopted. Also, the novel highlights how children's morality is easily influenced by bad-mannered families. Families are responsible for the moral education of children, and, due to the social hierarchy, children's education, children's entertainment and children's class are all closely intertwined. Informal education was aimed at common children, as seen in the case of Pip, who is

educated through the reading of books and his exposure to literature in Mr Wopsle's great-aunt's school. Pip's family cannot afford to improve their fate, e.g. engage in a better occupation or obtain more tools for entertainment, except for the Christmas celebration, underlining their religious interest. Hence, Pip suffers from a lack of access to things such as educational opportunities and options for a decent income. Based on his love for Estella, he decides to seek an education that is based on aristocratic manners and not on everyday education. Pip willingness to be a gentleman and not a blacksmith stems from his desire to be accepted by Estella. This shows how teaching children how to read and write is useful, yet it does not help them develop their social rank. However, better education is important for Pip to fulfil his dreams. Dickens portrays how this condition becomes dangerous when Pip deprives everyone in his family once he becomes a gentleman. Throughout the novel, Dickens emphasises that even though Joe is not well educated due to his abusive father, he does possess emotional intelligence and the moral values that others lack. His decent attitudes toward his wife Mrs. Joe and his parental care led to much of the sentiment for which he is best nurtured. Dickens is more attentive and sympathetic to moral education than formal education.

Dickens is aware of the need for children to learn virtues and morals. Estella, who comes from a privileged class, has her perception manipulated by Miss Havisham. Miss Havisham oppresses Estela's imagination and Pip's expectations, and Estella suppresses Pip in turn. Meanwhile, Pip's sister Mrs Joe denies him all comforts, frightening him instead.

So there is a theme reflects the importance of personal donations and charitable activities at a time when many families and children live in complex social problems. Dickens provides a compassionate view of legal status of adopting children. Pip and Estella are foster children who hope for help from their foster parents. But instead they meet irresponsible benefactors. They make their children unhappy. Miss. Havisham educates Estella into never let any gentleman wins her heart, while Magwitch uses criminal money to let Pip lives as a gentleman.

Through his writing, Dickens popularized the need for urgent reform at a time when proper employment was being debated by scholars

who showed high level standard of education and training. Dickens highlighted that when indifference pervades, children will be the victims.

Conclusion

By analysing three of Dickens's novels, namely *Oliver Twist*, *Hard Times* and *Great Expectations*, through the lens of their respective illustrations, this thesis has discussed the strategies employed by Dickens as a means to encourage both social system reform and childhood education, specifically by engaging the sympathies of a broad readership. Aware of how the current social and economic laws result in an insecure and corrupted childhood for many children, Dickens focuses on the misery of children because he assumes that his readership agrees that children's income and education are inadequate and that the social circumstances are the source of this misery. While the readers are left to determine the causes of these mistreated children's educational and financial problems, they are related to the rules of the new Poor Law and utilitarianism.

Two points relate to Dickens's considerable sense of responsibility and compassion towards childhood and the education of children. The first is that his views of childhood originate in response to the Poor Laws and utilitarianism. This theme is depicted in his novels, particularly in their illustrations, which play a key role in the popularity of his stories. Through their different ways of expression, both the novels and their illustrations combine to draw the attention and sympathy of readers, especially child readers, towards children. His exploration of this social theme further offers an insight into the lives of the sufferer from Victorian society, including paupers, the middle class, the working class and the criminal class. To this end, the three novels are richly illustrated with sketches and drawings by various illustrators to reflect the background and the spirit of each story's setting, characters and themes. Also, the interpretations that the illustrators create vividly reflect Dickens's extremely detailed descriptions of the characters and themes. Thus, illustration in this case is a social technique that extends Dickens's relationships with his readers.

These three novels were written in the Victorian era when Britain had passed an Act that aimed to tackle poverty. The new Poor Law was based on the belief that supporting paupers would create economic problems for the government, which was heavily dependent on industrial and commercial development. This law did not end poverty, and it produced several ineffective solutions to ensure that the paupers' labours were utilized and that the

government's role in supporting paupers related solely to its workhouse policy. The ultimate goal of this law was to reduce the need for the government to support paupers.

These three novels reflect the atmosphere and the difficult conditions in which they were written. They describe Dickens's concern for children, extending beyond the protagonists themselves to shape the readers' empathy for all children. There is also a considerable amount of information on the urgent need for reform and that how the low economic standards lead to criminality. For example, Oliver is a poor orphan who is inadequately supported by the workhouse, and is eventually sold into apprenticeships as a chimney sweeper and undertaker. In the workhouse, Oliver does things that are considered as wrong and thus should be punished. Oliver's only other possibility is escaping from the workhouse. On the street, he is captured by gangs and learns how to steal in order to survive. The gangs themselves are children and are essentially apprenticed to the practice of pickpocketing and house robbery. Essentially, they have become expert thieves out of destitution.

All these themes are well depicted in the illustrations, which are used for better impact because they strengthen the respective themes. Moreover, titles are provided for each picture, offering clues as to the setting of either a specific theme or a specific character. Children are particularly important in these stories and are thus central to their illustrations. Each illustrator depicts the conditions of the children by placing the reader directly into the scene. For example, in *Oliver Twist*, Cruikshank demonstrates to the reader that life in the workhouse is making Oliver unhappy and unfulfilled. Subsequently, in depicting the gang's den, especially the scene around the fire, Dickens and Cruikshank highlight Fagin's attractiveness in his nurturing and caring for the children. The fact that he is giving the children what they need, despite his criminal behaviour, is an important theme. Hence, the illustrations play a significant satirical role in response to the prevailing strategies used to educate and nurture children.

One of the themes outlining how the children suffer is utilitarianism, which considers children solely in terms of the labour that they can provide for their family and society. Throughout the three novels, the children protagonists live only to suffer, while the education they receive is either restricted or informal. Children are educated only in terms of what the

adults responsible for them have chosen. For example, Tom and Louisa are not allowed to read freely, nor are they are permitted to liberate their thoughts. Pip and Estella highlight the extreme differences in the levels of education between the aristocracy and the common people. After all, Pip and Estella cannot choose to better themselves. The novels show the emotional manipulation of children, resulting in their low expectations. For example, Pip is depicted as a small boy who is terrified of a convict and who steals because he fears he will be murdered. However, Pip learns to see himself as a villain – in no small part through his sister's training, who is always punishing him for doing wrong. From the moment Pip meets Magwitch, he feels guilty. The novel explores the long-term effects of this psychology.

The second point is that Dickens's representation of children is sentimental because it is inspired by Christianity and Romanticism, i.e. emphasising feelings and sympathy. The three novels specifically use significant forms of depiction, namely emotionality, sympathy and sentimentality. Religious charity comprises personal remedies from rich to poor people, and it speaks to the hearts of the readers, who are thus emotionally capable of understanding what the children have experienced. Melodrama is key to Dickens's understanding of the influence of morality in the just treatment of others as it portrays a world of exaggeration and pathos.

Through his novels' descriptive style as well as the illustrations, Dickens relies on melodramatic tropes and satire for much of the impact he hopes to create. Dickens focuses on the tools of influence, motivation and compassion to highlight his concerns about the social systems and the misery of children. Specifically, he uses melodramatic stories and illustrations to criticise families, educators, and social organisations for causing the corruption of childhood. Dickens's illustrators understand his ideas and narrative style, and thus are able to integrate his humour and gothic characterisation into what he expresses through his interpretive melodrama.

Dickens works to engage the interest of his audience, encouraging them to follow the events of the narrative in order to find out what happens to the child protagonists. This ability to fascinate the audiences and attract their attention requires immense effort from the author and the skilful use of melodrama alongside realism and satire. The many varieties of melodrama not only dominate Dickens's novels but are also fully present in the illustrations. Certain words occur

frequently in the titles of these illustrations, thereby helping to convey the emotional condition, e.g. shocked, frightened, upset, angry, genteel, wretched, and passionate.

Each of the selected novels and illustrations presents children as victims – sympathetic and powerless. There is always a reason behind children's hunger, brutality, and criminality. Hereby, the themes of childhood and education are allowed to develop through the struggle between good and evil in unexpected scenes, thereby revealing the root causes of the children's problems. For example, in *Oliver Twist*, Oliver is refused help by a group working within the new Poor Law. Their actions toward children and the poor are based solely on how much can be gained from them. The focus of the workhouse is not charity. In other words, Oliver is forced to live with people who increase his destitution. Another example is Pip in *Great Expectations*, whose thoughts and dreams are denied by his society because he is a common boy. Similarly, to satisfy his need to revolt against his parents and their hard education, Tom in *Hard Times* steals from the bank and has no regrets. This occurs due to his nurture conflicts. In contrast, this novel depicts Sleary's people, especially the children, as compassionate and responsible. They are used to living in the circus and are thus emotionally affected by its ideology of music and sympathetic harmony. For example, Sissy, the daughter of a clown and a member of Sleary's circus, has a fun-filled childhood and is an avid reader of fairy tales.

Melodrama plays a significant role in demonstrating the viewpoint of the child protagonists. It also expresses the sentimentality portrayed in the novels, with various types of emotional modes ranging from romance and gothic to realism. The use of melodrama allows the reader to engage with economic and social issues, particularly the education and social role of gentility. It can thus provide a better understanding of the children's condition. Dickens further makes extensive use of symbolism to satirize the new Poor Law. Each novel's theme seeks to prove that economic change not only exacerbates the problems of poverty, but also leads to children being humiliated and made to suffer. In Dickens's novels, there is sympathy for children about to be starved or beaten, with the crowd often contributing to this punishment. Hence, Dickens uses melodrama in his novels in the same way as contemporary theatre. He further uses horror and wit alongside melodrama to express his passion for children.

While some of the illustrations are designed to evoke the same mood as Dickens's scenes, many of the details are also created by the illustrator's imagination. For example, while Dickens uses humorous satire in *Oliver Twist,* George Cruikshank uses caricature. Furthermore, each illustration includes the characters' thoughts and feelings in addition to the setting and scene. The illustrator thus describes the actions and responses of the characters as Dickens has presented them, thereby reporting on a stratum of society that many people are unaware of.

By combining melodrama with social realism, Dickens sought to not simply show how things were but rather compel his readers to react with feeling. His use of melodrama serves to characterise the brutality and carelessness that the Poor Law guardians direct towards the children in their care. When Oliver flees from the workhouse, he is lured into the criminal underworld by the Artful Dodger who, the novel implies, has already been captured by the gangmaster Fagin. This is a disastrous home for children and yet one, the novel implies, that merely mirrors the 'criminal' neglect and brutalisation of children in the workhouse. Oliver's only education is in the hardship of his world, such as picking oakum in the workhouse. What all children need, the novel implies, is a loving, caring family and a home, represented by the comfortable domestic setting of the benevolent Mr Brownlow's house.

In *Hard Times* Dickens draws a stark comparison between the bleak rigidity and utility of a mechanistic approach to education with the sentimental, fantastical and colourful life of the circus. He skilfully renders the dullness of life in Coketown through realism and satire, depicting working-class children who are turned into factory hands and grow up without imagination and freedom. Their schooling is regimented and machine-like – just like in the factories in which they work – yet their childish admiration for stories and dreams shows their invincible humanity.

The economic development in the novels leads to children being neglected or charged as criminal juveniles. The social misbehaviour of the child characters underscores their social and educational backgrounds. Poor and uneducated children are portrayed as non-innocent yet nice, but they also commit repeated errors. For example, Oliver in *Oliver Twist* is shown as guilty because he acts ungratefully towards his guardians. He also avoids being helpful

in the workhouse, in his apprenticeship, and in the gang's shelter. The novel shows that it is important to understand how children's fear controls their anger. Life in an orphanage is very hard for children's psychology, and it negatively affects Oliver and his social relationships. While Oliver is showing a natural reaction, Dickens aims to focus on supporting orphan children in terms of their childhood needs and emotional development.

This thesis has discussed both Dickens himself and his works and their emphasis on social connections and circumstances, as demonstrated in the three novels and their illustrations presented here. He wrote about families and children, women and criminals, schools and prisons, rural, destitute England and the aristocracy, and education and marriage. Dickens realised the importance and roles of these classes in society, and thus he had worked hard to improve them. These themes feature prominently in all his novels, but especially in the three novels discussed here. From the start of his career as a reporter for *The Mirror of Parliament* and then throughout his work as a novelist, editor and publisher, Dickens's concerns for social equity increased his demands for reform.

Then as now, his fictional characterisation increased his readership and increased the popularity of his works, and hence his views. The serialization of his novels and the melodrama that emerges in his dark comedies as well as the domestic satire and gothic scenes that are reflected in his three novels and illustrations have made him one of the most widely read Victorian novelists. The social points are highlighted by Dickens with detailed wit and humorous plots expressed through words and pictures. Both Dickens and his illustrators knew how to stimulate emotion and imagination using their sketchy and highly considered style, which revolves around the notion of connection. This thesis has shown how the illustrators are drawn towards depicting the theme of children. The illustrators' aim hereby is to make the readers empathise with the characters, not only by portraying melodrama through drawing but also by using a wide range of gestures and symbols. For example, the physical neglect of destitute children drives them into Fagin's gang, and emotional deprivation is shown to lie behind Tom Gradgrind's desperate turn to bank robbery.

Each novel explores whether its child characters are inevitably destined for a bad fate because there can be no great expectations in hard times, or whether there might be a slight glimmer of hope. In other words, children

suffer from the failure of the Poor Law system to help the destitute out of poverty as well as they suffer from the cruel utilitarian society in which education brings disastrous outcomes. Rather than offering them joy and fulfilment, it robs them of their innocence, restricts their emotions and complicates their life.

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