

EDWIN DROOD: A CRITICAL AND TEXTUAL STUDY

Thesis presented for the Degree of Ph.D., March, 1969,

by

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The thesis sets out to examine first the circumstances of the composition of The Mystery of Edwin Drood and any experiences which might have influenced Dickens's thoughts while writing the novel. The interest aroused by the unfinished state of the novel is also considered. In order to assess Dickens's literary position at the time, critical attitudes to novel writing in the 1860s, and in particular criticisms of Dickens's work in the last decade of his life, are illustrated, mainly through articles in the Spectator, and the popular vogue for sensation novels is briefly touched on, as having interest with regard to Dickens's choice of a mystery plot for Edwin Drood. Arising from this, the particular demands of mystery novels and some of the ways in which Dickens meets these demands are examined. The central character in Edwin Drood, John Jasper, is then compared with similar characters in Dickens's previous work. Both the specific qualities of this story and the features which show continuity with Dickens's earlier writing are thus considered. Finally, in this section, subsequent critical approaches to the novel are summarized. Chapter V deals with textual matters: the manuscript is examined and comparisons made between this and the Monthly Parts text, with reference also to proofs, where available, and the first American edition which was published at the same time as the Monthly Numbers. This chapter makes some suggestions as to more accurate readings for an authoritative text and indicates some of the ways in which Dickens corrected and improved his work from manuscript to publication.

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Chapter I

1. EDWIN DROOD: Inception; Calendar of Composition

Dickens's last complete novel, Our Mutual Friend, was published in November 1865. From then until the writing of his latest novel, his time was mainly devoted to the editing of All The Year Round, including up to 1867 the production of Christmas Numbers, and to the public readings in England and America - the first 'private' reading of 'The Murder from Oliver Twist' took place on November 14th 1868. According to Dolby he began 'to cast about for a subject for a new book' after the end of the readings, that is, probably in May.<sup>1</sup>

The first mention of the new story, according to Forster, was in mid-July 1869, when Dickens wrote to him: 'What should you think of the idea of a story beginning in this way? - Two people, boy and girl, or very young, going apart from one another, pledged to be married after many years - at the end of the book. The interest to arise out of the tracing of their separate ways, and the impossibility of telling what will be done with that impending fate.'<sup>2</sup> As can be seen from this letter, the interest at first was to centre on the young couple themselves, and the question of whether they would, in fact, come together at the end - compare the Pip and Estella story. There is nothing here of the 'mystery' element in the sense it was finally to assume.

1. George Dolby, Charles Dickens As I Knew Him, T. Fisher Unwin 1885, pp.416-17.
2. John Forster, The Life of Charles Dickens, Chapman and Hall, first published 1872-4, XI, ii. Madeline House, The Letters of Charles Dickens, Oxford 1965, Vol.1, p.xv, casts doubt on Forster's accuracy here: 'Into later chapters he introduced, once more as if quoting from letters to himself, early ideas for Our Mutual Friend and Edwin Drood which Dickens had noted down in his 'Book of Memoranda'.' cf. Felix Aylmer, The Drood Case, Hart-Davis 1964, p.201.

According to Dolby the new book was much in his thoughts at the end of July,<sup>1</sup> and he reported himself to Wills on August 3rd as having been 'at it' considerably.<sup>2</sup> Already the original idea had been modified: he told Forster on August 6th: 'I laid aside the fancy I told you of, and have a very curious and new idea for my new story. Not a communicable idea (or the interest of the book would be gone), but a very strong one, though difficult to work.' Here we seem nearer to the field of 'mystery' stories, with their necessary elements of surprise and suspense. Whether Forster was importunate or Dickens too excited to keep his new idea long to himself, no sooner had he pronounced it incommunicable than he apparently passed on the new idea:

'The story, I learnt immediately afterward, was to be that of the murder of a nephew by his uncle; the originality of which was to consist in the review of the murderer's career by himself at the close, when its temptations were to be dwelt upon as if, not he the culprit, but some other man, were the tempted. The last chapters were to be written in the condemned cell, to which his wickedness, all elaborately elicited from him as if told of another, had brought him. Discovery by the murderer of the utter needlessness of the murder for its object, was to follow hard upon commission of the deed; but all discovery of the murderer was to be baffled till towards the close, when, by means of a gold ring which had resisted the corrosive effects of the lime into which he had thrown the body, not only the person murdered was to be identified but the locality of the crime and the man who committed it. So much was told to me before any of the book was written; and it will be recollected that the ring, taken by Drood to be given to his betrothed only if their engagement went on, was brought away with him from their last interview. Rosa was to marry Tartar, and Crisparkle the sister of Landless, who was himself, I think, to have perished in assisting Tartar finally to unmask and seize the murderer.'

Much speculation has been devoted to the degree of accuracy of Forster's information; suspicion, fostered sometimes by the harbouring of a pet

1. Op.cit. p.434.

2. The Letters of Charles Dickens, ed. Walter Dexter, Nonesuch 1938, III, 733.



theory which does not square with this statement, has been thrown on his memory. Was Forster remembering exactly what he had been told, or filling in with his own later conclusions formed from reading the book? Was Dickens deliberately misleading, still keeping his idea incommunicable? Those who hold to the 'murder' solution will accept one view; those who have a variant ending will throw doubts on Forster. However, we have other testimony which shows plainly what was the question which was to keep the reader guessing, though the answer can never be known to everyone's satisfaction.

On Friday 20th August 1869, Dickens was speculating with trial titles for his new novel.<sup>1</sup> The last on his list puts the enigma most pithily: 'Dead? or alive?'. Of the seventeen titles,<sup>2</sup> ten seem designed to suggest this question, making use of such ambiguously suggestive words as 'loss', 'disappearance' or just plain 'mystery'.<sup>3</sup> Two titles, 'The flight of Edwyn Drood' and 'Edwin Drood in hiding', may be a more deliberately misleading way of covering the same question (i.e. 'Was his suspected flight or hiding - the possibility raised in chapter xvi - really death?') or they may be literally 'true' and intended to lead to the further mystery: why was Edwin Drood in hiding? In a sense, this is an aspect of the same question, for the obvious answer would be : because his uncle had tried to murder him. All of the titles so far discussed, except one,

1. See below p. 212. The MS. of Edwin Drood is in the Forster Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum. According to Dolby, op.cit. p.436, Dickens was for a long while 'sorely puzzled' to find a title that pleased him.'
2. Some of these show variants in spelling only, but they have been counted separately as still showing persistence of ideas.
3. cf. also Dickens's reply to his sister-in-law's inquiry about the novel's outcome: 'I call my book the Mystery, not the History, of Edwin Drood.' Quoted in 'Edwin Drood, and the Last Days of Charles Dickens', by Kate Perugini, Pall Mall Magazine, June 1906, p.654.

direct the attention to one character, Edwin, but, by implication, of course to his murderer, or would-be murderer, also. The one exception is 'The Mystery in the Drood Family', and it is possible, but does not seem necessary to posit, that there was some further 'mystery', which Edwin was trying to uncover - or conceal. Four of the remaining titles introduce Jasper, one merely linking him with Edwin - 'The Two Kinsmen'; three focussing the attention on his behaviour through the greater part of the novel: 'Sworn to avenge it', 'One object in Life', 'A Kinsman's Devotion'. These are all, of course, perfectly consistent with Forster's statement and with the story which could be behind the other titles. There is no contradiction, merely a change of emphasis. The last title to be discussed can likewise be made to 'fit', but it does perhaps give a little more weight to the 'hiding' theory. 'Flight And Pursuit' at least suggests the idea of a pursuit ending in the escaper's capture and return. It is, however, an odd title, for Jasper, in the story as we have it, is not pursuing Edwin so much as Neville, as the surrounding titles, with their words, 'devotion', 'avenge', 'one object', indicate, and yet Neville's 'flight' is scarcely dominant enough to be the book's major focus.

Beyond this idea of the book's theme, and three essential characters - a victim, an avenger and a suspect to be hunted down - we also have at this early date a glimpse of the clerical setting, in the inclusion among characters of 'The Dean', 'Mrs. Dean' and 'Miss Dean', with the suggestion of gentle fun or satire inherent in the manner of their listing, and of not so gentle satire to be directed at the self-explanatory character

'Mr. Honeythunder' or 'Mr. Honeyblast'. This element of possibly topical satire,<sup>1</sup> present from the start, was perhaps intended as something to add 'body' to the central story.

Dickens was now really getting down to his new story: within two days he was writing to Frederic Ouvry to arrange the contract with the publishers<sup>2</sup> and shortly after this an illustrator was found, Charles Collins, brother of Wilkie, to try the cover first. On September 24th<sup>3</sup> Dickens wrote to Chapman and Hall:

'Charles Collins wishes to try his hand at illustrating my new book. I want him to try the cover first. Please send down to him at Gad's Hill, any of our old green covers you may have by you.'

According to Dolby, by September 27th the title was decided and a dinner was given to celebrate.<sup>4</sup>

It is not until October that we hear of the actual writing of the first number - according to Forster (XII, i) the summer and autumn of 1869, following Dickens's breakdown in April, were passed quietly at Gadshill - but the preliminary calendar is not complete without mention of two related topics, one closely related, the other more curiously: the visits made by Dickens with his American friends, in particular the visit to the opium den, and the publication of John Acland. Contemporary records - those of Dickens himself, and of Fields, Forster and Dolby - agree as to the authenticity of the opening scene in Princess Puffer's den: the description was based on first-hand experience of a visit to 'Opium Sal',

1. See below p. 133.

2. Nonesuch Letters III, pp. 739-740.

3. This is the date given in Nonesuch p. 742 and it tallies with surrounding dates there. Harry B. Smith, however, Sentimental Library, 1914, p. 106, gives September 14th, apparently in error.

4. Op.cit. p. 436.

a visit made by Dickens in the company of J.T. Fields, of the American firm of Fields, Osgood and Co., who were to be the first American publishers of Edwin Drood, George Dolby, the manager of his latest reading tours, and two officers of some kind who acted as guides.

Dickens's reference to this visit is in a letter, dated 5th May, 1870, to Sir John Bowring, the authority whom he consulted on the effects of opium-smoking in the east:

'I send you many cordial thanks for your note, and the very curious drawing accompanying it. I ought to tell you, perhaps, that the opium smoking I have described, I saw (exactly as I have described it, penny ink-bottle and all) down in Shadwell this last autumn. A couple of the Inspectors of Lodging-Houses knew the woman and took me to her as I was making a round with them to see for myself the working of Lord Shaftesbury's Bill.'<sup>1</sup>

Later writers, for example Philip Collins, 'Inspector Bucket Visits The Princess Puffer', Dickensian May 1964, have accepted this autumn dating,<sup>2</sup> and it has been more particularly identified as October 9th when Fields is known to have visited Dickens. This is very close to the date at which he must have been writing the opening chapter, and, as the evidence of Fields and Dolby, and possibly Forster, suggests an earlier visit, it seems likely that the autumn visit, if Dickens's recollection is accurate, was in the nature of a refresher, when he had definitely decided to incorporate the material in his new book.<sup>3</sup> Of course Dickens could have conceived the idea of Jasper as an opium smoker without the stimulus of visiting an opium-den, but it is possible that an earlier visit had helped,

1. Letters, III, 775.

2. Andrew Lang is an exception. In his introduction to the Gadshill edition, Chapman and Hall, 1899, p.vii, he speaks of a summer expedition.

3. There is ample evidence of Dickens's frequent visits to this neighbourhood, e.g. letter to Wilkie Collins, December 8th, 1868, and other acquaintances bear witness to having seen him frequently in these parts.

perhaps unconsciously, to form this idea in his mind. The authority of Fields - In and Out of Doors with Charles Dickens, 1876, - is the most definite on the subject of the date of the visit. Following a letter dated Tuesday, May 25th which refers to 'the rendezvous for Monday evening ... at half past eight ... with the great Detective', Fields, speaking of the varied excursions made during this summer visit to Dickens, says:

'Two of these expeditions were made on two consecutive nights, under the protection of police detailed for the service. On one of these nights we also visited the lock-up houses, watch-houses, and opium-eating establishments. It was in one of the horrid opium-dens that he gathered the incidents which he has related in the opening pages of Edwin Drood. In a miserable court we found the haggard old woman blowing at a kind of pipe made of an old penny ink-bottle. The identical words which Dickens puts into the mouth of this wretched creature in Edwin Drood we heard her croon as we leaned over the tattered bed on which she was lying. There was something hideous in the way this woman kept repeating, 'Ye'll pay up according, deary, won't ye?' and the Chinamen and Lascars made never-to-be-forgotten pictures in the scene. I watched Dickens intently as he went among these outcasts of London, and saw with what deep sympathy he encountered the sad and suffering in their horrid abodes.'<sup>1</sup>

Fields concludes his memories of these summer excursions by remarking:

'Many days and weeks passed over after those June days were ended before we were to see Dickens again ... A small roll of manuscript in his hand led him soon to confess that a new story was already begun; but this communication was made in the utmost confidence ...'<sup>2</sup>

These writers can be irritatingly vague over their dates, but Dolby's recollections support Fields. He, Dolby, speaks in this order of events

1. Letters III, 727 and James T. Fields, In and Out of Doors with Charles Dickens, James R. Osgood and Co., Boston, 1876, pp.105-6. N.B. the firm was first Ticknor and Fields, then Fields, Osgood and Co., then James R. Osgood and Co. Monday 31st could not have been the opium-den visit, if Dolby were indeed present, for Dickens wrote informing him of the Monday's excursion the following day, Tuesday June 1st. Letters III, p.728.
2. Ibid. p.138.

in 1869: Dickens's beginning to 'cast about for a subject for a new book'; his giving over the sub-editing and general management of All The Year Round to his son Charles; visits from his American friends Mr. and Mrs. Fields and Mr. and Mrs. Childs, in the course of which excursions under the guidance of Scotland Yard detectives were arranged for the gentlemen to the slums of 'Horrible London', including one visit to opium dens in the neighbourhood of Ratcliffe Highway, an evening's instruction which culminated in 'a place of resort for sailors of every nationality, known as "Tiger Bay"'; and finally, in June, a visit to Gad's Hill.<sup>1</sup>

Forster, too, seems to favour a summer visit; though his section 'Last Days' opens by bracketing together 'The summer and autumn of 1869', he goes on, 'He received there in June, the American friends ...' and his resort to the tense, 'He had been able', rather than 'He was able', after a brief reference to activities of August and September, suggests that the events he is about to relate took place earlier:

'He had been able to show Mr. Fields something of the interest of London as well as of his Kentish home. He went over its General Post Office with him, took him among its cheap theatres and poor lodging-houses, and piloted him by night through its most notorious thieves' quarter. Its localities that are pleasantest to a lover of books, such as Johnson's Bolt Court and Goldsmith's Temple Chambers, he explored with him; and, at his visitor's special request, mounted a staircase he had not ascended for more than thirty years, to show the chamber in Furnival's Inn where the first page of Pickwick was written. One more book, unfinished, was to close what that famous book began; and the original of the scene of its opening chapter, the opium-eater's den, was the last place visited.'

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1. Op.cit., pp.416-419. Dolby also says, p.434, speaking of their rambles at the end of July when he could see that Edwin Drood was much in Dickens's thoughts: 'In the early pages of this work, he utilized the scene we had witnessed at the opium den in Ratcliffe Highway ...'

From here on, Forster quotes Fields.

One other visit made by the group in the summer of 1869 may well have had its bearing on Edwin Drood: at least it shows the same sensitive reaction. Both Fields and Dolby record a visit to Canterbury during which Dickens, in particular, was revolted by the apathetic performance of the service. According to Fields:

'Dickens, with tireless observation, noted how sleepy and inane were the faces of many of the singers, to whom this beautiful service was but a sickening monotony of repetition. The words, too, were gabbled over in a manner anything but impressive. He was such a downright enemy to form, as substituted for religion, that any dash of untruth or unreality was abhorrent to him.'<sup>1</sup>

The words of Dolby are even more reminiscent of Drood: after referring to the 'careless half-hearted manner' in which the service was performed, he goes on:

'The seeming indifference of the officiating clergy jarred most acutely on Dickens's feelings, for he, who did all things so thoroughly, could not conceive how (as he afterwards said) any person accepting an office, or a trust so important as the proper rendering of our beautiful Cathedral Service, could go through their duties in this mechanical and slipshod fashion.'<sup>2</sup> He returned to this subject on several subsequent occasions.'

Closely applicable as this is to Edwin Drood, it is likely that if either Dolby or Fields had been consciously influenced by the novel to read more into the experience than was at the time justified, the parallel with Jasper would have been made. From revulsion from a response no longer anything but mechanical, felt by Dickens in respect of the Canterbury clergymen, the imaginative step is easy to the horror of experiencing the deadness in oneself:

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1. Op.cit., p.131.

2. Op.cit., p.426.

'I hate it. The cramped monotony of my existence grinds me away by the grain. How does our service sound to you?... It often sounds to me quite devilish. I am so weary of it. The echoes of my own voice among the arches seem to mock me with my daily drudging round. No wretched monk who droned his life away in that gloomy place, before me, can have been more tired of it than I am. He could take for relief (and did take) to carving demons out of the stalls and seats and desks. What shall I do? Must I take to carving them out of my heart?'

This note sounded in the first Number (ch. ii) - Jasper's key-note - is reinforced in the last chapter as we have it, a point intended as about halfway through the book, and intended also, with its setting and title, 'The Dawn Again', to reinvoke the opening vision of Jasper. This time the wording is even more strikingly close to the words of Dolby:

'Constantly exercising an Art which brought him into mechanical harmony with others, and which could not have been pursued unless he and they had been in the nicest mechanical relations and unison, it is curious to consider that the spirit of the man was in moral accordance or interchange with nothing around him.'

It is a notable feature of Jasper's presentation that his beautiful singing voice is stressed in circumstances which invite the reader to view him in a discreditable light: in the 'unaccountable expedition' chapter (p.89: 'he sits chanting choir-music in a low and beautiful voice, for two or three hours;'), in the Christmas Eve chapter (p.112: 'Mr. Jasper is in beautiful voice this day. In the pathetic supplication to have his heart inclined to keep this law, he quite astonishes his fellows by his melodious power') and again in the last chapter, in the opium den (p.181: 'What a sweet singer you was when you first come! Used to drop your head, and sing yourself off, like a bird!'). Admittedly, the second of these occasions marks a plot necessity, to introduce the reference to the 'large black scarf', but a secondary, and by no means



negligible, effect is to emphasize the sinister nature of outward beauty masking inward hatred and discord.<sup>1</sup>

So far, then, we have coming together, before the actual writing of the book begins, the boy and girl element, Dickens's new and curious idea, the 'dead or alive' question, the opium den setting and the jarring apprehension of the gulf between delighted awareness of beauty or truth and mere dulled, mechanical acceptance of it.

The story of John Acland may be just briefly mentioned here as a last and curiously timed preliminary<sup>2</sup> - one which throws the speculations roused by the trial titles into a better perspective. On September 2nd 1869 Dickens wrote to Robert Lytton, the son of Bulwer Lytton, accepting 'most willingly' a story to which he refers as John Acland but of which the full title presumably was The Murder of John Acland, for publication in the 'next monthly part' of All The Year Round. As often, Dickens proposes certain improvements, one of great interest in relation to Edwin Drood:

'I shall make bold to condense him here and there (according to my best idea of story-telling), and particularly where he makes the speech:- And with the usual fault of being too long, here<sup>3</sup> and there, I think you let the story out too much - prematurely<sup>3</sup> - and this I hope to prevent artfully. I think your title open to the same objection, and therefore propose to substitute:

THE DISAPPEARANCE  
of JOHN ACLAND

This will leave the reader in doubt whether he really was murdered, until the end.<sup>4</sup>

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1. The page references are to the Monthly Parts one volume edition.
  2. For further account of John Acland see pp. 39-42.
  3. cf. Dickens's worries about the progress of his own novel, Edwin Drood, pp. 25-4 below.
  4. Letters, III, p. 740.

On September 18th, 1869, The Disappearance of John Acland, A True Story in 13 chapters, duly begins: the number for the 25th contains chapters 2, 3 and 4; and so it goes on through October 2nd, 9th and 16th, till all thirteen chapters have appeared, but, although the story is complete, chapters 5-13, October 2nd-16th, are so short as to arouse speculation in the most passive reader. The reason for this hasty end is given in a further letter from Dickens to Robert Lytton, dated 1st October:

'My Dear Robert Lytton, -

I am assured by a correspondent that John Acland has been done before. Said correspondent has evidently read the story - and is almost confident in Chambers's Journal. This is very unfortunate, but of course cannot be helped. There is always a possibility of such a malignant conjunction of stars when the story is a true one ...

You will of course understand that I do not tell you this by way of complaint. Indeed, I should not have mentioned it at all, but as an explanation to you of my reason for winding the story up (which I have done to-day) as expeditiously as possible. You might otherwise have thought me, on reading it as published, a little hard on Mr. Doilly. I have not had time to direct search to be made in Chambers's:<sup>1</sup> but as to the main part of the story having been printed somewhere, I have not the faintest doubt. And I believe my correspondent to be also right as to the where. You could not help it any more than I could, and therefore will not be troubled by it any more than I am.

The more I get of your writing, the better I shall be pleased. -

Do believe me to be, as I am, -

Your genuine Admirer -  
And affectionate Friend.'<sup>2</sup>

1. I have not been able as yet to trace the story in Chambers's, nor, so far as I know, have any of the Drood critics who have searched for it, e.g. Aylmer, Cuming Walters, Andrew Lang. It is not in any number close to September 1869. Whether there or not, however, the point is that Dickens believed it to be there.
2. Letters, III, p.743.

The whole tone of the letter is reassuring and kindly, designed to spare any possible embarrassment on the part of the young writer, and there is no reason to suspect Dickens's motives in bringing the story to so rapid a conclusion. The important thing is that he had willingly accepted it a month before, and this would seem surprising if he had already determined the identical major interest for his own new story, which he was possibly even then writing and which would obviously appear within a few months. The implication seems clearly to be that, whatever speculations some of the trial titles may arouse, Dickens's chief interest was not a mere plot resolution, one, indeed, which could only rather naively be described as 'a very curious and new idea': that Forster, in fact, was right in his emphasis: 'the originality of which was to consist in the review of the murderer's career by himself at the close, when its temptations were to be dwelt upon as if, not he the culprit, but some other man, were the tempted'. The interest of Edwin Drood is in Jasper, the man out of harmony with outwardly harmonious surroundings, who finds consolation in opium dreams, the man whose character we can see growing in the preliminary stages to the novel's writing. This is the view of another contemporary authority, Kate Perugini, whose first husband had designed the cover, in answer to the strong interest which the mere plot question had evoked since her father's death:

'If those who are interested in the subject will carefully read what I have quoted, [from Forster] they will not be able to detect any word or hint from my father that it was upon the Mystery alone that he relied for the interest and originality of his idea. The originality was to be shown, as he tells us, in what we may call the psychological

description the murderer gives us of his temptations, temperament, and character, as if told by another; ... I do not mean to imply that the mystery itself had no strong hold on my father's imagination; but, greatly as he was interested in the intricacies of that tangled skein, the information he voluntarily gave to Mr. Forster, from whom he had withheld nothing for thirty-three years, certainly points to the fact that he was quite as deeply fascinated and absorbed in the study of the criminal Jasper, as in the dark and sinister crime that has given the book its title ...

It was not, I imagine, for the intricate working out of his plot alone, that my father cared to write this story; but it was through his wonderful observation of character, and his strange insight into the tragic secrets of the human heart, that he desired his greatest triumph to be achieved.<sup>1</sup>

While John Acland was reaching its abrupt end, Edwin Drood was beginning to take shape. On October 17th Dickens wrote to Fitzgerald, 'I am at work upon a new book', and the next day he informed his old friend Macready more specifically:

'This leaves me in the preliminary agonies of a new book, which I hope to begin publishing (in twelve numbers, not twenty) next March. The coming readings being all in London, and being, after the first fortnight, only once a week, will divert my attention very little, I hope.'<sup>2</sup>

By the third week of October, Number I was finished (Forster XII, i) and was read 'at my house with great spirit', on the 26th, Fields, too, who was visiting Dickens again, was privileged to hear in advance the first instalment of the new novel. He recalls 'a pleasant Sunday morning in October' when 'I heard from the author's lips the first chapters of Edwin Drood, the concluding lines of which initial pages were then scarcely dry from the pen'<sup>3</sup>. If this was, as seems likely,

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1. 'Edwin Drood and the Last Days of Charles Dickens', Pall Mall Magazine, June 1906, pp.643-654.

2. Letters, III, pp.745-6

3. Op.cit. p.141.

the whole of Part I, and if the phrase 'scarcely dry from the pen' was meant literally, Fields must have heard the Number <sup>two</sup> 2 days before Forster, on Sunday 24th. In late October and November there are various references to work on the 'new book';<sup>1</sup> negotiations for its simultaneous publication in America were under way,<sup>2</sup> and then came the first set-back. Charles Collins, whose cover had been pronounced 'well worth £10',<sup>3</sup> was too ill to go on with the work of illustrating. Dickens wrote to Frederic Chapman on Sunday, November 28th:

Charles Collins finds that the sitting down to draw, brings back all the worst symptoms of the old illness that occasioned him to leave his old pursuit of painting; and here we are suddenly without an Illustrator! We will use his cover of course, but he gives in altogether as to further subjects.

I knew this only last night and I lose no time in writing to you. There is no time to<sup>3</sup> be lost, and we must immediately consider what is to be done.

Something was done quickly. A letter preserved in the Duffield Collection at Dickens House, dated 28th November 1927, from W. H. Chambers to Howard Duffield, in response to a request for information about Files<sup>d</sup> with whom Chambers was personally acquainted, gives the following account of the discovery of a new illustrator for Edwin Drood:

It appears that Millais the Artist was staying with Dickens at Gadds Hill and a copy of The Graphic containing an illustration by Fildes was sent there. The title of this was I think 'Houseless and Homeless'. Millais rushed into Dickens' room waving the paper over his head exclaiming 'I've got him' - 'Got who?' said Dickens. 'A man to illustrate your Edwin Drood'. Millais spread the paper on the desk in front of Dickens. 'Who is the artist?' said Dickens. 'A rising young man on the staff of The Graphic' said Millais. 'Yes, I'll write to him' Dickens

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1. Letters, III, pp.749, 751, to T. A. Trollope, November 4th, and to Mrs. Frances Elliot, November 23rd.
  2. Letters, III, p.748, to Frederic Chapman, Friday, October 29th.
  3. Ibid., p.753.

said. Fildes showed the letter to me. It ran, 'I see from your illustration in The Graphic this week that you are an adept at drawing scamps, send me some specimens of pretty ladies.' Fildes did so, and was invited to Gadds Hill ...

The actual title of Fildes' illustration was 'Houseless and Hungry', later re-entitled 'The Casuals'. It appeared in the first issue of The Graphic on December 4th. It is ironic that this very number of The Graphic also contained an announcement which had to be retracted the following week, of the name of the new Dickens' illustrator, Charles Collins.

In the meantime, just when Dickens was faced with the problems of finding a new illustrator, came an even more serious set-back, with the arrival of the proofs of the first two numbers from the printers on December 2nd.<sup>1</sup> We have it on the evidence of Fields<sup>2</sup> that Dickens's eagerness to see his work in print never abated with familiarity, but on this occasion pleasure would seem to have been more than out-weighed by shock: each of the numbers was six pages short, a disaster which necessitated renewed planning and extra work during December, a time which he had set aside for other pressing commitments:

When I had written and, as I thought, disposed of the first two numbers of my story, Clowes informed me to my horror that they were, together, twelve printed pages too short!!! Consequently I had to transpose a chapter from number two to number one, and remodel number two altogether! This was the more unlucky, that it came upon me at the time when I was obliged to leave the book, in order to get up the Readings,

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1. Letters, III, p.753, to Georgina Hogarth.

2. Op.cit. pp.146-7: '... he once told me that all his life long he never got over the thrill of pleasure and interest which accompanied the first sight in type of anything he had written. After he had sent a manuscript to the printer he was as eager to see his words set up in the proof-sheet as any young adventurer into letters possibly could be.'

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quite gone out of my mind since I left them off. However, I turned to it and got it done, and both numbers are now in type ...<sup>1</sup>

No wonder that he told Wills two days later, 'I have been so put about', nor that he wrote to J. H. Chamberlain on December 31st, 'The work I have before me the next three months is the virtuous cause to which I am so true, and I sacrifice every tempting engagement to it'.<sup>2</sup>

Never had Dickens underwritten a number by quite so much before -  $2\frac{1}{2}$  pages had shocked him in Our Mutual Friend (Forster IX, v); nevertheless, the business-like way in which he 'turned to' and worked at speed seems not to have detracted from his enjoyment of the new novel: Forster records that on New Year's Eve the second number was read at his house with 'such an overflow of humour' for Mr. Honeythunder's boisterous philanthropy' that 'there was no room, then, for anything but enjoyment.'<sup>3</sup>

The New Year was, however, to bring the additional burden of the final series of readings, planned for January 11th to March 15th, twelve readings in all, including the exhausting 'Sikes and Nancy' murder scenes, and Dickens's letters at this time show the strain of carrying on the two kinds of work simultaneously. To Fields, on January 14th, he admitted that the readings disturbed him at his 'book-work'; 'nevertheless I hope, please God, to lose no way on their account',<sup>4</sup> and the same note, of

1. Forster, XI, ii, letter of December 22nd. The chapter transposed was ch.v 'Mr. Durdles and Friend', originally ch.viii. The alteration in No.II consisted in the main of the addition of a new chapter, ix, 'Birds in the Bush'. Dickens had to increase the number of manuscript pages for the subsequent Numbers. See below p.201.

2. Letters, III, pp.755, 756.

3. Forster, XII, i.

4. Letters, III, 759-60.

difficulties hopefully borne, was sounded a week later in a letter to Wills:<sup>1</sup>

I hope, now I have got over the mornings, that I may be able to work at my book. But up to this time the great preparation required in getting the subjects up again, and the twice a week besides, have almost exclusively occupied me.

Throughout February the pressure continued: on the 26th Dickens wrote to G. H. Lewes: 'Between my readings, my book, my weekly journal ... I am really hard put to it occasionally...'<sup>2</sup> and Dolby, who saw so much of him at this time, bears witness, like Forster, to the utter prostration which often followed on the Oliver Twist reading and the disturbing after effects of the readings generally.<sup>3</sup>

At this time, too, attention had to be given to examining the work of the prospective illustrator of Edwin Drood. Dickens had told Fields that he would, of course, use Charley Collins's 'charming cover',<sup>4</sup> but that he had a new man in mind for the rest, and that the 'new man's' work showed encouraging promise is attested in a note to Fildes from the author, expressing approval of 'the highly meritorious and interesting specimens of your art that you have had the kindness to send me.'<sup>5</sup> Another encouraging sign was Forster's enthusiastic reception of Part II: the value that Dickens placed on his friend's opinion can be heard in his genial report to Fields that Forster thinks it 'a clincher', and this appreciation from one of his closest friends may have helped to sustain him

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1. Ibid. 761-2, January 23rd. In this letter Dickens himself admitted to Wills, as he did also to Dolby, the exhausting effect of the 'Sikes and Nancy' reading.

2. Ibid., 764.

3. Op.cit., p.441, Dickens's anxiety to have the new book as far forward as possible before the readings began; 442-4, the strain of the readings, rising pulse, inability to speak a rational or consecutive sentence for ten minutes after the 'Murder'; Forster, XII, i.

4. Letters, III, 759-60. The cover, as designed by Collins, was subsequently revised by Fildes; see below, p.186 et seq.

5. Dated in Letters, III, p.760-1, as Wednesday, January 16th, but with a note suggesting February as more probable. Certainly, in relation to the other letter dates, Wednesday could have been February 16th, but not January 16th.



in the careful planning and thought necessary for the writing of the next part of his novel:

There is a curious interest steadily working up to No. 5, which requires a great deal of art and self-denial. I think also, apart from character and picturesqueness, that the young people are placed in a very novel situation. So I hope - at Nos. 5 and 6 the story will turn upon an interest suspended until the end.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, in spite of the strain, Dickens was able to work on his book. Number III was at the printers' by February 13th - a letter of February 18th to Clowes refers to the last two-thirds of his 'precious child' deposited last Sunday,<sup>2</sup> and on February 25th this Number was read to Forster, who makes no comment beyond recording that Dickens's hand was 'still swollen and painful' at the time.<sup>3</sup>

The opening of March strikes a more cheerful note again: the readings are attracting 'immense audiences'; he has been 'getting on very well' with his book,<sup>4</sup> and Fildes is making preparations for a brother-student to engrave his drawings.<sup>5</sup> Arrangements had been made for a German translation of the novel by Dr. Lehmann of Hamburg;<sup>6</sup> Part I was advertised in All The Year Round on Saturday, March 19th; the ~~youth~~<sup>fourth</sup> number was 'read admirably' (Forster's words, XII, i) on March 21st; on the 26th Number I was sent to Sir Arthur Helps for the Queen, with a promise of further advance instalments, if desired,<sup>7</sup> and then, on March 31st, the first number for April was

1. Letters, of January 14th.

2. W.B. Clowes, Family Business 1803-1953, Clowes and Sons Ltd. [1953], p.50.

3. XII, i.

4. Letters, III, pp.764-5; March 2nd, to Macready.

5. Letters, III, p.766, March 14th to Frederic Chapman.

6. Ibid. p.767, March 17th.

7. Ibid. p.768.

published. By this time, of course, Dickens was free from the anxiety of the public readings. In his farewell speech he had made reference to his forthcoming new contact with his audiences:

In but two short weeks from this time I hope that you may enter, in your own homes, on a new series of readings at which my assistance will be indispensable; but from these garish lights I vanish now forever more, ...<sup>1</sup>

Everything now seemed set for success: he has 'great hopes' of his new illustrator;<sup>2</sup> he is hard at work all day, and 'We have been doing wonders with No. I of Edwin Drood. It has very, very far outstripped every one of its predecessors'.<sup>3</sup> The writing of the latest numbers - the ones which were to require carefully suspended interest - was, however, proving difficult: within a week of sounding this confident note, he was confessing to Charles Kent (April 25th):

For the last week I have been most perseveringly and ding-dong-doggedly at work, making headway but slowly.<sup>4</sup>

It was the fifth number which, according to Forster, caused him some apprehension: he was afraid that he was introducing too early the events leading to the catastrophe, such as the Datchery assumption.<sup>5</sup> This is the peculiar hazard of ~~the~~ mystery-novel writing - remember Dickens's caution to Robert Lytton<sup>6</sup> - and was apparently not the first time in this novel that

1. Forster, XII, i.

2. Letters, III, p.771, April 16th to Frith.

3. Ibid., p.771, April 18th to Fields.

4. Ibid., p.772.

5. Forster, XI, ii.

6. See also Dickens's various comments to Wilkie Collins on this subject, in relation to the latter's novels and plays, e.g. September 12th and November 1st, 1856, respecting The Frozen Deep; October 14th 1862 respecting No Name: September 12th 1856, 'An admirable idea ... But it is so very strong that I doubt whether the man can (without an anti-climax) be shown to be rescued and alive, until the last act. The struggle, the following him away, the great suspicion,<sup>and</sup> the suspended interest, in the second. The relief and joy of the discovery, in the third ...', a comment of peculiar interest in connexion with Edwin Drood.

he had been disconcerted in this way: Luke Fildes' question, earlier, as to the significance of Jasper's long neckerchief had revealed that this was too unusual a detail not to have obvious significance for the reader.<sup>1</sup> Forster's words about Datchery are, however, ambiguous, giving no indication whether the example introduced by 'such as' is his interpretation or Dickens's. The author's misgivings, as expressed to his sister-in-law, might well have been aroused by Fildes' questionings relating to the previous ~~Nov~~<sup>o</sup>ember which would make it apparent to him that the readers might cast Jasper in the rôle of murderer much more readily than he himself had intended. Henry Fielding Dickens, for one, emphatically denied that his father's anxiety related specifically to Datchery. In 'A Chat About Charles Dickens' published in Harper's Monthly Magazine, July 1914, he wrote (p.191):

That is not at all a correct description of what he did in fact say. He never suggested to her that he had introduced Datchery out of his proper place in the book; but that, having regard to the fact that he had still six more numbers to write, the whole story was advancing too rapidly. It was for this reason that he wrote a new scene, the manuscript of which was found among his papers after his death.<sup>2</sup>

Henry Dickens had no speculations to advance about the subsequent plot development; he had no knowledge beyond that of the general public. He did, however, bear witness as to his father's mental capacities at the time of writing Edwin Drood:

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1. Letter from Fildes, October 27th, 1905, printed in the Times Literary Supplement, November 3rd. For further discussion of this point see p.43.
  2. For discussion of the Sapsea fragment see below, pp. 28-9, 197-9. See also p.288 for discussion of the plan for No.V and the light this may throw on Dickens's anxiety for the progress of his story.

I have always thought that the book, though unequal in parts, contains some of his best work; and so far as any personal knowledge can throw light upon the matter, I entirely agree with what my sister has said, that his brain was more than usually clear and bright during the writing of it ...

. That Dickens was anxious about the progress of his story - in whatever particular - was corroborated by his eldest son. Charles Dickens junior, in his Introduction to Macmillan's 1923 edition of Edwin Drood, recorded his personal witness to this:

It was during the last walk I ever had with him at Gadshill, and our talk, which had been principally concerned with literary matters connected with All The Year Round, presently drifting to Edwin Drood, my father asked me if I did not think that he had let out too much of his story too soon. I assented, and added, 'Of course Edwin Drood was murdered?' Whereupon he turned upon me with an expression of astonishment at my having asked such an unnecessary question, and said: 'Of course; what else do you suppose?' (p.XV)

There seems, then, to be no doubt that the last numbers did prove difficult to write. This, in itself, indicates nothing particularly significant: Dickens had had difficulties in his novel-writing before.<sup>1</sup> But this was his last novel, unfinished at the time of his death, and in these circumstances it is perhaps not surprising that the rumours spread. Henry Dickens strikes a rather defensive note in his last-quoted remark about the clarity and brightness of his father's brain at the end, understandable when one is aware of the context of speculation which surrounded Dickens's last half-written work. Again and again, in Memoirs and Reminiscences, one comes across the suggestion that Dickens had reached an impasse in which he could see no way to a solution. Rudolf Lehmann, for example, in his Reminiscences, affirms that he had it on the authority of Wills that this was so:

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1. See, for example, Forster, IX, v. (Our Mutual Friend).

While in the midst of the serial publication of The Mystery of Edwin Drood he altered the plot and found himself hopelessly entangled, as in a maze of which he could not find the issue. Mr. Wills had no doubt that the anxiety and subsequent excitement materially contributed to his sudden and premature death.<sup>1</sup>

Dion Boucicault, too,<sup>2</sup> is reported to have been told by Dickens himself that he did not know how to end the story.<sup>3</sup> Dickens's remark to Boucicault, if authentic, may, however, have been a way of fobbing off too pertinent enquiries, in the same category as his reproof to Georgina, 'I call my book the Mystery, not the History, of Edwin Drood'; and there is nothing in the plans for the novel to corroborate Wills' statement as to the altered plot. The enigmatic 'Sapsea fragment' discovered by

1. An Artist's Reminiscences, Smith, Elder & Co., 1894, pp.231-2. The Lehmann family had close connexions with Dickens: two of the brothers, Frederick and Rudolf, married two of the daughters of R. C. Chambers, the third of whom married Wills. The son of Frederick and Nina, Rudolph Chambers Lehmann, was the editor of Charles Dickens as Editor, Dickens's letters to Wills. A third brother, Emil, was chosen as the translator of Edwin Drood into German. The latter's son, C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, was convinced that there was no significance in Wills' remark to his uncle. In a letter to Howard Duffield now at Dickens House dated April 19th, 1929, from Innsbruck, he wrote: '... there cannot be any doubt that Wills' utterance is quite authentic. But it only shows how far spread the quite erroneous idea was that Dickens had ever changed the plot of Edwin Drood and found himself hopelessly entangled, which would have contributed to his sudden death.' His chief support for this view seems, however, to have been founded on nothing more than Mrs. Perugini's statements in her article in the Pall Mall Magazine of June 1906, and apparently Mrs. Perugini later wrote less decisively on the subject, admitting that her father was very worried and preoccupied by his story for some time before his death, and conceding the possibility that he might have changed his mind at the very last minute and decided to keep Edwin alive, but reaffirming her own personal feeling that he would not have made any radical change. (Ref. in Nottingham Guardian, 14th October 1929, to a letter written in 1913. Noted by John Watt in his typescript comments on Edwin Drood, now in the collection at Dickens House.)
2. For Boucicault's connexion with Edwin Drood see below pp.48-9.
3. Eustace Conway, Anthony Munday and Other Essays, N.Y. 1927, p.95. Conway gives no source for his statement, which he himself is inclined to discredit, as 'hardly ... possible'.

Forster among Dickens's manuscripts after his death does, with its introduction of a character, Poker, in a similar situation to that of Datchery in the novel as we have it, indicate hesitation and re-writing at the point when the vitally important 'detective' character is to be introduced, but it can hardly be even as Forster suggests,<sup>1</sup> that Dickens was trying, rather belatedly, to delay his catastrophe by 'open[ing] some fresh veins of character incidental to the interest, though not directly part of it ...', for Poker's introduction is surely too close a parallel to that of Datchery to be a likely additional interest; the more reasonable assumption would surely be that this was a first draft later rejected.<sup>2</sup> Even if Forster were correct, this certainly does not amount to the hopeless state which Wills is said to have witnessed.

The idea that Dickens was in difficulties with his last novel certainly gained currency rapidly, in America as well as in England. R. Shelton Mackenzie, who published a *Life of Dickens* very shortly after the novelist's death<sup>3</sup>, offered a variant on Forster's remark that Dickens feared that he had 'plunged too soon into the incidents leading on to the catastrophe'.

1. XI, ii.

2. The manuscript of the Sapsea fragment is referred to on pp. 194-9 below. The striking reminiscence of Datchery is, of course, in the indirect manner in which the name of the newcomer is introduced:

Poker: I asked him his name.  
'Mr. Sapsea,' he answered, looking down, 'your penetration is so acute, your glance into the souls of your fellow men is so penetrating, that if I was hardy enough to deny that my name is Poker, what would it avail me?'

Datchery: 'Take my hat down for a moment from that peg, will you? No, I don't want it; look into it. What do you see written there?'

The waiter read: 'Datchery',  
'Now you know my name,' said the gentleman; 'Dick Datchery'.  
(ch. xviii).

3. R. Shelton Mackenzie, *Life of Charles Dickens*, Peterson & Bros. Philadelphia 1870. The dedication is dated 1st August 1870.

Mackenzie claimed, more specifically, but perhaps mistakenly,<sup>1</sup> that Dickens was afraid 'that he had allowed the "mystery" of his hero to be too readily guessed at' and he also commented on the numerous manuscript and proof revisions, deducing from these that Dickens 'seems to have been haunted by a dread of failure'.<sup>2</sup> But Mackenzie cites no authority for his statements, though he could not have seen the manuscript for himself, and in the absence of further corroboration one would hesitate to attach great weight to his testimony.

Another American publication which contributes to the idea of Dickens's difficulties with Edwin Drood is Phebe Hanaford's The Life and Writings of Charles Dickens, published by Lothrop and Company, Boston, in 1882. On pages 374-6 the author quotes from a London correspondent of the Scotsman who went so far as to blame Dickens's death on the anxieties caused by his novel:

Since his sudden seizure in the midst of his readings last year he had never been the same man ... He grew sooner wearied, both in walking and in work, and complained at times of a strange supineness of mind and laboured slowness with the pen ... I saw him a few weeks ago just before he left town ... Beyond question, I think it was Edwin Drood that killed him. He went back to work too soon. He had had the idea of the story for some time in his mind, I believe; but after the first impulse of the start was off, he found the development of the incidents and characters slow and painful. Within the last week or so he was complaining much of this. He seemed to make so little progress, and at the cost of such an effort. Perhaps it was the hot weather, he thought .<sup>3</sup> Then came Edwin Drood to put the finishing-stroke to the work.

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1. Mackenzie is not always to be relied on. The brief passage he quotes from Drood contains minor inaccuracies of spelling and punctuation, and, for example, he says on p.65 that all Dickens's monthlies had green covers, whereas, in fact, some of them were blue.
  2. Op.cit. pp.308-9.
  3. The article appeared in the Scotsman on June 14th, the same day as the obituary. The American reproduction contains minor inaccuracies.

F. B. Perkins, too, in Charles Dickens. His Life and Works, Putnam, N.Y. 1870, repeats the familiar story:

Beginning his last novel, after five or six years' intermission since Our Mutual Friend, he found that his chariot wheels drove heavily. His thoughts did not come so spontaneously nor so plenteously as usual. He was not so fully the master of his subject; and already he had been a little vexing himself for having, as he supposed, told too much of the story within the first few numbers. He went steadily on with it, nevertheless  
...

One cannot place much reliance on the importance of these reiterations. Even if Forster's testimony to Dickens's anxieties were not public until the appearance of his Life, once the rumour had gained currency from some source, it could soon multiply, and, as has already been suggested, Dickens's reputed evasiveness might well stem from an author's quite proper concern to keep the development of his mystery story to himself, an assumption in keeping with his telling Forster at the outset: 'Not a communicable idea (or the interest of the book would be gone)'. In connexion with this question of Dickens's feelings about the progress of his novel, a recollection of Blanchard Jerrold is, perhaps, not without interest. Writing of Dickens in the Gentleman's Magazine, July 1870, he recalled an incident of a few weeks earlier, when, as Dickens was walking with friends, in the course of conversation one said, speaking of Edwin Drood: 'Well, you, or we, are approaching the mystery'. Thereupon, according to Jerrold, 'Dickens, who had been, and was at the moment - all vivacity - extinguished his gaiety, and fell into a long and silent reverie, from which he never broke during the remainder of the walk'. Was he, Jerrold wondered in the light of later events, contemplating the mystery of approaching death? A simpler, but more mundane, interpretation might

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be that he was preoccupied with the approaching problems of his 'mystery' plot.

Kate Perugini's recollections, as has been indicated, strike a more positive, optimistic note, even though at the end her father apparently knew that he was writing against time. She recalled the extraordinary interest he took in the development of this story, 'apparent in all that he said or did', and his confiding to her on June 4th that he hoped Drood would be a success, 'if, please God, I live to finish it.'<sup>1</sup>

Neither Forster nor the letters throw light on Dickens's reactions in the last stages of the novel's progress, and there is a little left to record but the bare facts. Number II was published on April 30th; Number V, including the first chapter of Number VI, as we read it,<sup>2</sup> was read to Forster on May 7th;<sup>3</sup> from May 30th onwards Dickens was at Gadshill working on Number VI; May 31st saw the publication of Number III, the June ~~Number~~, the last published ~~Number~~ that Dickens saw. In the last two or three days of his life Dickens was hard at work on the novel - on June 8th he told Georgina and Mamie that he must finish Number VI that day<sup>4</sup>, the following being the day of his weekly visit to the All The Year Round office. Contrary to his usual custom, therefore, he worked most of the day, one of his activities being the writing of a letter to a correspondent

1. Pall Mall Magazine, June 1906. One would, of course, expect a fairly exclusive preoccupation with the story at this stage of its writing.
2. For discussion of manuscript and proofs of Edwin Drood see below pp.196 et seq particularly p.289.
3. Forster, XII, i.
4. Letters of Charles Dickens, edited by his sister-in-law and his eldest daughter. Macmillan & Co. 1909 (1st edn. 1893) p.748: 'On the morning of Wednesday, the eighth ... he was very well; in excellent spirits about his book, of which he said he must finish his number that day ...'

who had objected to the passage in chapter x of Edwin Drood in which Crisparkle is compared to 'the highly-popular lamb who has so long and unresistingly been led to the slaughter'.<sup>1</sup> Later in the same day he was taken ill and died on June 9th, leaving the sixth Number some six or seven pages short. The Number plans give one more chapter heading for Number VI, but beyond that not even a title. Number IV appeared on June 30th; Number V on July 31st, with Dickens's proof<sup>A</sup> deletions restored, and the last Number - VI - on August 30th, with its first chapter taken from V, where it had been the latter part of the last chapter. Dickens saw proofs as far as Number V and the first chapter of VI, but the rest of VI obviously had to be seen through the press by someone else, presumably Forster and possibly Charles Dickens junior.

The publishers' agreement for Edwin Drood<sup>2</sup> had included, at Dickens's wish but not, as is sometimes stated, for the first time, a clause relating to the author's possible death, in which contingency Forster was to determine the amount of compensation to be paid to Frederic Chapman. The sum to be paid for Edwin Drood was £7,500 for 25,000 copies. Beyond that number, profits were to be shared equally between author and publisher, and according to Forster the number reached while Dickens was still alive was 50,000 copies.

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1. Letters, III, p.784, to John M. Makeham.

2. This original contract for Edwin Drood apparently no longer exists. The Duffield Collection at Dickens House contains two letters from Chapman and Hall to Duffield, the first, dated February 1st 1926, stating that the contract is locked in the safe and refusing to have it photographed, the second, dated January 25th 1927, explaining that the original agreement no longer exists, that all former contracts with Dickens were rendered obsolete when the firm purchased the whole of his copyrights from Forster and Miss Hogarth, and that the agreements referring to this later transaction are the only ones preserved.

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Since 1867, Ticknor and Fields, later Fields, Osgood and Company, had been the authorized American publishers of Dickens's works. The sum of £1,000 was paid for advance sheets of Edwin Drood for simultaneous publication in America and the novel duly appeared there for the first time in the Weekly Magazine, Every Saturday, published by Fields, Osgood and Company.<sup>1</sup> The Forster Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum Library contains a volume of Accounts of Sales of Works of Charles Dickens, Chapman and Hall, 1862-70. According to this, the Monthly Numbers with their accompanying illustrations were sent to America regularly on the 3rd of the month, from March to August, except that on the first occasion, though the advance sheets went on March 3rd, the illustrations and wrapper were not sent off until the 7th. The intended arrangement was obviously that each month's portion should be split into weekly parts to appear on the Saturdays subsequent to that month's publication in England, but that there was some misunderstanding about the agreement is indicated in a letter of May 14<sup>th</sup> 1870 from Dickens to the American firm, pointing out that if he allowed any part of the novel to appear in America prior to its publication in England, he would thereby lose the English copyright:

... I had no idea of your intended plan of republishing Edwin Drood in America when we engaged for the proof sheets ... if pursued, it would entail upon me the loss of copyright in England of any parts of the book, first published in America ... I wanted to do the most for you that I could, without the least reference to any<sub>2</sub> extra gain, consistently with the safety of my property ...

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1. See below ch. v. for discussion of this text.
  2. Letters, III, p.777. See also letter to Edmund Yates, June 5th, p.783 and article by Gerald G. Grubb, 'Some Unpublished Correspondence of Dickens and Chapman and Hall', Boston University Studies in English, No.I.
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The dates on which Edwin Drood was eventually published in Every Saturday are as follows:

- No. I      April 9th, chs. 1 & 2; 16th, ch. 3; 23rd, 4 & 5.  
 No. II     May 7th, 6 & 7; 14th, 8 & 9.  
 No. III    June 11th, 10; 18th, 11; 25th, 12.  
 No. IV    July 9th, 13 & 14; 16th, 15; 23rd, 16.  
 No. V     August 6th, 17; 13th, 18 & 19; 20th, 20.  
 No. VI    September 3rd, 21 and part of 22; 10th, end of 22 and part  
             of 23; 17th, rest of 23.

Harper Brothers of New York, who had published the first American edition of some of Dickens's novels, ran an Edwin Drood Monthly Supplement to Harper's Weekly, the first instalment appearing on April 23rd, and the last on October 1st.

Harper Brothers had hoped to publish the first edition of Edwin Drood in America, and Dickens's agreement with Ticknor and Fields ran him into some difficulties. In 1867 appeared the latter firm's Diamond Edition of Dickens's works, bearing on the back of the title page a letter from Dickens dated April 2nd:

By a special arrangement made with me and my English Publishers (partners with me in the copyright of my works), Messrs. Ticknor and Fields, of Boston, have become the only authorized representatives in America of the whole series of my books.

This in itself might well have been galling to Harper Brothers, who had paid for advance sheets of earlier works: Bleak House £400; Little Dorrit £250; Tale of Two Cities £1,000; Great Expectations £1,250; Our Mutual Friend £1,000. Hard on Dickens's letter of April 2nd came another to Ticknor and Fields on April 16th, implying that they were the only American

publishers who paid him fairly for his work:

In America, the occupation of my life for thirty years is, unless it bears your imprint, utterly worthless and profitless to me.<sup>1</sup>

Either this letter or another one also close in date was published in the Pall Mall Gazette. Referring as it did to Dickens's gratitude for the payment of £200, it carried the implication that he was not used to receiving payment from American publishers.<sup>2</sup> Sampson Low consequently wrote to the Pall Mall Gazette on behalf of Harper Brothers for whom he was the agent, citing particulars of money which they had paid, and quoting also a letter from Petersons on this subject stating that they had always assumed that the American rights belonged to whichever firm had purchased advance sheets. Petersons had paid other American publishing firms for the right to produce the novels in volume form. The details of the dispute were reproduced in the Publishers' Circular of Philadelphia on June 1st, and, with the title 'The Dickens Controversy', in some editions of Mackenzie's Life of Dickens, published by Petersons in 1870. Dickens's reaction was to write back to a friend, presumably for publication, claiming that what he had said had been grossly misrepresented.<sup>3</sup>

One wonders whether this controversy might have had any repercussions on the readings. According to Mackenzie<sup>4</sup> an article in the Philadelphia Press contained such caustic criticisms that Dickens almost gave them up.

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1. Letters, III, p.523.
  2. If this is the same letter as the Nonesuch one, neither Nonesuch nor Shelton Mackenzie's Life prints it complete.
  3. The details of the above transactions are gathered from the following sources: William Glyde Wilkins, First and Early American Editions of the Works of Charles Dickens, Cedar Rapids, 1910; Postscript to R. Shelton Mackenzie's Life of Charles Dickens, Peterson and Bros. Philadelphia 1870; Dickensian, August 1909, pp.209-10.
  4. Op.cit. p.276.

Forster<sup>1</sup> has no comment beyond a reference to Dickens's 'extraordinary composure'.

This was not the end of the disputes over the American publication of Edwin Drood. Incredible as it may seem, Dickens appears subsequently to have forgotten his agreement with Ticknor and Fields and to have tentatively offered the advance sheets of the next work to Harper's,<sup>2</sup> who, on seeing an announcement of the new story on November 20th 1869 in a London paper, offered £2,000 for the rights. According to Grubb this offer was provisionally accepted until Fields, who was staying with Dickens at the time and listening to the author's readings of the early chapters, went home to look up his own agreement and remind Dickens of his promise, whereupon the latter apologized all round. It seems most unlikely that, in view of Fields' constant visits to Dickens in the summer and autumn of 1869, the agreement between them would not have been mentioned before this date. Grubb seems to be romancing here, as in fact Dickens was negotiating American publication in October at the very time he was reading Number I to Fields.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the details of the case, Dickens did have to write to Harpers on November 30th, apologizing for having forgotten the Fields agreement.<sup>4</sup>

Still this did not end the correspondence. Grubb claims that for some reason, although Harpers accepted the situation, Fields, Osgood and Company

1. X, ii.

2. See Gerald Grubb, art.cit.

3. See p.20.

4. Letters, III, p.750, dated November 13th, which does not fit the surrounding dates. Howard Duffield, in his Cloisterham Mail Bag, dates it 30th, giving as his source the Eustace Conway Collection, New York. Duffield's version of the letter differs in small particulars from Nonesuch and, according to a facsimile preserved elsewhere in the Duffield Collection, is the correct version.

wrote in resentful terms to them, and Harpers consequently wrote to Dickens renewing their offer if Fields withdrew. The letter cited by Duffield as from the Jerome Kern Catalogue, Part One, No.443, would seem to be in answer to this approach:

You may be sure that if I should find myself 'free' to make a new arrangement concerning advance sheets of The Mystery of Edwin Dröod at any time during the issuing of the book in numbers, I will at once send them to you, and place myself in your hands.

Dickens certainly seems to have been keeping his publishers dangling.

Fields, Osgood and Company, perhaps not surprisingly, seem to have experienced other pre-publication difficulties: the letter to Fields of January 14th, recording Forster's verdict on Number II as 'a clincher', begins:

I cannot overcome my instinctive feeling that it would be a very unseemly thing for me to engage in any single combats with the Pirates. I have already announced my own connexion with your house; and it is for you, and not for me, to make all appeals or protests or other announcements connected with that association. I am quite clear as to my silent part.<sup>1</sup>

In the course of publication, too, on June 11th, they were impelled to issue a notice in Every Saturday reminding readers that theirs was the authorized American edition.

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1. Letters, III, pp.759-60, quoted incompletely. Duffield prints photographs of this letter, from the Huntington Library, which again show some inaccuracies in Nonesuch.

NOTES ON EDWIN DROOD

and

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN ACLAND

It has already been suggested that Dickens did not consider the resemblances between Lytton's story and his own to be too great to preclude his publishing of the former so near in date to his own new work. A brief synopsis of Lytton's story will indicate the common features of detail and the vast divergences in essentials.

John Ackland<sup>1</sup> is an American business man about to leave Boston when the story opens, partly in order to collect a debt from a certain Philip Cartright, a hard-living, gambling Southerner. Ackland has, however, other reasons for wanting to get away from Boston and his habitual surroundings: he is disappointed in life, apparently tired of existence, the consequence of an unhappy love affair. This gives the motive for the suspicion of a possible suicide later. Apart from the termination of his relationship with Mary Mordent, whom he obviously deeply loves, it would be hard to conceive two figures more unlike in circumstances and character than Ackland and Edwin Drood.

The opening chapter of John Ackland makes it clear from the care with which certain details are given that this is a detective story. Ackland, on his way to Cartright's house, takes his watch to a jeweller's to be regulated, and the latter specifically notices the watch, unusual in his common experience, a good watch obviously not made in the States. It is clear that this watch will be easily recognized if it turns up again in the

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1. The name is spelt with a 'k' in All The Year Round.



course of events. This incident immediately calls to mind the similar one in Drood, where Edwin's watch is taken to the jeweller on Christmas Eve and we are informed both of the time at which the watch was wound and of Jasper's awareness that Edwin's jewellery is limited to a watch and chain and a shirt-pin. Distinctive jewellery is, however, likely to be a regular feature of possible identification in murder cases, too common to merit particular attention in drawing significant parallels between such stories.

Cartright's debt to Ackland is publicly paid in bank notes and Ackland subsequently leaves the house earlier than he had intended, upset by a chance allusion to Mary Mordent and her inability to love deeply, made by a young woman of 'magnetic' powers who is able, among other evidences of sensibility, to deduce character from handwriting. Cartright alone escorts Ackland on his way, in highly suspicious circumstances; the horse Ackland was lent subsequently returns riderless, and a search for the missing man is made, to no avail. The negro slaves are terrified by cross-examination, particularly 'Uncle Ned' whom Cartright threatens. Recourse is had to the powers of the young lady but no positive information is to be had from her either: on touching the receipt Ackland had given for the money, she screams, 'You have put me in touch with a - ', faints, and on recovery says she cannot remember anything.

In subsequent chapters Ackland's cousin Tom, who takes on the rôle of detective, receives evidence including a letter apparently from John Ackland, relating to his accident, his melancholy depression and what is obviously a growing persecution mania. In his determination to track down his cousin, he receives encouragement and sympathy from Cartright, whose zeal

in the matter profoundly affects him. Here, a similarity is noticeable to Jasper's zeal in hunting down Edwin's murderer. The pair finally come upon what appears to be incontrovertible proof of Ackland's suicide, and here the matter seems to be at an end, though there are people acquainted with Cartright, among them Mr. D'Oiley the watch-maker, who still suspects he was not unconnected with his guest's disappearance. Fate now plays into Mr. D'Oiley's hands. Cartright's daughter, the one person for whom he feels affection, leaves her watch to be cleaned by Mr. D'Oiley. He at once recognizes it as Ackland's and decides to return the watch in person to Miss Cartright, convinced that he will be guided 'by the finger of Providence to unravel this great mystery and bring detection home to as black a criminal as ever burdened God's earth'. So it turns out. On the Cartright estate he comes upon a negro, Uncle Ned, being beaten for refusing to take a load of ice into the icehouse, because he is afraid of 'Bogie'. Mr. D'Oiley buys Uncle Ned in Cartright's absence. When the latter returns and finds Uncle Ned gone, realizing the game is up, he flees the country. The icehouse is searched and the body discovered buried in the ice which 'had so wonderfully preserved the hideous secret confided to its frozen clasp, that the murdered man looked as freshly dead as if he had perished only an hour ago'. (Here a parallel may be noted with the speculations of those commentators on Edwin Drood who think that Jasper might ultimately have been exposed through misunderstanding the properties of quicklime which in certain circumstances acts as a preserver, not a destroyer).

The evidence shows that Cartright had first shot Ackland, then battered

in his skull, and forced Uncle Ned to assist in the disposal of the body. The action took place in summer time when the icehouse was nearly empty. The 'evidence' of John Ackland's survival and subsequent suicide had been planted by Cartright's accomplice, a fact which the reader has been at liberty to suspect all along. The motive for the murder was, of course, recovery of the bank notes. Had Cartright not been overcome by greed and stolen the watch as well, he might never have been found out. As it was, he was eventually lured back over the border, arrested and hanged.

The possible links between this story and Edwin Drood are then: the mystification of the reader over the question of murder, the production of jewellery in evidence, the broken love affair, the introduction of a young lady of magnetic powers (cf. the sympathy which exists between Helena and Neville), the zeal of the murderer in unravelling the case, and the preservation of the body. All are 'detective plot' resemblances. Nothing, in characters, character relationships, setting or emphasis of interest connects the two. The crime in John Ackland is purely mercenary: there is no closer relationship between the two men. This is no study of distorted and divided passions; there is, indeed, no character interest to speak of.

NOTES ON FILDES' LETTER TO 'THE TIMES'

Letter from Fildes, October 27th, 1905, printed in the Times Literary Supplement, November 3rd. According to Fildes, in reply to his question about the scarf Dickens first muttered that he was getting on too fast, and then confided in him that Jasper was to kill his nephew by strangulation. W. R. Hughes, A Week's Tramp in Dickens-Land, Chapman and Hall, 1891, p.140, also quotes Fildes on this subject. Later commentators have assumed that Dickens altered the reference from 'neckerchief' to 'scarf' as a result of Fildes' enquiries, and, as the manuscript does not bear this out, doubts have subsequently been thrown on the accuracy of Fildes' memory. The other odd feature of this recollection is that Fildes had no need to be disconcerted about Jasper's change of dress as it is specifically introduced as an innovation and no reader would think that the illustrator was being inconsistent; in any case, neither of the 'murder' Number illustrations shows Jasper on that occasion. The illustration in which he does figure relates to several days later, and he is lying on the floor in a swoon, in a position in which his neck-wear cannot distinctly be seen. The answer to these difficulties which have puzzled the commentators is given in an article in The Dickensian by W. Laurence Gadd, June 1st 1927, pp.157-60. The writer's brother, G. F. Gadd, came across a magazine article of 1884 commenting on the fact that Fildes had embarrassed Dickens by drawing Jasper's scarf with a 'kind of emphasis' which drew attention to the change in dress. On Fildes' notice being drawn to this, he replied, May 2nd, 1904:

Of course I am not responsible for the writer's picturesque manner in describing the 'scarf incident'. The fact is, I

asked Dickens before I did the drawings for that month why he had made a change in his description of Jasper's dress, and it was then he told me why he had done so. I considered it advisable not to select a scene in which Jasper wore the great black scarf, and possibly that accounts for your failure to find any trace of it in the illustrations. So it did not 'appear itself in the drawing', nor did Dickens see 'the thing had been drawn with a kind of emphasis' for the best of all reasons.

ii) EDWIN DROOD: After-History

When it was known that Dickens had died leaving the novel unfinished, there was naturally much speculation as to the possibility of its completion with the aid of any surviving memoranda. It is hardly surprising, in view of the frequent collaborations between the two, that the name of Wilkie Collins was put forward as a likely continuer<sup>1</sup>, and both Collins himself and Chapman and Hall had to issue disclaimers. Without mentioning any names, Chapman and Hall were emphatic in making their position clear. Their statement in the Preface to the first edition, dated 12th August 1870 - 'it is believed that what the author would himself have most desired is done, in placing before the reader without further note or suggestion the fragment of THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD' - had been anticipated much earlier, as soon as the rumours started to circulate. The Times, on June 23rd, carried the following announcement:

We find that erroneous reports are in circulation respecting The Mystery of Edwin Drood, the novel on which Mr. Dickens was at work when he died. It has been suggested that the tale is to be finished by other hands. We hope you will allow us to state in your columns that Mr. Dickens has left three numbers complete, in addition to those already published, this being one-half of the story as it was intended to be written. These numbers will be published, and the fragment will so remain. No other writer could be permitted by us to complete the work which Mr. Dickens has left.

The publishers of Every Saturday, after initial hesitancy owing to their own ignorance of the state of affairs in London, eventually followed suit. On July 16th they had to be content with quoting from the Pall Mall Gazette

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1. It will be remembered that some years earlier Dickens had offered to perform a similar office for Collins, in case he was too ill to keep up with the instalments of No Name. See letter to Wilkie Collins, October 14th, 1862: 'I could do it, at a pinch, so like you as that no one should find out the difference'.

a premonitory warning to Mr. Collins: 'It is not likely that Mr. Collins is rash enough to undertake the task'; the following week a letter was printed from a gentleman whose name they charitably withheld, offering to finish the novel for them if no one had already undertaken the task and to do it in time for them to keep the publication going; on July 30th they could give assurance that 'the story as far as completed will be laid before the readers of this Journal simultaneously with the appearance of the monthly parts in London', and 'will probably be resumed in our next number'; and finally on September 17th, the issue containing the last chapter of Number VI, a eulogistic article was printed praising the novel as 'the writer's masterpiece, the work of his ripe genius', comparable only to A Tale of Two Cities, 'in many respects the author's most artistic novel', in which it was categorically stated that the six monthly parts prepared for the press by the author himself were all of the story that was to be given to the public.

Though Wilkie Collins later emphatically denied all connexion with any attempt to complete the novel,<sup>1</sup> inevitably great interest attaches to his possible knowledge of the story's intended development. After a close intimacy of several years the two friends seem to have drifted apart towards the close of Dickens's life; comparatively few letters survive from these last years and Forster, the other major contemporary source of information, is notoriously - possibly jealously - reticent about the Dickens-Collins friendship. Collins is known to have made scathing remarks about Forster's egocentric Life - 'The Life of John Forster, with

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1. See below, p. 164.

Occasional Anecdotes of Charles Dickens'<sup>1</sup> - perhaps stung to this retaliation partly by the ungenerously scanty references to himself there, partly as a result of the rebuff he is said to have received from Forster's refusal to answer a letter from him. Kenneth Robinson, my authority for this, also refers to Collins's refusal to finish Edwin Drood which he stigmatized as 'Dickens's last laboured effort, the melancholy work of a worn out brain'.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Collins had been apprised of Dickens's strictures on The Moonstone as 'wearisome beyond endurance', with 'a vein of obstinate conceit', after his earlier enthusiastic reception of it.<sup>3</sup>

There do appear to be signs of decreasing intimacy, possibly even of estrangement, between the two towards the end, but this does not detract interest from a study of the writings of Wilkie Collins which might have bearing on the Drood story. Did Collins know any more than other associates of Dickens? Was, for example, his Miss or Mrs?<sup>4</sup> an attempt to work over the material he knew to have been in Dickens's mind, or was it his own tacit version of how the novel might have ended? Was there too great an element of rivalry towards the end for there to be any further collaboration? (According to Davis, pp.257-8, when the sales of The Moonstone far outsoared those of Our Mutual Friend and Great Expectations, Dickens and Wills 'communed with each other on Wilkie's

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1. The World, October 2nd, 1889 (Edmund Yates).
  2. Pall Mall Gazette, January 20th, 1890. See also Kenneth Robinson, Wilkie Collins (A Biography), Bodley Head, 1951, pp.245-6, 257-60 and Nuel Pharr Davis, The Life of Wilkie Collins, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1956, pp.270, 289, 290.
  3. Letters to Wills, July 26th, 1868 and June 30th, 1867.
  4. See below, pp.54-4.



story like two jealous children'.) Was, in fact, Dickens's Edwin Drood his own answer to the problem of how to write a successful mystery novel, his own intended showing of supremacy over The Moonstone?<sup>1</sup> The linking of Wilkie Collins's name with John Jasper's Secret will be discussed later;<sup>2</sup> Charles Dickens junior, whose name was also associated with this novel, was emphatic in his denial of any authorized continuation:

I have frequently been asked by unknown correspondents for particulars of a continuation of Edwin Drood which is supposed to have been written by Wilkie Collins 'at the request of the Dickens family'. Of course there is no such book. Neither the 'Dickens family' nor Wilkie Collins would have entertained such an idea for a moment.<sup>3</sup>

However, though Collins's name is thus specifically dissociated from Edwin Drood, there is one other whose name Charles Dickens junior mentions as a potential collaborator in a different way.<sup>4</sup> According to the latter, his father had 'made arrangements' for dramatizing Drood with the co-operation of Dion Boucicault. After Dickens died, Boucicault proposed that his son should join him in the work with a view to a production at the Lyceum Theatre with Henry Irving as John Jasper.<sup>5</sup> For some reason this production fell through. Charles Dickens junior assigns the blame for this failure partly to Forster:

1. For the relationship of Edwin Drood to mystery novels of its day, see pp. 99-134.
2. pp. 161 et seq.
3. Introduction to Macmillan's 1923 edition, p.xv.
4. Ibid. pp.xvi-xviii.
5. This is interesting in view of Irving's later success in The Bells. See pp. 58-60.

But, shortly after we had commenced our labours, a foolish version of the book was brought out at the Surrey Theatre, with Henry Neville as Jasper - and with a live Edwin Drood turning up, disguised as a barrister, at Neville Landless's trial. The production of this piece - it was called the Mystery of Cloisterham - with the express sanction and approval of Mr. Forster, who declined to take any notice of the remonstrances which Boucicault and I addressed to him, of course put a stop to our play. The book has been dramatised more than once since, but always, I believe, with the same altogether erroneous idea as to what was really meant by the mystery of Edwin Drood.

I have not been able to establish conclusively which Surrey Theatre production Charles Dickens junior so bitterly disapproved of. The Mystery of Edwin Drood seems to be shrouded in mystery at every turn. According to a play bill poster preserved in the Duffield collection, Walter Stephens had a dramatic version of Drood in four acts staged at the Surrey Theatre on November 20th, 1871, but the version by Stephens which I have read is entitled Lost,<sup>1</sup> and in it Drood is murdered, and Neville is Datchery. The play begins quite well but deteriorates into stilted melodrama as soon as the writer has to depend on his own words and invention. Another poster refers, in far more melodramatic terms - 'Cathedral Close by Moonlight', 'secret and devouring passion', 'Love Intense and Hate Ineradicable!' - to a version at the Britannia Theatre, Hoxton, July 22nd 1872 and week, by a Mr. G.H. MacDermott. This I have not seen, but according to Mr. Cuming Walters, in it Drood escapes,

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1. Lost. A drama in 4 acts ... by Walter Stephens. Printed by J. W. Last, Princess Street, n.d. but written above the title in ink is 'H. Vaughan. Prompt Copy. 1871.' (Duffield Collection, Dickens House).

Bazzard is Datchery, and Jasper dies of shock at Drood's reappearance.<sup>1</sup> This is not the only mystery which surrounds the play version of Edwin Drood. There is also the question as to how much was really known about the novel's proposed ending. Boucicault, as has already been mentioned,<sup>2</sup> was reported to have been told by Dickens himself that he did not know how to end the novel. Another prospective dramatizer was Augustin Daly, the adapter for the American stage of works by Dickens, Wilkie Collins, and Boucicault among others, in some of whose productions Fechter, the leading actor in No Thoroughfare, appeared in the 1870<sup>s</sup>.

1. The Complete Mystery of Edwin Drood, History, Continuations and Solutions (1870-1912), Chapman and Hall, 1912. Tabulated list of conclusions. F. Dubrez Fawcett, Dickens the Dramatist, W.H. Allen 1952, (pp.103-4) bears out these facts about the plots of the Stephens and MacDermott productions, and a note in The Dickensian, April 1924, pp.100-101, by J.C.L. Clark, points out, though only on the authority of Robertson Nicoll and Cuming Walters, that Charles Dickens junior obviously confused the two plays. The most comprehensive survey, XIX Century Drama, 1850-1900, by Allardyce Nicoll, C.M.P. 1946, lists in Appendix B, under 'Unknown Authors', The Mystery of Cloisterham, Surrey, 26, 10,'71 and under Stephens, The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Surrey, 4, 11,'71. Charles Dickens junior might therefore just conceivably be right in his recollection, though it rather stretches credulity to postulate two Drood plays at the same theatre in two consecutive weeks. Nicoll himself says in his Preface (Vol.2, p.16) that he cannot hope to make his lists accurate, as 'the kaleidoscopic change in titles (a favourite device of the time) renders available records uncertain or ambiguous. It is probable that several plays given here under the names of their writers reappear with a different nomenclature among the dramas by "unknown authors" ... unquestionably some manuscript versions must have been permitted to slip in as separate entities alongside their other selves, the acted plays.' I have not had the opportunity to check at Dickens House what title was given on the Stephens poster, but the fact that I have no recorded note of this inclines me to suspect that the title was nearer to the novel's title than is Lost, i.e. that it was either The Mystery of Edwin Drood or The Mystery of Cloisterham, a supposition which would bear out Allardyce Nicoll's experience of multiple titles. We have thus no accurate means of knowing how many versions of Drood were staged in the year following the novel's publication, but it is likely that the book afforded dramatists a popular subject.

2. p. 26.

Daly's version was announced in the London Figaro, October 20th 1870, as having just been entered for copyright at Washington, and as being prepared for speedy production at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York,<sup>1</sup> but this, too, seems to have been fated. Assuming that Dickens would have left some clue to the mystery, Daly wrote to Charles Dickens junior for information, but was told by him that 'it was as great a mystery to him as to the public at large'. Daly thereupon wrote to Fildes who put him on to Charles Collins, who eventually replied on May 4th, 1871, giving all the information he had, most important that 'Edwin Drood was never to reappear, he having been murdered by Jasper'.<sup>2</sup> Daly then considered inventing his own conclusion, somewhat on the lines of Le Juif Polonais, but before he could get to work on it the English version of The Bells appeared and effectually deterred him.<sup>3</sup>

It is possible that Charles Dickens junior refused information, preferring to keep to himself what he knew for his own prospective adaptation. Or it might be that he genuinely felt that he knew no more than the public at large - assuming then that they, too, would take for granted Jasper's successful crime - and that only later did he realize what preposterous conclusions some writers would draw. He certainly expressed forcibly enough later his conviction that Drood was murdered. Nor is this all. Though in his Preface to the novel in 1923 he made no reference to any other attempt at dramatization on his part, there seems to be conclusive evidence that he did eventually write a version

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1. Cutting enclosed in Duffield Collection copy of The Life of Augustin Daly.
  2. For fuller text of Collins's letter, see below pp.186-7.
  3. Joseph Francis Daly, The Life of Augustin Daly, N.Y. Macmillan, 1917, pp.107-8.

of the play in collaboration with Joseph Hatton. An article from Hatton in The People, November 19th, 1905, refers to Dickens's own thoughts of dramatization with Boucicault, to Boucicault's subsequent consideration and later rejection of the idea of writing the play himself, and, admittedly in rather vague terms, to the authenticity of the version ultimately written by himself and Charles Dickens junior: he says, for example, that much of the son's version of the finale was proved by the instructions which the author had given to the illustrator in regard to certain of the unpublished and unwritten chapters. We know, however, how non-committal the instructions to the illustrators were.<sup>1</sup> A letter preserved in the Duffield Collection from Bessie Hatton, the playwright's daughter, is more categorical in its assurance that her father told her Charles Dickens junior knew how the story was to end, and in support of this claim she enclosed a letter from Mary Angela Dickens, as follows:

Miss Hatton has asked whether we have any reason for believing that my father, Charles Dickens, the eldest son of my grandfather, knew what was to be the end of Edwin Drood.

My father told me more than once that when Edwin Drood was being written he went with his father for a country walk. After walking for a long time in dead silence my grandfather suddenly began to talk of the book with which he was evidently completely preoccupied. Almost as if he were talking to himself, my father said, he described the murder, standing still and going through the scene in rapid action. Then he mapped out the means by which the murderer was to be identified.

All that my grandfather thus told my father is embodied in the play in which my father collaborated with Mr. Hatton.

March 3rd 1929.

Mary Angela Dickens

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1. See below, pp. 186-8.

It seems that several years elapsed before the Dickens/Hatton version was ready for the public - a brief preliminary notice appeared in the magazine The Theatre for March 1st, 1880 announcing its forthcoming appearance at the Princess's Theatre, with Mr. Charles Warner in the lead - and even then it failed to find favour in the theatre world. There were difficulties with the stage-manager and the play was never acted.<sup>1</sup> It was, however, published by Charles Dickens and Evans, Crystal Palace Press, and a copy exists at Dickens House. It is a melodramatic affair, with nothing distinctive to recommend it in the dialogue, which is poor, though with possibilities in the situation, which may owe something to the success of The Bells: Jasper in an opium vision 'sees' his crime and its discovery; as he does so, the knocking on his door in Cloisterham in his vision merges with actual knocking on the opium den door. He poisons himself and dies with a defiant confession on his lips. There is no place in the play for Tartar and Datchery: Neville presumably marries Rosa.

One final note to add to the 'mystery' of the dramatizations - among miscellaneous letters referring to Droodiana in the Duffield Collection is one from D.E. Grant, on behalf of Duttons, referring to the notice in the Theatre magazine, March 1880, of a Drood play by Charles Dickens junior, 'which', says Mr. Grant, 'I understand, he entirely disclaims'.

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1. Hatton, article in The People.

NOTES ON EDWIN DROOD AND MISS OR MRS?

Wilkie Collins's Miss or Mrs?, which first appeared in the 1871 Christmas number of the Graphic, was included in a volume published by Chatto and Windus in 1875, along with other 'Stories in Outline', two of which had appeared in the Christmas numbers of All The Year Round for 1859 and 1861. Though, in that paragraph of the 1875 Dedication which refers to these two stories, Collins naturally makes mention of his 'kindest reader' and 'dear lost friend, Charles Dickens', there is no acknowledgment of any debt to that friend's latest work in reference to Miss or Mrs?, a novel which appears to have made extensive borrowings from Dickens's plot for Edwin Drood, as the following brief summary will indicate.

The 'Miss or Mrs?' of the title is a young girl, Natalie Graybrooke, not of age for marriage without parental consent at the time the story opens, but sought in marriage by two suitors, one her cousin Launce whom she has known from childhood and loves, the other, the accepted suitor, a considerably older man, Richard Turlington, at whose name she shudders in terror. The latter, the Jasper figure in the book, differs from Jasper in that he is a villainous character already responsible for the death of a man and has a double motive for his courtship: he needs marriage with a wealthy heiress in order to save his business concerns from ruin. In order to secure Natalie from a forced marriage with Turlington, Launce persuades her into a secret marriage with himself, after which, to avoid a charge of abduction, she is to return to her father's house until she reaches the age of sixteen. (It is typical of Collins to make use in his plot of the details of the legal situation;

cf. his use of the peculiar marriage laws of Scotland in Man and Wife). Meanwhile, arrangements for the marriage between Natalie and Turlington proceed, the latter being nominated in her father's will as sole executor and trustee of his vast fortune. However, Natalie's secret marriage is eventually revealed by a jealous acquaintance to Turlington, whereupon 'a look of deadly vengeance' transfigures his face to 'something superhuman and devilish'. Realizing that his one hope of avoiding ruin now depends on gaining control, as trustee, of Graybrooke's money, he makes his way to an infamous river-side quarter of East London where he knows he will find one Thomas Wildfang, a former employee and accomplice in his evil past. The landlord of the public house where Wildfang lives tells Turlington that he 'had another fit of the horrors last night' and is unlikely to last long. We are introduced to him in the following setting:

On the miserable bed lay a grey-headed old man, of gigantic stature, with nothing on him but a ragged shirt and a pair of patched filthy trousers. At the side of the bed, with a bottle of gin on the ricketty table between them, sat two hideous, leering, painted monsters, wearing the dress of women. The smell of opium was in the room, as well as the smell of spirits. (Tenth Scene • Green Anchor Lane).

This miserable creature, despite his protests that he is 'past the job', succumbs to the temptation of the £100 payment held out by Turlington.

The scene changes to the little Somersetshire village of Baxdale where the Graybrookes are spending Christmas as the guests of Richard Turlington. Towards eight in the evening of Christmas Eve<sup>1</sup> in a dark and lonely spot in the churchyard the conspirators meet to lay their

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1. The similarity of date is striking, but one must bear in mind that this was a Christmas story.



final plans, although Wildfang's hand in which he bears his cudgel trembles so much that he needs a draught from his master's spirit-flask to steady it. He is to attack Graybrooke on his way to the vicarage, make sure that he is dead, rob him of his money and jewellery to make the motive appear to be robbery (the fact that the watch is missing as well as the purse is mentioned twice later), and then make his way to the malthouse where he will find a change of clothes as well as a cauldron full of quicklime in which to destroy those he is wearing. Wildfang is to disappear from the neighbourhood immediately the crime has been committed.

Returning from his secret meeting with Wildfang, Turlington sees near his house a mysterious stranger, with 'thick beard and moustachio' and hat pulled over his eyes, whom report gives out to be a surveyor, who has been in the neighbourhood for some days past, working on a new map of that part of the country. The mystery of his identity is not allowed to baffle us for long: within half a page the author has informed us that the bearded individual is Launce. Was Collins perhaps irritated by the protracted puzzle of Datchery? Or was it just that the list of dramatis personae in his novel was so meagre that he was aware that there was no scope for mystery here?

Turlington's plan miscarries. Hard on the discovery of the blood-stained body we are told that the wound is superficial and the victim will recover in two or three days, information which renders ludicrous in retrospect the drama of the preceding moments. The failure of the murder attempt is accounted for when Wildfang is discovered in a fit on

the road by the churchyard:

It was thought - if you could trust the ravings of a madman - that the fit took him while he was putting his hand on Sir Joseph's heart to feel if it had stopped beating. A sort of a vision ... must have overpowered him at the moment.  
(Twelfth Scene. Inside the House)

Again one wonders whether Collins had Edwin Drood in mind. Was this what he thought would have been the outcome there, or what he thought should have been the outcome? Was he obliquely giving his version of the plot without committing himself to a direct interest in Dickens's latest work, or had he merely scented the possibilities of a dramatic story and boldly lifted them from a novel which could make no further use of them?

At this point the resemblances, actual or conjectural, with the Drood story end. In fact, we are now almost at the end of Collins's story and the narrative becomes even cruder and balder as the preposterous climax approaches in which Turlington, after firing through the locked bedroom door on the wounded Sir Joseph lying on his daughter's bed, accidentally shoots himself through the mouth while looking down the barrel of his revolver. The whole narrative is improbable and hasty, totally lacking in distinction in character drawing or the creation of atmosphere. Admittedly, as Collins himself reminds us in the Dedication, this was a 'story in outline' and, as such, 'restricted within limits which alike precluded elaborate development of character and subtle handling of events', but even so one feels that the supply of entertaining reading must have fallen to a low standard indeed for this to have found its way, as the Dedication claims, 'at once to the favour of an unusually large circle of readers'.

NOTE ON EDWIN DROOD AND LE JUIF POLONAIS

Dickens's life-long interest in the stage is well-known. According to Forster, during his residence in Paris in 1855-6, his associates were 'writers, painters, actors, or musicians, and when he wanted relief from any strain of work he found it at the theatre' (VII, v). Forster makes no mention here of Dickens's acquaintance with the two French writers, Emile Erckmann and Pierre-Alexandre Chatrian, whose collaboration in the 1840s to '80s produced many tales of mystery and the supernatural, likely to appeal to the Dickens of the Christmas stories, but it is at least possible that he knew their writings.

The particular work of interest here is Le Juif Polonais, according to Chambers' Encyclopedia written independently by Erckmann in 1869, but contained in a volume of Contes et Romans Populaires ascribed to the two jointly, under the usual form Erckmann-Chatrian, published in Paris by Hetzel, 18 Rue Jacob, and dated 1867. At least as early as this, then, this short work was in circulation, and we know that Dickens visited Paris in the summer of 1868 to see the French version of No Thoroughfare.<sup>1</sup> Could it be that he saw the possibilities of Le Juif Polonais and was influenced by them in his thinking about Drood? Or is it just coincidence that the most famous mystery story and the most famous melodrama of the late nineteenth century in England have certain features, or certain possible developments, in common? Le Juif Polonais, as such, is not famous in England, but its English counterpart, adapted from the French

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1. According to Jules Claretie, Erckmann-Chatrian, Paris 1883, p.21, Le Juif Polonais was acted at 'le petit théâtre de Cluny' in 1868.

by Leopold Lewis and presented in 1871 (first night November 25th, Royal Lyceum Theatre) under the title The Bells, became one of Henry Irving's most popular plays.

The stage machinery of Le Juif Polonais creaks in many ways, but the dénouement scene, in which Mathis's murder trial is enacted on the stage through his dream, has effective theatrical possibility. The play is sufficiently well-known and accessible to need no summary here:<sup>1</sup> its obvious common elements with Drood are as follows: the disappearance of the body, the date of the crime - Christmas Eve, the respected figure of the criminal, the probable use of lime in each case, the centring of interest on the question of how the murderer will eventually betray himself. The mixed feelings of revulsion and necessity with which Mathis awaits the approach of his victim are likely to have been <sup>even</sup> more strongly present in Jasper, and the manner of the crime, the repeated blows, the horrified gazing at the body, both recall Jasper's 'Look down, look down! You see what lies at the bottom there? ... Look at it! Look what a poor, mean, miserable thing it is!' and provide speculation for the possibility of the victim's escape, if the murderer were not so thorough as the burgomaster. More striking than any of this, however, is the manner of the crime's <sup>e</sup> revelation: the influence of the mesmerist - compare Jasper's opium revelations and the possible intimations of mesmeric power in both Jasper and Helena - and the unconsciousness of the criminal that he is revealing his crime. This latter aspect we actually see at work in the final opium den scene of Edwin Drood and it is strongly suggested as the ultimate outcome in Forster's words, '... the

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1. Lewis's The Bells is contained, for example, in the World's Classics Nineteenth Century Plays, ed. George Rowell, O.U.P. 1953.

review of the murderer's career ... as if, not he the culprit, but some other man, were the tempted'. There is no suggestion in Edwin Drood of a place for the doubly ironic retribution of Le Juif Polonais, whereby Mathis merely dreams that he has given himself away and dies of an imagined, self-inflicted sentence, but even so, the resemblances are striking and one wonders if Dickens had read or seen Le Juif Polonais, and if so, when.

Chapter II

i) Dickens's Literary Reputation in the 1860s; Reviews of EDWIN DROOD;

To gain some idea of Dickens's standing at the period prior to the publication of Edwin Drood, relevant articles from the Spectator, many of them by the critic R. H. Hutton, have been consulted, together with a few obituaries and reviews of Our Mutual Friend from other periodicals. One of the most notable features to emerge from the general part of this survey is the frequency of references to the earlier novels: a stranger to Dickens's writing might almost be justified in thinking that it stopped with Martin Chuzzlewit or, at the latest, David Copperfield. What Mrs. Poyser is to George Eliot, Mrs. Nickleby is to Dickens. Numerous are the references to her imitators, numerous the tributes to her mad admirer and his vegetable love.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Gamp, a greater creation than Juliet's nurse,<sup>2</sup> is another popular favourite whose unorthodox richness of speech tempted lesser writers to copy; and sharing the honours with Mrs. Gamp as representing Dickens's finest art is Pecksniff.

The criticisms of Dickens's novels deal with four major topics: humour; characterization, by which is usually understood caricature; pathos and sentimentality; and stylistic devices. Discussion of these topics often shades into discussion of Dickens as a moral teacher.

Of the four, humour occupies the predominant position: the means by which it is effected are analyzed<sup>3</sup> and its moral influence in promoting good-will and tolerance is noted.<sup>3</sup> Dickens is acclaimed as the greatest

1. E.g. January 19th, March 9th 1867; April 3rd, May 29th 1869.

2. 'News of the Week', June 11th 1870.

3. E.g. Articles of June 11th, 18th and 25th 1870 all by R.H. Hutton. I am indebted, for identification of many of these articles, to the Ph.D. thesis of R.H. Tener, London 1960, Richard Holt Hutton's Criticism of Five Nineteenth Century Poets ... together with a bibliography of his writings on literature.

humourist in the world, 'Aristophanes and Shakespeare not excepted';<sup>1</sup> his humour is kindly, as is that of Charles Lamb,<sup>2</sup> but less refined: indeed, it is too broad to need the interpretation of a subtle delivery.<sup>3</sup> Coupled with his general liveliness, humour is the major characteristic which makes up for his deficiency in another branch of the novelist's art:

No doubt there are many English writers, - Mr. Dickens himself may be said to be one, - who have little or no genius for story-telling, and who yet attain the highest reputation from the wonderful humour of their studies of vulgar and of local life. But even so, though failing utterly in the art of constructing a tale, these writers when thoroughly popular in England almost always continue to supply a current of rapid movement somehow to their story. The Mrs. Gamps, and Bob Sawyers, and Sam Wellers, and Dick Swivellers, however badly pieced in to Mr. Dickens's usually absurd plots, are always about to do something or other in which the reader cannot help taking some interest, though it may be a merely mischievous explosion of animal spirits, or even a selfish and treacherous trick. Mr. Dickens never fails to impart the air of eagerness of movement to his tales, which from Sir Walter Scott downwards has been<sup>4</sup> a universal condition of the highest popularity in England.

Dickens's typical method of character drawing is noted as the seizing on an external peculiarity such as would fix the figure in the reader's or observer's mind, and the subsequent accumulation of all conceivable variations on the one basic characteristic, a method which would be

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1. April 17th 1869, 'Mr. Dickens's Moral Services to Literature'.
  2. March 16th 1867.
  3. 'News of the Week', January 4th 1868, reference to the 'odd mania' for listening to readings from his works. Many readers of the present century who have heard Mr. Emlyn Williams's interpretations would deny the justice of this assertion.
  4. September 28th 1867, review of In the Year '13, a German novel by Fritz Reuter. Compare one of the major criticisms levelled at Great Expectations, July 20th 1861: 'His genius is not suited to a unity of plot. He needs the freedom to ramble when he will and where he will. The most successful of his works have uniformly been the most incoherent as tales. The truth is that he gets too much interested in his own plot, and forgets the characters in his interest in the story'.

too tedious but for the fertility of Dickens's comic genius.<sup>1</sup> Pecksniff and Mrs. Gamp are among the most successful creations of what Hutton calls Dickens's 'idealism':<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Gamp, he says, is not a realistic portrait from life; she is 'a great humourist's creation on a hint from human life'. The method sometimes fails, however, when the original characteristic chosen is either not susceptible of adequate variety in the repetition or not recognized by the reader as having spontaneous significance. Among failures cited are Mr. Jaggers's thumb-biting,<sup>3</sup> Mr. Carker's showing of his teeth and the monotonous presentation of Cousin Feenix and the Fat Boy. The writer's claim that Dickens was an idealist he substantiates by pointing to his failures with ordinary men and women - Nicholas and Kate Nickleby, David Copperfield and, rather surprisingly, Mortimer Lightwood and Eugene Wrayburn. A provisional failure is also assigned to the incomplete portrait of 'the worthy minor Canon' in Edwin Drood.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes Dickens's failure is a moral rather than a purely aesthetic one, evinced in his ridicule of the professional philanthropists, despite his own inability to suggest remedies for the social evils he attacked, in such portraits as those of Honeythunder, Mrs. Jellaby, and - a somewhat surprising association - Bradley Headstone,

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1. 'The Reporter in Mr. Dickens', May 27th 1865. See also June 18th 1870.

2. June 18th 1870, 'The Genius of Dickens'.

3. Hutton was extremely harsh on Great Expectations generally. Among other stringent criticisms, he listed a series of characters with their attendant labels, such as:

Mr. Wemmick: Posts biscuits down his mouth, which is always called 'the post-office'.

Mr. Matthew Pocket: Lifts himself up by his hair when in despair.

Miss Havisham: Lives by candlelight, wears only one shoe, and the bridal dress in which she had suffered her disappointment, and takes exercise round the table where the bridecake is getting mouldy.

4. One feature of Canon Crisparkle's behaviour to which Hutton objected was particularized in his obituary on June 11th: the sentimental falseness of his pretence of needing spectacles in order to flatter his mother's pride in her own good sight.

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'the cut-and-dried certificated schoolmaster' in Our Mutual Friend,<sup>1</sup> and in his glorification of the Pickwicks, Wardles, Swivellers and Wellers, those who are 'admirable chiefly for their powers of enjoying drink and meat and stolen kisses and general hilarity'. Dickens's method of characterization through simplification, which produces portraits of genius among his eccentrics, frequently renders his virtuous characters either ludicrous or objectionable. Such are the brothers Cheeryble, Tom Pinch, Mr. Boffin and above all 'Mr. Dickens's saints', in particular the detestable Agnes 'who insists on pointing upwards'.<sup>2</sup>

The Spectator's assessment of Dickens's powers of character drawing is close to that expressed in Fraser's obituary.<sup>3</sup> This article, striking a nice balance of criticism and praise, while admitting the keen, humorous observation and brilliant 'quasi-theatric' expression, points out the frequent failures attendant on Dickens's peculiar genius for characterization, in cases where the humorous superstructure is built up 'with no sufficient fundamental idea to rest it upon'. Silas Wegg from Our Mutual Friend falls into this category. More serious, however, are considered the failures off 'the author's own ground', namely 'Rosa Dartle, Edith Dombey, Lady Dedlock,<sup>4</sup> Bradley Headstone, and in short all the high-flown talkers, and perhaps all the heroes, heroines, and others whom he has attempted to construct out of the germs of ordinary human character and

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1. June 25th 1870.

2. April 17th 1869.

3. July 1870, written, according to Every Saturday, by Mr. Froude.

4. Cf. G.H. Lewes's criticism in the Fortnightly Review, February 1872, printed in The Dickens Critics, ed. G.H. Ford and L. Lane Jr., Cornell U.P. 1961, p.65 and the following extract, pp.74-6, from Anthony Trollope's Autobiography, in which he draws the interesting comparison between Dickens's novels and Boucicault's plays.

motive, and not out of a humorous typical conception'.

A typical quality in Dickens's writing which is deplored in the pages of the Spectator almost as frequently as his humour is applauded is sentimentality, particularly that intended to evoke pathos or romantic feeling in the reader. Children's death-bed scenes come in for particular attack here, especially in Dickens's own readings: one article contrasts the 'very real and true pathos' of Paul Dombey's death with the overstrained sentimentality and maudlin emotionalism of little Nell's<sup>1</sup>, but on another occasion Dickens is accused of making, in the public reading, an emotional feast even out of the former:

Lamb's pathos is comparatively rare, and, when it comes, controlled by the most delicate reserve, - the pathos of unacknowledged tears in smiling eyes. Mr. Dickens's pathos is often true, but always on the edge, very often indeed over the edge, of self-indulgence. Mr. Fitzgerald refers to the pathos in the story of little Paul Dombey's death-bed. Well! yes, - but Mr. Dickens almost makes you feel that it is a sweetmeat, - there is a lusciousness as of lollypops in the stream of tenderness he pours out over that death-bed; and any one who has heard him read the scene will notice that he takes a sensuous and almost voluptuous delight in the emotion he has thus expressed.<sup>2</sup>

The heroine whose love scenes seem most to rouse the wrath of the Spectator is Ruth Pinch, in particular in that scene where ' "the Temple fountain sparkles" with such damned iteration "in the sun" to keep time to Ruth Pinch's love-making'.<sup>3</sup> Dickens is accused of mawkish sentimentality in

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1. April 17th 1869.

2. January 14th 1865, review of Percy Fitzgerald's lecture on Dickens and Lamb. See also June 18th 1870: 'It was precisely the pathos of the Adelphi Theatre, and made the most painful impression of pathos feasting on itself' and compare the criticism of the love scenes in Edwin Drood, p. 76 below.

3. May 27th 1865.

the caressing sort of praise lavished on spoony young men and women simply because they are spoony, in those multitudinous passages tending to excite nausea, of which the type is the blessing pronounced over Ruth Pinch because she frequents the fountain in the Temple, is in love with John Westlake [sic], and makes a rumpsteak pie with some deftness.

Related to the charge of sentimentality is the criticism of Dickens's deficiency in the power to paint true passion: Nancy in Oliver Twist is the exception;<sup>2</sup> apart from this isolated example, remorse is the one passion allowed to be within Dickens's scope, as, for example, in the delineation of Sikes' feelings after the murder of Nancy.<sup>3</sup> Jonas Chuzzlewit's panic after the murder of Tigg is conceded to be powerfully drawn, but showing the power of melodrama rather than that of true passion.<sup>2</sup> (The word 'remorse' seems to be rather loosely used: does either of these characters really feel remorse as distinct from fear? In the case of a later would-be murderer, Bradley Headstone, Dickens specifically denies the presence of remorse among his reactions).

One aspect of Dickens's art which comes in for frequent criticism in the Spectator is the extravagance of his style, particularly, though unfairly, in view of his unfortunate influence on less skilled authors. Many are the gibes at an attack of "Dickens-on-the-brain"<sup>4</sup> or 'the hallmark of All The Year Round silver',<sup>5</sup> and one knows immediately that what

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1. April 17th 1869, Cf. the epithet 'spoony-moony' applied to Rosa and Edwin in Judy, p. 76 below. Fildes also is reported to have called the Edwin Drood sketch 'Under the Trees' 'spooney Mooney'. (Dickensian, June 1st 1927; vol. xxiii, pp. 157-60).
  2. April 17th 1869.
  3. June 18th 1870.
  4. December 31st 1870, review of The Luck of Roaring Camp, Bret Harte.
  5. September 3rd 1870, review of A Tour Round England, Walter Thornbury. However, the reviewer of J.C. Parkinson's Places and People, December 11th 1869, admits, though rather grudgingly, that the articles in AYR are usually well written.

is being criticized is some form of artificiality, probably stretched out to inordinate length. 'False personification' marring the formerly terse and graphic style of Mr. James Greenwood is charged at Dickens's door in the review of Humphrey Dyot, January 18th 1868:

What possible good can it be to speak of waves as impatient creditors, or of winds as hungering after fragments of the rigging? Writers infected with what is one of Mr. Dickens' worst vices of style suppose, we imagine, this sort of writing to be picturesque and graphic. We should say that if it has any effect upon the reader's mind beyond fatiguing it, it must obscure and weaken his conceptions

and a similar complaint is found among the many Dickensian affectations Charles H. Ross is rebuked for indulging in, in A London Romance.<sup>1</sup> From the so-called Dickensian passage quoted, it is evident that rhetorical repetition, balanced phrases and sentences, excruciating puns, exaggeration for humorous effect, detailed word-painting not only of the immediate scene but of comparable or contrasting ones, and the ascription of qualities and sensations to inanimate scenery - all these comprise Dickensian affectation. To this list of charges may be added that of lacking intellectual content, being satisfied with an appeal to his readers' eyes: 'by grotesque inventories of brokers' shops, or muddled masses of picturesque details, tied together with "ands".'<sup>2</sup> The article on 'The Reporter in Mr. Dickens' also accuses him of lack of

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1. February 13th 1869. Was Mr. Ross, one wonders, retaliating for the imputation of this pernicious influence in approving, possibly even writing, the later wicked parody of Edwin Drood's opening chapters? (See below, p. 86). Or was he merely a clever imitator adept at turning his hand to anything in fashion? A review of his A Private Inquiry, October 15th 1870, suspects him of inwardly despising his readers for consuming the highly artificial 'literary garbage' he sets before them.
  2. June 25th 1870, review of The Fella, Edmond About. The topic under discussion is the superiority of French light literature over English. The latter is at its best a poor imitation of Dickens's 'most vicious style'.

intellectual content, implying that the only ideas in his novels are 'crude, broad, hasty, claptrap', and, while praising his ability to seize in a flash the memorable essentials of a scene, likewise deplores the 'artificial trickery' which is the worst feature of Dickens's descriptive power and is regrettably present in his latest novel, Our Mutual Friend.<sup>1</sup> The occasion cited is the Veneering dinner party in the opening Number, where all the members are seen reflected in the great looking-glass, an observation which tells us nothing of the characters beyond 'that very remarkable physical property of the human body, liability to reflection in looking-glasses'.

The obituary articles in both Fraser's and the Saturday Review comment on the 'artfulness' of Dickens's style, the latter with some rebuke for the over-elaboration of the later novels:

In some of his later novels, too, there was an air of too much study of a particular effect, and a tendency to try to prove to himself and his readers that he was following rules of art which he had invented, and the following of which gave a virtue to what otherwise might be called tedious.<sup>2</sup>

This criticism is followed, however, by an acknowledgement of Dickens's continued power as a novelist and the tribute to Edwin Drood that:

The story which he has left unfinished was full of life, interest, and brilliancy.

In reading reviews of Our Mutual Friend I had one specific inquiry in mind, which, however, was not satisfied in any of the reviews seen, namely to find out whether any critic had commented on what has always

1. The date of the article is May 27th 1865.
2. June 11th 1870. The Saturday Review was praised by the authors of the Memoir of Charles Reade, 1887 (vol.2, p.26) as having, from about 1856 onwards, revived 'the dormant science of criticism'.

seemed to me an odd feature of the 'detective' plot, the fact that the mere discovery that John Harmon was alive was apparently considered to exonerate Gaffer Hexam from suspicion of murder, even though a corpse had undoubtedly been found in circumstances which seemed to implicate him. Neither Dickens nor the reviewers seem to have been disturbed by this problem, in spite of the careful attention which was given to Dickens's plotting, and in this respect at least nothing emerged which would suggest the need for an even tighter plot line in Edwin Drood.

Plot criticism, however, there was in abundance. Of the reviews drawn on here,<sup>1</sup> the Spectator, the Athenaeum and the Saturday Review all comment unfavourably on the proliferation of intricate plot complications and the consequent strain imposed on the characters involved, in particular on the character of John Harmon.<sup>2</sup> It is tempting to speculate whether these strictures on the use Harmon makes of his supposed death might have had any influence on Dickens's decision

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1. Spectator, October 28th 1865; Athenaeum (Chorley), October 28th 1865; Saturday Review, November 11th 1865; The Times (Dallas), November 29th 1865; Westminster Review, April 1866. Of these, Dickens is known to have expressed his appreciation of the Times and Athenaeum reviews, offering the manuscript as a gift to Dallas, and writing to Chorley: 'there is nothing I could have wished away, and all that I read there affects and delights me.' Quoted in J.W.T.Ley, The Dickens Circle, Dutton 1919, ch.63, p.285. Some of the periodicals consulted carried no review, for example Chambers' Journal, the Edinburgh Review and the Fortnightly, though the first mentioned of these did occasionally include fiction reviews, e.g. of Felix Holt, and the Fortnightly was not above a reference to Miss Braddon in its pages.

2. 'Improbable and extraordinary' are the words of the Saturday Review; 'absurd' and 'melodramatic' those of the Spectator. Dickens laid himself open to attack here through his Postscript claim to 'art' in the narrative, for which the Spectator substituted the phrase 'art with which the numerous grotesque contrasts are packed together into the limits of the same picture'.

as to Edwin Drood's fate. Of course, Edwin Drood is not open to the same criticisms in that, so far as the story goes, the eloquent speeches on the disappointments of his life which were objected to from the lurking Harmon are not present in the last novel; nor does it suffer from the diffusion of sub-plots criticized by the reviewers of Our Mutual Friend. Dallas in The Times was more cautious than the other reviewers cited here, contenting himself with a reference to the 'ingenious' elaboration and the abundance of sensation, a comment not specifically coloured by approval or disapproval.

As regards characterization, the critics diverge to a certain extent. The Westminster voices the generally applicable objection that Dickens's characters reveal to us the grotesque quirks rather than the essentials of human nature, that

His characters, in fact, are a bundle of deformities. And he appears, too, to value them because they are deformed, as some minds value a crooked sixpence more than a sound coin.

The Spectator praises the low-life oddities and grotesques, foremost among whom are the dolls' dressmaker,<sup>1</sup> Silas Wegg, Mr. Venus, Rogue Riderhood, Mr. Inspector and Mrs. Wilfer. The Athenaeum, on the other hand, demurs to the first two on this list 'as to a pair of eccentrics approaching that boundary line of caricature towards which their creator is, by fits, tempted'. These two also part company on their reactions to the novel's social chorus, Chorley in the Athenaeum praising the veneering dinner-party scenes for their 'vivacity' and 'variety', while Hutton reserves his most stringent criticism for 'Mr. Dickens's futile

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1. 'Kindliness' and 'genial laughter' seem odd terms in this context. One wonders what the reviewer found 'genial' in the picture of the sensitive, deformed little dolls' dressmaker with her bitter defensive manner and her angelic dreams of 'being dead'.

and ridiculous attempt to draw ambitious "society" in the middle class'. The charge is the usual one that Dickens could or would paint only eccentrics; that he was therefore reasonably successful with low-life characters because these were unfamiliar and therefore odd to him; but that when dealing with material more familiar to himself he could only justify his use of it by indulging in unnatural exaggeration. The depiction of Podsnap is allowed a slight gleam of humour through all its conceited mannerism, but Lady Toppins, the Veneerings, Boots, Brewer, and the butler whom Dickens with infinite pride calls 'the analytic' as often as he can get the phrase in, are all dismissed as forced productions with none of the old sparkle. Vulgar and detestable art, it is asserted, is not necessary for the depiction of vulgar and affected characters. The Spectator's reference to 'the painful scream of his taunting mannerism in describing Lady Toppins and Veneering' is very close to the Saturday Review's condemnation of the same portraits as 'angry, screaming caricature'. The Times is more moderate in tone in respect of these scenes, referring to the 'exceeding skill' of the author,<sup>1</sup> but equally disappointed at their prominence in the novel. Approximately half of a three column review is devoted to this 'weak part of the work', particularly to be deplored as dominating the opening scenes to the extent of misleading the casual reader as to the real centre of interest in the tale.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Dickens's achievement here in the depiction of 'dull and dead' people is compared with that of George Eliot in The Mill on the Floss and of Anthony Trollope in Miss Mackenzie.
  2. Dallas's reference to the superficial reading habits of the present day is rather amusing in that he objects to the 'social chorus' being allowed even to give the novel its title, whereas surely the relevant authority here is Boffin's designation of Rokesmith to the Wilfers as 'Our Mutual Friend' (Bk.I, ch.ix).



There is some disagreement in the appraisals of the heroine, Bella Wilfer, Dallas considering her 'the finest picture in the novel', the Saturday Review finding her conversations with her 'half-idiotic father' and her 'mysterious and exceedingly dull husband' 'among the most wearisome dialogues in modern fiction'. Bradley Headstone, too, stimulates conflicting reactions. To the Spectator he is 'a caricature without humour'; to the Saturday Review, the only serious character worthy of praise. In this schoolmaster 'with dull plodding intellect, and full of overwhelming and irrepressible passion', a character he thinks typical of Dickens, the reviewer sees the germ of 'a very powerful creation' but botched in the failure to provide an adequate plot for the working out. The Athenaeum goes even further in its approval of Headstone, 'dogged, sensual, unready', the most original conception in the book. This critic praises not only the idea, but the development of the idea, in particular the masterly way in which the schoolmaster's unlovable nature is realized, so that even <sup>when</sup> we feel there is some right on his side, we never have a moment's pity for him. It is this quality, he thinks, which makes the scenes of the aftermath of his murderous attack more effective even than those where 'real' villains such as Bill Sikes or Jonas Chuzzlewit were concerned:<sup>1</sup>

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1. Although moderate in tone, Chorley's adverse criticism of Our Mutual Friend is lengthy and much of it is directed towards an important section of the book. Dickens's appreciation of the review therefore suggests the likelihood that he valued highly the things Chorley did praise, the conception of Bradley Headstone foremost. Dallas, too, approved of Headstone, though only in a passing reference: his emphasis was on the painstaking sincerity of Dickens's art, the equal value of his tragic and his comic works, the success of Bella Wilfer, and, a point which he develops at some length in quoting a passage from Betty Higden's journey, Dickens's moral preference for doing good to the countless poor who cannot read novels rather than for entertaining 'all the novel readers in the world'. The knowledge that Dickens was pleased by this review throws an interesting light on his attitude to his own work.

There have been many murders, and many pictures of remorse in novels; - and none more powerful than the pages in which we were shown the wanderings of Bill Sikes, and the slinking home of Jonas Chuzzlewit, after his bloody deed in the wood; but Mr. Dickens has exceeded even those in the scene where the wretched criminal, tortured by the rebuking consciousness of his having failed in his diabolical design, is dogged and dragged back to the fatal spot by his hideous confidant. Nothing can be more masterly as a display of blank, inevitable retribution and wretchedness.

Finally, among the criticisms of Our Mutual Friend, we find the same carping at Dickens's affectations of style as was noted in the more general articles. Both the Westminster and the Saturday Review object to such characteristic features as the persistent reiteration of what the author evidently considers a joke, for example Fledgeby's repeated feeling for his whiskers, or the recurrence of the epithet 'Analytical', a habit the Spectator also found maddening.<sup>1</sup>

When we come to reviews of Edwin Drood the situation is not quite so simple as for earlier novels, in the sense that the occasion for reviewing the final publication is overshadowed by the obituaries, which naturally deal with Dickens's achievement in a more general survey. Added to this the difficulty of reviewing a half complete work and, perhaps, of refraining on grounds of good taste from the virulent criticism accorded to some of its predecessors may have acted as a minor deterrent. The publication earlier in the same year of a novel by the ex-prime minister probably did not help matters. Several magazines which ignore Edwin Drood devote pages, mainly of unfavourable criticism, to Lothair. Whatever the reasons, many of the periodicals consulted carried no review of Edwin Drood in 1870<sup>2</sup> and one or two of those which did, publish

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1. Cf. also Vanity Fair's objection to the 'china shepherdess' joke in Edwin Drood; p. 45.

2. E.g. Blackwood's, the Quarterly, the Edinburgh Review, Macmillan's, Fraser's, all of which reviewed Lothair.

a review couched in curiously evasive general terms. Such is the Athenaeum's article of September 17th 1870 which is strong in its praise of Dickens's final achievement:

At his last, he was at his best. In his concluding chapters, especially in the 'Shadow on the Sun-Dial', and in 'Dawn Again', there is as good writing as ever fell from his pen.

but then finds surprisingly little specifically to praise. The novel, the writer remarks, is not superabundantly rich in general reflections; there is, however, a quaint humour in some of them. The opium woman's remark that opium is like a human being in that you always hear the bad, never the good of it, is a truthful observation; it is, however, rather too philosophical to be appropriate to the character voicing it. So far, nothing which strikingly bears out the critic's claim as to the book's greatness. Then follows more general approval: the change from the caricature of Pickwick to the characterization of Drood is as great as the change in two portraits of Dickens, from the young dandy to the mature 'manly beauty'; and again there is a suggestion of underlying qualification in the approval:

So, time improved the author's delineation of character, and yet preserved some of the older strongly-marked features. Mr. Honeythunder is, no doubt, an exaggeration, just as Mr. Pickwick is; but only a master-hand could draw it. A dramatic hero who delivers a soliloquy is like nothing in nature, for no man delivers soliloquies. But this is allowed on the stage, that the audience may know the thoughts of the person represented. So in many characters in novels, the individuals need to be in a strong light, the better to show their peculiarities. Thackeray used the light less glaringly than Dickens. We should describe the difference between the two as something like that which exists on the stage between Mr. Toole and Mr. Compton.

The final paragraph makes the odd comment:

... we have only further to say of the book before us that it is, after all, not such a fragment as it looks. In itself it is really complete. If it pauses in mid-story, it is exactly at the point where the stop, if inevitable, could best occur.

All in all, this is one of the vaguest reviews conceivable, with little of critical value on any major aspect of the novel. The writer seems to be taking every opportunity to shy away into generalizations and comments which are, critically speaking, irrelevant, such as a quotation of the passage about the two journeymen of Death in Durdles' yard with a reference to Dickens's own unconsciously impending death.<sup>1</sup> One concludes the review feeling sceptical of the writer's initially expressed belief in the novel's claims to greatness. Even the Athenaeum's own review of the first Number on April 2nd was less perfunctory, singling out for praise the sense of local colour in the cathedral descriptions and the opium den scene, the comedy in the Deputy and Durdles encounter and the 'amusing and sympathy-stirring' presentation of the young lovers.

The young lovers, as one might expect from reading previous criticisms of Dickens's sentimentality, were not unanimously so well received as they were by the Athenaeum critic. The Spectator's comments<sup>2</sup> recall that periodical's strictures on earlier episodes such as the love-making of Ruth Pinch and the lingering pathos of Paul Dombey's death scene:

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1. It is this review which draws attention to the possible topicality in Bazzard's membership of a choice society of dramatic geniuses: 'Was it a chance shot, or one steadily aimed at a certain society, the members of which are described as "geniuses" ...?'

2. October 1st, 1870.

Mr. Dickens could not get over the notion that a love scene was a rich and luscious sort of juice, to be sucked up in the sort of way in which a bowl of punch and a Christmas dinner are so often enjoyed in his tales; and not only so, but all beauty, all that he thinks loveable, is apt to be treated by him as if it were a pot of raspberry jam, something luscious to the palate, instead of something fascinating to the imagination and those finer powers by which harmony of expression is perceived.

The Spectator on the whole, however, was much more kindly towards Edwin Drood than it had been towards Dickens's preceding novels: for years past there had been no really favourable review; the early novels were repeatedly held up as a standard from which Dickens had lately consistently fallen; humour, particularly of 'idealised' low-life characters was acclaimed as his greatest strength, his genius thought to be incompatible with the production of plot. In some ways the Drood review is consistent with this body of criticism, in others not - the latter rather in the sense that the critical attitude has somewhat shifted and mellowed than that the individual criteria have been changed. Perhaps the feeling for good taste, already mentioned tentatively as a factor in Drood criticism, or lack of it, is operative here, where for the first time apparently the reviewer conceives the possibility that the assumed wide-spread preference for Dickens's early novels owes something to a change in the reader, not just to a deterioration in the writer. The very strength of the impact of a work read in the eagerness of youth may induce in the recollection an impression of superior quality: mature taste finds it difficult to recapture, with successive new works, the freshness of the initial response. This position assumes that Dickens's readers do not re-read the early novels. One corollary of this preference the critic does not pursue: namely that

such conservative memory may work against the reader's appreciation of any attempt at innovation on the part of a favourite author. What he does in his review of Edwin Drood is to look with scrupulous care for what is good rather than for what is bad, giving credit, that is, for achievements similar in kind to the successes of the early novels. This he is able to do the more readily as Edwin Drood is almost wholly free from the 'fault' most criticized in the review of Our Mutual Friend, and characterizing most of the novels from Bleak House onwards, Dickens's predilection for impressionistic, satirical, unkindly exposure of 'society' pretensions:

However characteristic the faults of the fragment which embodies Mr. Dickens's last literary effort, we feel no doubt that it will be read, admired, and remembered for the display of his equally characteristic powers, long after such performances as Little Dorrit and Bleak House are utterly neglected and forgotten.

The chief characteristic 'fault', as we have noticed, is the cloying excess of the love scenes. The faults of the novel, however, are felt to be more than offset by the virtues: it appears to the critic to be 'nearer the standard of his first few works than anything he had written for many years back', and this on three main counts, the first of which, as one would expect, is the excellence of its humour. Miss Twinkleton's school, the two waiters at the dinner party, Durdles and Deputy, are singled out for praise, and, above all, 'the Billickin' whose reference to the poorness of blood which has flowed through her life from the school dining-table of her youth he compares to Wordsworth's

Was it for this  
That one, the fairest of all rivers ...  
  sent a voice  
That flowed along my dreams?

The Billickin's, he claims, if not the grander, is at least the bolder imaginative flight.

The second virtue ascribed to Dickens in Edwin Drood is 'his peculiar power of grasping the local colour and detail of all characteristic physical life', as in the scene in the opium den and the 'abundant and marvellous detail as to the precincts and interior of the Cathedral'.<sup>1</sup> One feels that, again, distaste for the harshness of the later Dickens dictates a preference for physical scene setting as an imaginative sense stimulus to the reader as opposed to the selection of physical detail with an eye to satirical effect. Surely the settings of Bleak House, Little Dorrit and Our Mutual Friend are as vividly realized as those of Edwin Drood, though for a different purpose.

The third quality which distinguishes Edwin Drood is that which was earlier said to be incompatible with Dickens's best work, namely, the construction of a careful plot. Admittedly praise of this new departure is rather two-edged: whereas, in the review of Great Expectations, the critic had felt that concentration on plot was, with Dickens, detrimental to character development, here he admits:

... the very unusual phenomenon of a story constructed with great care and ingenuity, relieves the ill-drawn and over-coloured characters of much of their ordinary tedium.

Which are the 'ill-drawn and over-coloured characters' is not specified: as this comment follows criticism of the love-scenes the implication may be intended for the characters concerned here, including, perhaps, the hero/villain Jasper who is never once mentioned in the critical part

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1. Cf. Athenaeum, April 2nd and see below, pp. 118-20 for discussion of this quality in the novel.

of the review, a feat one would have thought almost impossible. In fact, apart from two complimentary references to the skill of the plotting, so far as it can be judged in this incomplete state, this review, too, seems curiously peripheral in this respect, whether because the reviewer found the conception of Jasper distasteful and hesitated to damn outright a central feature of the book, or because he preferred not to commit himself to forecasting plot development.

In the realm not of criticism but of pure speculation much of the later writing on the Drood mystery is, in brief, anticipated. Why, the reviewer reasonably asks, was the green cover not incorporated in the first volume edition so that the readers would at least have all the clues the author intended to furnish in this form? The questions which he asks about the sketches of this cover concern the two which have perhaps most exercised later would-be finishers of the mystery: who is discovering the 'figure apparently meant for Edwin Drood' - note the way in which he slides over the problem raised here; is this because there is no doubt in his mind that the real Drood is dead? - in the lamp-light scene at the foot of the page, and what is the significance of the figures ascending the winding stair-case? He suggests that Mr. Fildes should be consulted for any light he may throw on these topics. However tantalizing the fragmentary nature of The Mystery of Edwin Drood may be, on one thing the reviewer is quite clear:

... any attempt to complete the tale by a different hand would have been an insult to Mr. Dickens, and altogether unwelcome to the public.

Another critic who took the opportunity of this review to look back



to Dickens's earlier work was the writer in the Saturday Review.<sup>1</sup> This time the comparison was not favourable to Edwin Drood. This writer admits the difficulty of reviewing impartially 'the last words of a man who, whatever place he may occupy in the opinion of posterity, certainly possessed some faculties in almost unequalled perfection'. Comparisons with the earlier novels are inevitable and in the case of Dickens, the reviewer feels, work to the detriment of the later writing. For Dickens's outstanding quality in the early novels was his fertility of invention, his love of the grotesque, his 'rollicking and jovial humour' which made up for any defects in the writing. This freshness and vigour in a young man was welcome, but 'when the same man is grotesque and eccentric in cold blood, after the natural effervescence of his youth has subsided, it makes a rather melancholy impression upon us, and reminds us unpleasantly of the artificial laughter by which an old actor tries to simulate an impossible and perennial juvenility'. Dickens, he feels, was the slave of his own success, playing the old tricks with something of the old humour, but without the spontaneous impulse which prevented quaintness from degenerating into a mannerism. Nor does this reviewer feel, with the Athenaeum critic, that the more substantial qualities of maturity compensate for this decline in freshness:

There was a certain thinness about his characters at the best of times. There was little depth of sentiment or power of reflection. With an extraordinary capacity for catching the external aspects of things, and seeing with incredible rapidity all that a man could see in a glance, he seldom penetrated to any of the deeper springs of emotion, or gave much proof of purely intellectual power. For this reason his pathos was generally rather repulsive to his more thoughtful readers, and his characters, though admirable sketches, never rose to the level of portraits by the great masters. To the last

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1. September 17th 1870.

he showed many flashes of the old inimitable spirit of fun; but yet, as that power grew inevitably weaker, one could not but feel more strongly his comparative incapacity for appealing to other sources of interest.

In illustration of the grotesque element in Edwin Drood the extraordinary names of the characters are listed, and Honeythunder singled out as an example of the forced and lifeless presentation. More serious, however, are the defects in the 'pathetic and passionate' parts of the book. The love-making is dismissed briefly as reminiscent of that of Dora in David Copperfield, but it is for Jasper that the critic reserves most of his attack. The passage in which this 'wolfish' villain woos Rosa is quoted, from "Rosa, even when my dear boy was affianced to you" to "carrying your image in my arms, I loved you madly" (p.149) and the following comment appended:

In this precious oration we recognise the worst style of Mr. Dickens, 'ticking off' each point (as Mr. Grewgious expresses it on a similar occasion) by the burden of 'I loved you madly'. But do we recognise anything like the language of a passionate and blackhearted villain trying to bully a timid girl? It is the sort of oration which a silly boy, nourished on bad novels, might prepare for such an occasion; but it is stiff and artificial and jerky to a degree which excludes any belief in real passion. It is rounded off prettily enough for a peroration in a debating society; or it might be a fair piece of acting for a romantic young tradesman who fancied himself doing his love-making in the high poetic style; but it has an air of affectation and mock-heroics which is palpably inappropriate to the place. It is really curious that so keen an observer should diverge into such poor and stilted bombast whenever he tries the note of intense emotion.<sup>1</sup>

After this biting criticism, the review takes on a milder note, paying tribute to the skill of the plotting, the passages of genuine and easy

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1. A later critic, Sir Felix Aylmer, is convinced that Jasper is deliberately acting a part in these speeches. See below, pp.121, 177.

humour and the picturesque description of the old cathedral town.

The complications attendant on reviewing a posthumous work do not of course apply to notices of the earlier numbers and some of these record a favourable reception of Dickens's latest novel. The Athenaeum's approval of the opening Number has already been noted and The Times, too,<sup>1</sup> was appreciative, referring to the 'author's best manner', his dialogue 'full of the old happy and unexpected turns', his prose 'close as ivory' and his firm touch with character 'more delicate than ever'. Particularly singled out are the Nuns' House scene, Mr. Sapsea and Durdles, 'a thoroughly original conception' though the chapter devoted to him is criticized as being a trifle drawn out 'and a little defaced by some of Mr. Dickens's time-honoured excrescences of style and taste'. In one respect the novel is considered to improve on its predecessors: the character of Edwin should vindicate Dickens of the reproach sometimes made against him, 'that though he can sketch admirably many eccentricities of character, he cannot draw a hero who is simply a gentleman'. Edwin Drood should provide enjoyment not merely to lovers of the mystery novel; with all its skilful descriptions the story progresses considerably in thirty-two pages and the reviewer expresses confidence in Dickens's power to maintain interest in each number and yet preserve 'the unity and continuity of his story'.

The review in the Graphic<sup>2</sup> opens on a promising note:

In the first number of The Mystery of Edwin Drood Mr. Dickens is decidedly himself again.

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1. April 2nd 1870.

2. April 9th 1870.

But one soon begins to wonder whether indeed the reviewer considers this a pleasure or not. Admittedly, he eventually comes to the point of conceding that Mr. Dickens's novels, with all their faults, 'comprise more of genuine imagination, invention, and observation of human life and inanimate nature than half the shelves in Mr. Mudie's capacious premises', but on the way to this judgement he has contrived to get in a dig at all the well-known eccentricities of the author and at his supposed imperviousness to criticism:

Wise critics who have scolded the author for his excessive fondness for queer people, his eccentric punctuation, his capricious application of adjectives, his over-ingenious and occasionally hyperfanciful following up of metaphors, his fondness for punning similes in which the resemblance indicated is frequently merely verbal, his sometimes tediously minute descriptions, his excessive habit of communicating human peculiarities and attributing human consciousness to inanimate things - in short, all those who object to Mr. Dickens that he is Mr. Dickens and not somebody else, are perhaps by this time convinced that their criticisms are wasted. Some of us may perhaps still regret that the author of The Mystery of Edwin Drood seems to have lost that vein of simple and spontaneous narrative which is so delightful in Barnaby Rudge and The Curiosity Shop, and be taken himself to Carlylean mysteries of style and manner, including that passion for relating past events in the present tense which is never quite pleasing but when sparingly used. But Mr. Dickens's tacit compact with the public is very simple. He is understood to need no criticisms, favourable or unfavourable. The reader must take him for what he is ... Mr. Dickens is no young beginner to be instructed in his art by volunteer counsellors and anonymous critics.

On the whole this review carefully intermingles praise with adverse criticism. The description of Cloisterham is admired, but approval of Sapsea, Durdles and Deputy is tempered with the reservation that they bear the characteristic Dickens mark of farcical improbability:

It takes time to warm to these characters, in which the real and the uncouth and the mysterious are so oddly intermixed.

On the other hand this writer, unlike the Spectator critic, finds great pleasure in the love scenes and says so in some detail:

The border land between childish life and womanhood has perhaps never been more charmingly depicted than in Rosa's naif answers to the wooing of her impatient lover: her inability quite to conceive the nature of her position towards the young man of her father's choice, and her almost babyish touch of 'saucy discontent, comically conscious of itself', which betrays itself also as the author tells us in her portrait at the old stone gatehouse. There is evidently trouble brewing here. The girl will break from the condition imposed upon her, merely because it is a condition, and she is of the kind who must be free, or perhaps she will marry in mere blind obedience, and afterwards repent; whence tragic incidents and bitter tears, with which it is not hard to perceive that the young husband's particular friend and relative, Jasper, the opium dreamer, will have some very close connexion. But prophecy is not within our province.

'Not within our province', but nevertheless not a bad attempt. The reviewer has been disappointed so far of his 'mystery': Jasper, he foresees, will prove a mysterious figure, with his habit of opium-smoking 'in one of those terrible dens, somewhere in the east of London, to which special correspondents of the newspapers have already directed public attention', but 'as yet he awakens little curiosity'.

The Illustrated London News carried brief approving notices of the first three numbers, on April 9th, May 21st and July 11th. Among scenes, those in the opium den and in Miss Twinkleton's Seminary are singled out, and, of the characters, Durdles, 'the only character, so far, [Number III] that can be regarded as a creation, in Mr. Dickens's characteristic style'.

Another brief and racy tribute to the popularity of Dickens was provided by the magazine Fun, which on April 9th bore the following announcement:

What the Dickens next?

Really - really, Messrs. Chapman and Hall!  
Please revise your announcement of Dickens's last work!

The Mystery of Edwin Drood!

Of course it did, a work from the pen of Boz is always sure to draw. Please alter:- 'The Mystery of Edwin' drew - you may add, if you like, immensely.

An interesting swing of opinion is evidenced in Vanity Fair, in which the first Number, reviewed April 9th, elicits mixed praise and disapproval, the former for its humorous characters, Mrs. Tisher, Sapsea and Deputy, recalling respectively Mrs. Pipchin, Pumblechook and Quilp's boy, the latter for Dickens's usual faults of 'mannerism and overdone sentiment', witness the walnut cracking dinner party.<sup>1</sup> By the time the second Number is reviewed, on May 7th, there remains nothing good to be said: the writing is found 'forced and morbid', and boredom and irritation are anticipated from the young man and girl 'of the tiger description' and the 'amiable fool Crisparkle'. The reviewer disagrees with the Times' anticipation that this novel will vindicate Dickens from the reproach of not being able to draw a true gentleman and cites as an illustration of forced humour the china ornament comparison, particularly distasteful in its assumption of the reader's obtuseness in needing an explanation and likely to recur wearisomely whenever Mrs. Crisparkle appears. The only items praised in this Number are Fildes' illustrations.

Mention is made elsewhere<sup>2</sup> of The Cloven Foot, which is one indication of the criticized weaknesses of Dickens's style. In similar vein is the parody of the early chapters which appeared on April 13th in Judy,

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1. Cf. the Judy parody which follows.

2. pp. 155-61.

The London Serio-Comic Journal edited by Charles H. Ross.<sup>1</sup> What also the parody reveals, no less clearly than does that condensed version of the novel which was prefixed to the continuation in Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper<sup>2</sup> is the immeasurable gulf which separates Dickens's own inventions from those of any imitator.

The Judy parody, which is entitled The Mysterious Mystery of Rude Dedwin, and is accompanied by two caricatures of the illustrations, entitled respectively 'Higgledy Piggledy' and 'Spoony Moony',<sup>3</sup> takes the form of an advance reading of the first Number, from proof-sheets, by the author for 'JUDY'S' approval. The incongruities of Jasper's vision in the opening paragraph, crudely ridiculed by the removal of any atmospheric colouring, are followed by a brief interchange of dialogue:

'But ain't that rather disconnected?' asked JUDY.  
 'Isn't it powerful, though?' said the great author.  
 'Very', said JUDY.

Also charged against the first chapter, rather unfairly, is the accusation of contrived exposition: JUDY'S opium woman introduces badly the various inhabitants of the opium den and Jasper, or RASPER as he is called in this version, obligingly introduces himself in return. Chapter ii opens with a sweeping reminder of Dickens's repetitiveness in character drawing, coupled with mockery of his oblique approach through pointless

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1. According to a writer in the Connoisseur (date unknown; fragment preserved in Duffield Collection) the style of this parody suggests the hand of the editor, Charles H. Ross, and the woodcuts 'a long way after Sir Luke Fildes' reveal that of his wife, 'Marie Duval'. See p. 67 for Spectator criticism of Dickens's effect on Ross's style. Ross's father, Charles Ross, was a friend of Dickens. See William J. Carlton, 'Dickens and the Ross Family', Dickensian, March 1955.
  2. See p. 66.
  3. Cf. the reactions of Fildes and the Spectator, p. 66.

metaphor:

Whosoever has observed that extremely useful, though homely, vegetable, the potato, may have noticed, in a sackful, how like each bulb is to its brother. In like fashion there is a sort of semblance 'twixt the Dorrits, Dombey's, Micawbers, and Pecksniffs of other days, and the Sapseas, Tokes, [sic] and Crisparkles of to-day. But what does it matter?

The nutcracking scene between MR. RASPER and RUDE TEDDY provides a great fund for comic parody, the main targets being the casualness of Jasper's reference to his fits - ' "... don't mind me, RUDE TEDDY ... Wait till I have another fit. Take another nut while I do so." Then MR. RASPER dissolves his attitude with a little hot water, and takes it without sugar'; the peculiar inclusiveness of his glance - 'with a comprehensive glance including the clock tower and a large portion of the Thames Embankment', 'with a comprehensive glance, including all Smith's Library and the greater part of the railway bookstalls'; and, again, the repetitiveness of Dickens's art, this time in connexion with the betrothal between Edwin and Rosa: 'You may remember a similar state of things in several old farces, also in a novel called, Our Mutual Friend'. Dickens's habit of seeing inanimate objects as animate, as in his comparison of the Nuns' House to 'a battered old beau', is exposed in the parallel passage:

It is an old house repainted, and naturally puts the most unimaginative persons in mind of a withered coquette who has been Rachelized

and his characters' names are ridiculed, implicitly in JUDY'S versions, notably MISS PITT, called POPPITT, for Rosa<sup>1</sup> and explicitly from the

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1. Cf. The Cloven Foot's 'Flora Potts ... called the Flowerpot'; p. 154.



mouth of PAPSY (Sapsea):

'My own name ... is not PECKSNIFF, as at first you might imagine, but PAPSY. I chose it because it was funny. I married a woman of the name of ETHELINDA, for the same reason.'

At the conclusion of the reading the following dialogue takes place:

'Sweetly pretty!' said JUDY, when the great author had finished; 'but what's the Mystery?'

'It must go no further, if I tell you,' the great author said.

'I swear!' said JUDY.

'The Mystery is, then,' whispered the great author - 'the Mystery is - How it sells!'

It is perhaps only fair to add that the June 22nd Number of Judy printed the sonnet in tribute to the magic of Dickens's skill, which contains the lines:

His fancy flows  
Fresh as when first he charm'd us with his art:  
He made a world, and peopled it with those  
Who live in our remembrance and our heart.

ii) Dickens and the 'Sensation' Vogue

One particular consideration which exercised the minds of the Spectator critics during the 1860s was that of the relative merits of plot and character. This was frequently linked to the equally important discussion of the growing gulf between the serious and the ephemeral: 'serious' frequently implies character study, whereas the specific issue with regard to plot is that of the sensation novels, the type which consists of 'weaving a slow web of mystery, and then slowly unravelling it',<sup>1</sup> and of which the sole art and design consists in baffling the reader for as long as possible and not letting him down with an anti-climax at the end. There is little indication of the possibilities of intertwining plot, theme and character to form a pattern within which the novelist's view of life might unfold, a possibility which was apparently not seen in the later novels of Dickens, which are generally condemned for their lack of form. The reviewer of George Eliot's Spanish Gypsy,<sup>2</sup> when considering the qualities necessary for the writer of a long poem, indicates a scope which might, one would think, be applied to a great novelist, but presumably few of the novels reviewed merit this approach:

... it is precisely in this masculine power of intellectual survey, in this grasp of imagination, in this perfect mastery of the significance of her materials, that George Eliot surpasses not merely all women, but most men of genius.

Novels by no means predominate among the Spectator book reviews of the 1860s: to be given first place over serious non-fiction a novel

1. September 9th 1865; review of Lady Flavia

2. June 6th 1868.

has to be outstanding. A notable example occurred on April 7th 1860 when The Mill on the Floss was given precedence over Essays and Reviews. Perhaps the compiler of 'Publications Received' of March 10th 1860 who lamented, rather reproachfully, that 'novels and reprints continue to be almost the sole productions of the press' was voicing a generally accepted opinion of the novel's status. However, the novel as a potential work of art was not ignored: critical attention was paid to the qualities which distinguish good novels from bad and it was recognized that there were certain criteria by which a novel might be judged. As the Mill on the Floss reviewer put it:

Sterne eulogized critics who were pleased 'they knew not why, and cared not wherefore'. In the present day, we are perhaps unhappily too critical to be satisfied with that simple and gracious reception of great works of art.

Truth to life and depth in character study were welcomed; excessive stylistic mannerism was irritating and cleverly ridiculed. Plot and character were both seen to have their importance, but if one had to be sacrificed, skilled and perceptive character drawing was preferred. Above all, morality was the serious responsibility of writer and critic. The class of novels most consistently deplored, both for their dangerous popularity and for failing to conform to all or some of these standards, was that labelled 'sensational'.<sup>1</sup> The English writer most frequently admired and held up as an example was George Eliot<sup>2</sup>, and following her,

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1. But see below, p. 94.

2. This, however, was not necessarily the case at the beginning of the period. A curt notice among 'Publications Received', February 12th 1859, drew attention to that characteristic of Adam Bede of 'minutely describing things, and delineating individuals as matters of substantive importance in themselves, rather than as subordinate to general interest, [which] has a tendency to induce a sluggishness of feeling in the reader'.

with reservations, Trollope. Dickens, as we have seen, was mainly noted for his early novels and his influence on the style of other writers was generally held to be bad.

Recognition of the novel's potential as an educator in human sympathy is indicated in a highly favourable review of the Russian novelist Turgenev's Liza<sup>1</sup> of which it is said:

... we hardly know whether to admire it most for ... its treatment of human hope and faith and destiny, - and the transparent sweetness of its pathos, or for the sharp, firm outlines of its delineations of character, and the new world of human life and actions which it opens before us ...

Liza is one of those books which teach 'more of life than life itself'. This is the greatest justification the novel can have: it is obviously, therefore, its greatest responsibility, a responsibility stressed by a review of November 16th 1867, which exhorts the writers and readers of fiction to raise it to the place it should worthily fill:

... it is the garment which often most fitly displays while assuming to conceal the figure of truth ... [It may have] the artistic instinct which is the truest insight, and often unconsciously therefore, a revelation ... We want definite thinkers, whether in the regions of fiction or of fact, not to create, but to find our own thoughts for us 'deeper than we ourselves did penetrate'.

Unfortunately, too many people read mediocre stories merely to pass the time, not realizing that they are 'clogging the wheels of the mind, giving the brain chaff instead of wheat to grind, and hastening the stage of mental paralysis when the drugged intellect is powerless to make further exertion'.<sup>2</sup> This latter judgement reveals a state of

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1. October 23rd, 1869.

2. Review of Anne Judge, Spinster, F. W. Robinson.

affairs frequently commented on - the tremendous flood of popular novels constantly pouring from the press, and the consequent marked split between serious and popular fiction. The prominence of novel-reading as a pastime is stressed in 'The Empire of Novels',<sup>1</sup> called forth by an article on the subject which had appeared in the Westminster Review.

According to the Spectator:

To thousands of Englishmen Mr. Trollope's personages are as real as the personages of comedy were to their grandfathers, and writers like Thackeray exercise a far more decisive influence on manners, if not on opinion, than Congreve or Sheridan could have claimed. The religious world, which has frequently defied the Theatre, has been beaten by the Novel, and the masses who never open In Memoriam know Nicholas Nickleby by heart.

This 'Empire of the Novel' is, however, seen to be waning among serious readers, as it increases as a pastime for the less-educated: the decreasing space devoted to the novel in literary reviews is cited as an illustration of the writer's view that 'The production of stories - good stories, too - does not decrease; but the taste for them, and above all, the belief in them as important works, certainly does'. The growing taste for contemporary realism in writing is suggested as a possible reason for the novel's increasingly ephemeral life and the writer foresees a development similar to that already noticeable in America, where the novel as light reading will be superseded by 'the most sensational of all', the newspaper. Then, he thinks, will the novel in its serious form really come into its own:

The empire of the novel ... is really based on the desire of a self-conscious race to look at itself in the glass, and to see itself, as it were, under analysis, - to study itself either clothed, as with Trollope; or nude, as with Thackeray; or under the anatomist's knife, as with the Author of Romola.

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1. January 9th 1869.

The character novel, 'the only true novel', will survive, and the preposterous place the novel has temporarily held, of supplying all kinds of instruction, will be taken over by the newspapers.

The division into novels of plot and novels of character is seen as one peculiar to the present age:

A popular and sufficiently correct division of the novels of the present distinguishes two classes, novels of incident and novels of character. Mr. Wilkie Collins may be taken to represent one school of writers, George Eliot the other. Of course the division must not be understood without its qualifications. George Eliot can construct a plot, witness the ingenuity of the device in Silas Marner by which the robbery of Silas's gold is explained, a device never surpassed for unexpectedness; and Mr. Wilkie Collins can draw a character, witness that one which alone should give him immortality, the inimitable Count Fosco; but the classification does not apply to the novels which were the especial favourites of a previous generation of novel-readers.

Wilkie Collins himself is given his due in the pages of the Spectator as a supreme master of his own peculiar type of art - 'the very best puzzle-maker in the world', 'the only one whose writing was endurable by cultivated taste',<sup>2</sup> but it was pointed out that everyone may not want to read a novel in which he can never feel certain 'that the slightest incident related may not eventually turn out to be of primary importance',<sup>3</sup> and the reviewer of The Moonstone, looking back on Collins's four best novels, places them in order of preference on a basis of character interest rather than of ingenuity in plotting. In this assessment, The Woman in White stands highest for its presentation

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1. June 11th 1870. Review of Marmion Savage's The Woman of Business; or, the Lady and the Lawyer.
  2. July 25th 1868; review of The Moonstone.
  3. August 24th 1867; review of Five Hundred Pounds' Reward by a Barrister.

of 'the subtle, cowardly, intellectual sybarite' Count Fosco; No Name aroused regrets that the rare skill shown in the plotting was not all expended on the heroine, Magdalen Vanstone, 'the single person in the story with a character at all'; in Armada the 'excessive and morbid improbability' was counterbalanced by 'curiosity ... in the proceedings of that vulgarized Becky Sharp, Miss Gwilt'; while The Moonstone was criticized as having 'no person who can in any way be described as a character, no one who interests us, no one who is human enough to excite even a faint emotion of dull curiosity as to his or her fate'. Just as Dickens's style suffered in criticism from the excesses of his imitators, Wilkie Collins' method gives rise to the adverse label of 'the Wilkie Collins school of characters' meaning those who act 'as if they were mere human chess-players'.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the ephemeral literature of the day is severely criticized for pandering to the worst tastes for sensationalism of the reading public. The sensation novelists were, however, on the whole not charged primarily with immorality among the many criticisms which were levelled at their work.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the reviewer of Lucretia, a lively but apparently seriously intentioned burlesque, expressly vindicates them on this score.<sup>3</sup> Of the two most famous representatives of the school, Mrs. Henry Wood and Miss Braddon, the former was most seriously charged with an offence in plotting, the latter with one against

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1. September 24th 1870; review of Mrs. Cashel Hoey's Falsely True.
  2. Mrs. Henry Wood's Bessy Rane, reviewed on October 27th 1870, was a sad exception, the more to be deplored in view of her popularity and usual moral concern.
  3. August 8th 1868.

character; in each case they are seen to set a 'standard' which lesser followers slavishly attempt to outdo. The flagrant improbability of the incident in East Lynne on which the pathos of the closing scenes depends is especially singled out for ridicule:

In actual life, it is true, persons who are anxious to keep themselves concealed do not come to the place where they are most likely to be known; but the practice is so common in novels that it does not cause perplexity or surprise ... the faculty of surprise as applicable to such incidents has been used up once for all by the marvellous incident of the return of the divorced wife in Mrs. Henry Wood's East Lynne.<sup>1</sup>

(A similar charge of improbability might be levelled against the hypothetical return of Edwin Drood to Cloisterham).

The popularity of Lady Audley's Secret was probably chiefly to blame for the other objectionable tendency in sensation fiction - the penchant for blue-eyed moral monsters as heroines:<sup>2</sup>

Given an exquisitely beautiful girl without heart of conscience, to find out what she is most likely to do. That is the problem which these volumes propose to solve ... Things are made so smooth and pleasant for beautiful young ladies, it is always so completely in their power to poison their husbands and marry their lovers, that they are sure to be always at it. It would be almost tempting Providence if they were not.

1. 'Current Literature', June 26th 1869; review of Madame Sylva's Secret, Mrs. Eiloart. See also March 30th 1867, review of Lady Adelaide's Oath, Mrs. Henry Wood: 'Considering that Mrs. Wood is one of the half-dozen women now alive who can make society read what they write, it is rather hard of her to use her power over the public so exceedingly ill'.
2. Wilkie Collins also had his share of responsibility for this, though his most famous novels did not have wicked heroines. The review of The Bond of Honour, August 6th 1870, complains of the familiar old ingredients: 'You may begin with the quiet repose of the domestic novel, and then shake in an infusion of the extreme sensational. Your good little girl of the first volume, for whom there are only too many originals, suddenly develops into a complete poisoner under the influence of Wilkie Collins'.
3. May 21st 1870; review of Gwendoline's Harvest by the Author of Lost Sir Massingberd.



Mockery is one of the chief weapons of the reviewers of sensation fiction: in the case of the heroines the mockery seems to be almost as much directed at the reviewer's own conservative gallantry as at the creators of the 'moral monsters':

We are not sorry to go back to witches who were old and unattractive, instead of having to believe that all young women are as <sup>1</sup>bad in heart and more successful in their machinations.

There is a refreshing feeling in getting back from the complicated sensationalism of the present day to the more simple and natural horrors of Mrs. Radcliffe. We have no objection to the last century being given up to crimes and deeds of darkness. If we are to have villains, we prefer having the old school of villains, whom it is proper to suspect and difficult to admire, instead of the lovely girls whose white curving shoulders<sup>2</sup> are made to bear all the atrocities of our own times.

This excursion into the realm of sensation heroines may seem a far cry from Edwin Drood, but it is in fact linked to another aspect of sensationalism which is not entirely irrelevant to a discussion of that novel.

The comparison between novels with a contemporary and novels with a historical setting concerns more than just the figures of the heroines: it applies to the whole consideration of what makes for credibility in a novel of which the incidents are unusual. Le Fanu repudiated the degrading epithet 'sensational' as applied to his novels, claiming that they belonged to 'the legitimate school of tragic English romance ... ennobled, and in great measure founded, by the genius of Sir Walter Scott':

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1. 'Current Literature', June 15th 1867; review of Marjorie Dudinstoune ... William Francis Collier.
  2. October 14th 1865; review of The Bucklin Shaig, by the Hon. Mrs. Alfred Montgomery.

No one, it is assumed, would describe Sir Walter Scott's romances as 'sensation novels'; yet in that marvellous series there is not a single tale in which death, crime, and, in some form, mystery, have not a place.<sup>1</sup>

The reviewer of Guy Deverell, however, (October 7th 1865) points out the basic differences in treatment: not only did Scott make 'the mysteries of machinery', haunted chambers, disguised personages and the like, subordinate to the 'personal characteristics' of his tale, whereas in Le Fanu these lurid elements are the principal effects aimed at, but the latter also places them in a modern story where such events are, if not impossible, rare, whereas Scott set his stories in an age when such things did not infrequently happen. This point is elaborated in the article on 'Sensational Novels' sparked off by the publication in 1868 of the sensational burlesque, Lucretia: or the Heroine of the Nineteenth Century. To show the difficulty of producing 'a tale of modern life that shall be at the same time a tale of striking incident', and without falling into that excess which provokes only ridicule, the reviewer transposes a famous scene from Scott into nineteenth century terms: -A

Take, for instance, the well-known scene in Ivanhoe, the storming of Front-de-Boeuf's castle, and translate it into modern life. A body of labourers, led by a gang of poachers and by a Royal Duke in disguise, attack the castle of the wicked Earl Mowbray, in order to deliver certain prisoners whom he is holding in durance, say, General Wilfred, a soldier who has distinguished himself in India, and Miss Rebekka Isaacs the beautiful daughter of a money-lender in Piccadilly. The chief of the poachers would wield a small-bore rifle, the Royal Duke a life-preserver of enormous size. And the story of the siege would conclude with a scene in which Sarah Hodge, a daughter of the people, who has suffered a fearful wrong from the wicked house and repaid it with as fearful a vengeance, dances on the battlements of the flaming pile, while she sings some song of the Music Halls.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Uncle Silas, 'A Preliminary Word'. Macmillan 1899. (1st edn.1864).
  2. August 8th 1868.

(An uncritical admirer of Disraeli's Sybil might not find anything too incongruous in the scene.)

The writer further extends his point by claiming that this is one of the characteristics distinguishing tragedy from melodrama:

Tragedy deals with historical or legendary persons and events, and gains a liberty which could not otherwise be accorded to it from the dignity or the sanctity of its subjects. Where could we find greater horrors than in the story of Oedipus? ... No Greek audience would have endured such a story, had the scene been laid in the Athens or Thebes of their own age. But it was made endurable by the remoteness of the time ... But tragedy requires cultivation in the audience, and supreme skill in the actor. Melodrama achieves success under easier conditions, but achieves it at the sacrifice of art. It deals with the same subjects as tragedy, but it vulgarizes them because it removes them from the associations which legitimize and ennoble them.

The mid-nineteenth century did not produce any great tragic drama; the taste for melodrama and the taste for sensation novels went side by side and the great actors in the tradition of Macready relied strongly on emotional effects. An article comparing contemporary acting with that of the past draws attention to the lack of a sympathetic climate for tragedy in the present age, owing partly perhaps to a growing intellectual distaste for 'external emotion', but also to an insensitivity in minds blunted by excess:

The faint dislike for tragedy which is so decided an intellectual feature of our time must be due, in part, at all events, to a kind of thickening of the chords which vibrate to tragic feeling, a thickening which explains some part of the sensational character of the plots<sup>1</sup> in popular novels. The blow must be hard to move us.

The sensation novelists pandered to popular tastes and themselves contributed to the 'thickening of the chords' by painting everything in extremes. An otherwise able writer, the Honourable Mrs. Norton,

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1. May 29th 1869.

was taken to task for indulging in extravagance in Old Sir Douglas:

If time can teach an artist anything, it should teach moderation, and it should teach harmony. A perfect ensemble of balanced parts - that, we suppose, is what the artist should strive after. Glaring lights and darkest shadows may fascinate for a moment. But the best pictures are not all in yellow and black.<sup>1</sup>

A review of Birds of Prey (October 26th 1867) refers to the lurid colours of Miss Braddon's art, 'as looking through the light cast by a blood-red pane', and similar effects are noted in the work of J. Sheridan Le Fanu: 'a sort of red atmosphere, a lurid light such as they turn on at theatres when anybody is to be murdered on the stage',<sup>2</sup> 'the glitter and shimmer of the ghastly moral effects in which he most delights' and which too often kill by their predominance 'the better literary power in him'.<sup>3</sup>

It seems that, if a writer is to make use of mystery in a contemporary story without incurring the derogatory label 'sensational', he must strive after credibility in presentation of his characters, while at the same time finding some sufficiently vivid contemporary equivalent for the 'Gothic' atmosphere of a past age.<sup>4</sup>

There was some feeling by the late 1860s that the sensation vogue was dying out. Mrs. Henry Wood was castigated on November 14th 1868 for continuing to draw on the 'insipid dregs of the stale old criminalities and absurdities' when even the great pioneer Miss Braddon, 'so popular half a dozen years ago, has perceived in time that the high-

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1. January 11th 1868.

2. November 7th 1868; review of Hunted Lives.

3. October 2nd 1869; review of The Wyvern Mystery.

4. See pp. 114 & 129 for examination of Dickens's approach to the problem in Edwin Drood.

flavoured iniquities of her Lady Audleys and Aurora Floyds have begun to pall upon the public taste',<sup>1</sup> and a swing among younger writers away from sensationalism to the opposite extreme of 'placidity' was noted in a review of Hester's History on July 24th 1869.

On the whole, the Spectator reviews do not seem to link Dickens's name with sensationalism. The literary parodies of the sensation vogue do, however, draw attention to the connexions between some of the characteristic elements of a Dickens novel and the more specific vogue for sensation fiction in the second half of the century. Bret Harte, for instance, in his Sensation Novels Condensed,<sup>2</sup> casts his net wide, including Dickens and Charlotte Bronte as well as more obvious choices such as Wilkie Collins, Charles Reade, Miss Braddon and Mrs. Henry Wood. The Dickens parody, in the form of a Christmas Story, plays on such stylistic devices as verbal repetition and use of non-sentences, and the creation of an atmosphere of foreboding. Dickens's penchant for proud queenly women [Edith Dombey?], unnatural children who die 'to slow music' [Paul?] and childlike heroines, 'more or less imbecile and idiotic, but always fascinating and undersized' is also stressed.

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1. Review of Anne Hereford, Mrs. Henry Wood.

2. American publication, under a slightly different title, 1867, English publication 1870.

Lucretia (1868) by 'the author of The Owllet of Owlstone Edge, etc.'<sup>1</sup> a high-spirited burlesque intended to warn the young against the demoralizing effect of sensation fiction, makes passing reference to Dickens, for example to Tulkinghorn and Lady Dedlock, the inference being that Dickens should have his share of the blame for this pernicious and widespread influence. But the novel which draws most heavily on Dickens in this respect, though with a distinct difference, is one by, of all people, Miss Braddon herself, namely The Doctor's Wife (1864), a less boisterous exposure than Lucretia of the perils in wait for a young girl nourished on romantic fiction. Miss Braddon draws a distinction between writers such as Dickens and the authors of the cheap ephemeral productions of the day, though the former may serve as a kind of plundering ground for the latter. Sigismund Smith, for example, the very prosaic and likeable young hack sensation writer in the novel, not unlike Herbert Pocket in character and in his relationship to the hero, George, the doctor of the title, is in the process of doing 'a good strong combination story', fusing The Heart of Midlothian and The Wandering Jew, the whole set back in the Middle Ages, for 'there's nothing like the Middle Ages for getting over the difficulties of a story'.<sup>2</sup> An added attraction will be the dumbness of his 'Jeanie Deans' - 'there's twice the interest in her if you make her dumb'.<sup>3</sup> Sigismund, however, is well aware of the gulf between his productions and those works which

1. F. E. Paget.

2. Vol.1, ch.4, pp.96-7 (3 Vol. 1864, ed. Maxwell).

3. Cf. the heroine of Wilkie Collins's Hide and Seek. Even Sigismund does not seem to have conceived the possibilities of a blind heroine and a blue hero, as in Poor Miss Finch.

the heroine, Isabel, devours so avidly, 'the highest blossoms in the flower-garden of fiction'.<sup>1</sup> If Miss Braddon is making any serious point at all in her novel, it would seem to be in the nature of a counter-charge against the accusation of pernicious influence directed at sensation fiction: though she does not make this point explicitly it is certainly the case that Isabel's dangerously emotional views on life are seriously affected by her reading of, among others, Dickens, Thackeray and even Shakespeare, not by reading sensation novels. The 'moral' might be understood to be that if a young girl is brought up in a silly and unstable environment, anything which offers excitement will turn her head. The interesting point is to see which elements of Dickens Isabel broods on most avidly. Not surprisingly, references to Edith Dombey, usually 'sublime in scornful indignation and ruby silk velvet', head the list.<sup>2</sup> 'Are you never to wear ruby velvet, and diamonds in your hair, and to lure some recreant Carker to a foreign hostelry, and there denounce and scorn him?' the authoress mockingly apostrophizes her heroine at the point when she is about to ally her fortunes to those of the homely young doctor.<sup>3</sup> Florence Dombey, too, arouses a minor enthusiasm for her interesting position, ill-treated by her father and nourishing a romantic attachment for the absent Walter. Of Dickens's male characters it is naturally the villains, not the heroes, who attract: an aristocratic Bill Sikes, 'Count Guilliamme de

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1. Vol.1, ch.3, p.54.

2. Vol.3, ch.9, p.194. See also Vol.1, ch.7, p.201, and Vol.1, ch.9, p.222.

3. Vol.1, ch.7, p.175.

Syques' would be welcome, but, more irresistible still, a Steerforth: 'it was Steerforth's proud image, and not simple-hearted David's gentle shadow, which lingered in the girl's mind when she shut the book'.<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that, with such day-dreams, the doctor's wife precipitates tragedy in her married life, though her author does in the end save her for a future devoted to good works.<sup>2</sup>

As with the reviews, so with the sensation parodies: there is a good deal of emphasis on Dickens's earlier work. Judging by the references in these novels, Dickens would not appear to his contemporaries to be breaking strikingly new ground in choosing a 'mystery' subject for his latest work. The emphasis on mystery has become central in Edwin Drood, but the elements of 'sensation' have always been there.

One possible link between Dickens and the sensation trends, apart from the Jasper/mystery element of Edwin Drood, might be in the conception of Rosa with reference to Edwin. Rosa, in her awareness of the ridiculousness of her position, her inability to get on with Edwin in a cut-and-dried planned relationship, could be in a sense the product of the age as much as are the Isabels and Lucretias. Though Miss Twinkleton's girls feel 'the romantic aspect of this destiny', Rosa feels mainly its irritations. Romance enters her life with the Landlesses and Tartar with his adventurous past. Rosa, however, as a romantic heroine, bears about the same relationship to Isabel as Lucretia as, for example, Dickens's 'reforming' novels

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1. Vol.1, ch.6, pp.160-1.

2. An interesting parallel between The Doctor's Wife and Edwin Drood, though perhaps an obvious enough passage to introduce in either novels in the circumstances, occurs at the point where the 'villain' Roland goes to church in search of Isabel. As he enters, the preacher is reading 'that solemn invitation to the wicked man to repent of his wickedness' (Vol.3, ch.3, p.60).

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such as Bleak House do to those of Wilkie Collins such as Man and Wife. The one has only temporary, the other timeless application. Dickens is never so merely contemporary as are many lesser novelists.

The Spectator reference to 'the more simple and natural horrors of Mrs. Radcliffe'<sup>1</sup>, coupled with the distinction drawn between the relative credibility of historical and contemporary settings, serves as a reminder that Dickens himself was possibly consulting The Mysteries of Udolpho immediately prior to the beginning of his last novel. The 'Cloisterham Mail Bag' in the Duffield Collection at Dickens House contains a typed copy of a letter of September 7th 1869 on Athenaeum Club paper from Dickens to Georgina asking her to look out for him various books from his library, including 'That volume of the Edinburgh collection of novels which contains the Mysteries of Udolpho'.<sup>2</sup>

If Dickens was reading Udolpho with an eye to his forthcoming novel, and for some more specific reason than just general examination of effects, it is difficult to see what in particular he might have been looking for, unless it was for the conception and story of the 'mad' nun, Sister Agnes (Lady Laurentini of Udolpho) who in a passion of jealousy had connived at the poisoning of the Marchioness de Ville roi whose husband she loved, only to find that his subsequent remorse and despair proved an insuperable barrier to their union. Hence her retirement to religious seclusion and the torments of conscience for her 'unavailing crime' (ch.55). On her deathbed, tortured by the resemblance of Emily to the late Marchioness (in reality her aunt, though

1. p. 96.

2. Ref: Catalogue of Coggeshall Sale, No.276, p.50.

the relationship is at the time unknown) she confuses the two, believing she is in fact confronted by her former victim. She pours out to Emily a long, impassioned warning against passion, a warning which, together with the parallel warning against excess of sentiment, may be taken as the moral of the book:

'Look at me well, and see what guilt has made me. I then was innocent; the evil passions of my nature slept ... Sister! beware of the first indulgence of the passions; beware of the first! Their course, if not checked then, is rapid - their force is uncontrollable - they lead us we know not whither - they lead us perhaps to the commission of crimes, for which whole years of prayer and penitence cannot atone! - Such may be the force of even a single passion, that it overcomes every other, and sears up every other approach to the heart. Possessing us like a fiend, it leads us on to the acts of a fiend, making us insensible to pity and to conscience. And when its purpose is accomplished, like a fiend it leaves us to the torture of those feelings which its power had suspended - not annihilated - to the tortures of compassion, remorse, and conscience. Then, we awaken as from a dream,<sup>1</sup> and perceive a new world around us - we gaze in astonishment and horror - but the deed is committed; not all the powers of heaven and earth united can undo it - and the spectres of conscience will not fly! What are riches - grandeur - health itself, to the luxury of a pure conscience, the health of the soul; - and what the sufferings of poverty, disappointment, despair - to the anguish of an afflicted one! Oh! how long is it since I knew that luxury! I believed that I had suffered the most agonizing pangs of human nature, in love, jealousy, and despair - but these pangs were ease compared with the stings of conscience which I have since endured. I tasted too what was called the sweet of revenge - but it was transient, it expired even with the object that provoked it!<sup>2</sup> Remember, sister, that the passions are the seeds of vices as well as of virtues, from which either may spring, accordingly, as they are nurtured. Unhappy they who have never been taught the art to govern them!<sup>3</sup>

It is conceivable that, with or without his conception of Jasper already in mind, Dickens might have found peculiar interest in this part of the

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1. Cf. Jasper and Mr. Grewgious's revelation?
  2. "Look what a poor, mean, miserable thing it is!"?
  3. Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, The Mysteries of Udolpho, ch.54, pp.318-9; Everyman 1959.

story, even though not in the particular parallels which have been tentatively suggested.

### Chapter III

#### i) Characteristics of a Good Mystery Novel

Lovers of the detective novel probably divide, on the whole, into two major categories: those who like their puzzle 'neat', i.e. as a problem in mathematics or logic, and those for whom the detective element is an intriguing framework involving interesting characters in an exciting and appealing atmosphere. With all his previous predilections taken into account, Dickens is unlikely to be anyone's choice for the first category: he is too interested in character quirks and too fond of evoking atmosphere to want to write a purely 'intellectual' novel, near as Hard Times may come to this category. Rather would he have been likely to take his stand along with his friend Wilkie Collins, who, in his defence of 'plot' novels, protested his inability to see why 'plot' and 'character' were so often spoken of to each other's detriment as if mutually exclusive, whereas surely what to a great extent measured a plot's success in holding interest was the degree of sympathetic involvement the readers felt for the characters.<sup>1</sup> I should think it likely, too, that Dickens's own age would help to direct preference towards the character/atmosphere mystery novel as opposed to the purely detective: we have seen already that, though Wilkie Collins was acknowledged the master of the plot novel, still, the Spectator critic assessed his four major novels by the criterion of character achievement, and it seems on the whole that the sensation novels were judged very much as other novels were, rather than seen as having distinct 'rules' of their own which superseded the usual requirements. The influence of Edgar Allan Poe's

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1. See Preface to The Woman in White, February 1861.

example in the earlier half of the century in establishing a vogue for detective fiction was perhaps not yet strongly felt. It is clear, too, from the contemporary criticisms of Dickens which have been consulted that his strength in creating atmosphere and out of the way characters was felt in his own day far to outweigh his skill in plot construction, though this, of course, did not deter him from weaving complicated plot lines in successive works. Despite the repeated references to the sensation school and the singling out of the split into 'plot' and 'character' novels as typical of the day, there was perhaps not such a strict dividing line between straight and mystery novels, when the latter were thought of as being a passing phenomenon, as appears in the twentieth century when the detective novel is so common and apparently permanent a feature of the fiction landscape. There is today no Dickens bestriding the gulf between the two lines; many of what we think of as the great Victorian novels have a mystery of some kind - even Middlemarch has a minor one; and, conversely, the great exponents of the sensation novel - M.E. Braddon, Wilkie Collins, Mrs. Henry Wood, Sheridan Le Fanu - are all interested in something other than a pure diagrammatically conclusive plot.<sup>1</sup>

Two of the ingredients, then, which will contribute to the mystery novel's success are skill in creating character and skill in creating

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1. I write of Miss Braddon according to what is observable from her novels, though it is known that she wrote them 'tongue-in-cheek' for a good market, not because she felt she was serving the dictates of her art; e.g. she wrote to Edmund Yates: 'The Balzac-morbid-anatomy school is my especial delight, but it seems you want the right-down sensational ... I will give the kaleidoscope ... another turn, and will do my very best with the old bits of glass and pins and rubbish'. Yates: Fifty Years of London Life, Harper Bros. 1885, pp.336-7.

atmosphere, as in the case of any other novel. What, if any, are the particular demands of plot which specially distinguish this genre? Aristotle's classic demand for 'a beginning, a middle and an end' is obviously particularly applicable to the detective novel, though it appears to have been more applicable to all classes of novel in the period under consideration than is the case today, when we are presented with many a slice of life 'neat', or so the illusion suggests. When we begin to examine this 'beginning, middle and end', and particularly when we examine some faulty specimens, we soon see that the problem confronting the mystery novel writer is not unlike that of the Elizabethan revenge dramatist - how to sustain and develop interest between the initial act demanding investigation, which must not be delayed too long or the novel will not be a mystery novel proper at all, and the climax when the revenge is achieved or the culprit unmasked, without allowing the dénouement to be foreseen or precipitated too hastily. The revenge writer either resorted to extravagance, piling horror on horror (e.g. Kyd's Spanish Tragedy, Titus Andronicus) as do some detective novelists, or he introduced lengthy philosophical disquisitions, and possibly a sub-plot (e.g. Chapman in The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois) or he made his hero's behaviour the centre of interest and the delay in essential action integral to that character, as did Shakespeare in Hamlet, though not with entire success for the coherence of the whole. The danger inherent in the first of these methods is that of deadening the reader's or audience's reaction and falling into ultimate anticlimax; the second method can become tedious and can split the play or novel in

half so that it is no longer a proper example of the species; the third, depending as it does on delay in action, either runs the risk of tedium or must invent interim action which may distract the attention from the central issue and the reality of the delay.

Examination of some of the sensation novels popular in the second half of the nineteenth century shows that these novelists resorted to similar techniques to those employed by the revenge dramatists to fill out the number of pages expected by the reader accustomed to the three-volume novel.<sup>1</sup> Wylder's Hand,<sup>2</sup> for example, one of Le Fanu's popular novels, builds up such an apprehension of horror in the mind of the reader that the revelation of the crime, when it comes, is a distinct anticlimax. This, indeed, seems to me, from a reading of two or three of Le Fanu's novels, to be one of his shortcomings: his pages are so larded with veiled, atmospheric threat and implications of unspecified supernatural chicanery and black magic, that one is led to expect far worse than the narrative can in fact produce. The grotesqueness of his characters, for example in Uncle Silas, holds suggestion of sinister activity in excess of what they are actually engaged in, and no mystery novel reader likes to feel cheated of thrills -/

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1. Though convention to a certain extent dictated the length of the novel, it was not an absolute, nor even a wholly detrimental rule. A certain minimum length is essential for the sustained interest which determines the depth of the reader's absorption. The Woman in White is much better than Miss or Mrs? just as Edwin Drood is much better than, for example, a Dickens short story such as Hunted Down. However, Dickens himself seems to have felt that his usual length of novel, as in Our Mutual Friend, was too much for a concentrated mystery story. Edwin Drood breaks new ground in this respect, as a monthly novel in twelve parts.
  2. This novel, like Lady Audley's Secret, poses the 'dead or disappeared' question.

which have been promised. This is one of the hazards of the production of this kind of novel: the desired atmosphere is provided at too great a cost if initial over-writing fails to find an adequate translation into action.

Le Fanu's House by the Churchyard falls short of true mystery novel success in another respect: it depends for much of its interest on the activities of the army life it depicts so well, and the mystery element cannot be said to fill the book's major interest. It is too episodic to count as a pure specimen of the detective novel art.

Mrs. Henry Wood's famous East Lynne shows another, and by no means unskilful approach to the problem. Again, she cannot be said to have written a pure mystery novel, as her book has, in fact, two major plot interests, though cleverly interwoven. The story of Richard Hare and the murder of the gamekeeper Hallijohn of which he is suspected provides the detective interest; Lady Isabel's notorious failure in marriage and pathetic end provides the 'sensationalism', though 'emotionalism' would be a better choice of word, for Mrs. Wood's lengthy moral earnestness does not deserve that slighting term and would provide a sobering experience indeed for a mere sensation<sup>h</sup>seeker. -A

The greatest sensationalist of all, M.E. Braddon, whose name most frequently comes to mind as the 'leader' of the school, can fall into the worst excesses of piling crime upon crime to the point of absurdity, where her plot is too extravagant to be judged by any conceivable artistic standards and her character ceases to have any human interest, as in the case of Jabez North in The Trail of the Serpent; but it is



her most famous book, Lady Audley's Secret, which should be taken to show how she copes with plot development. The answer, surprisingly enough, is scarcely at all. After a skilful opening volume, in which one's interest in the characters is aroused, she too obviously resorts to padding to fill her middle pages. Unable to evolve any further plot complication, she falls back on page after page of tedious disquisitions on the nature of woman kind and the issues to be faced by a young man contemplating matrimony.

Wilkie Collins, surprisingly when one considers the baldness of some of his shorter novels, particularly those 'with a mission', succeeds most admirably in The Woman in White, more so, in one important sense, than in The Moonstone. For The Moonstone, in spite of its prefatory claim to show the interaction of character and circumstance, is far more interesting in the latter respect. We are held in suspense as to the 'how' of the crime rather than particularly anxious about the fate of those involved. The Moonstone is, in fact, perhaps the nearest of these nineteenth-century sensation novels to the novel of pure detection, and one of its readers, at least, Dickens himself, found, after an intriguing start, the spinning out of the detective matter very wearisome, probably from lack of sustaining interest in the persons of the story.<sup>1</sup> The Woman in White, on the other hand, a long story, holds the reader to the end. This is partly a matter of character interest, partly because here more than anywhere Wilkie Collins shows himself a master of atmosphere. It is also, however, partly the result of clever plot technique. It is perhaps easier to keep the reader waiting before the

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1. Cf. the Spectator criticism cited above, p.94.

crime rather than after its accomplishment; always provided that care is taken to avoid the danger of anticlimax, tension can be skilfully raised through many a foreboding preliminary, and this Wilkie Collins supremely achieves in The Woman in White. For long, we have known of the villainy of Fosco and Percival Glyde; for long we have anticipated some terrible harm <sup>in</sup> impending over Laura. Yet Collins is still the master of surprise; witness the chilling scene in the graveyard nearly two-thirds of the way through the book. Few readers can have anticipated the complete thrill of that moment, when the form of Laura herself advances towards the anguished figure of Walter Hartwright kneeling at her tomb. The skill of The Woman in White lies in prolonging anticipation of the crime, so that correspondingly shorter time remains for its revelation, and also in producing a series of twists - the unfinished diary, the ruse by which Marian is trapped into leaving Laura - so that the reader's expectation is always roused, and always given something ingeniously more exciting than had been anticipated. As regards the second part of a detective novel, the exposure of the villain, here again Wilkie Collins has provided himself with a safety device - the introduction of two villains necessitating two retributions, so that even when Percival Glyde, the 'immediate' villain, has been tracked to his horrible end, there still remains the infinitely more menacing figure of Count Fosco to be brought to justice. The Woman in White is one of the few detective novels of this period which sustains interest throughout and never falls from its own high standard of intrigue.

It is, of course, impossible to say how Dickens would have come out of this test. It may have been the peculiar problems of the detective novel and the difficulty of sustaining excitement without either padding or <sup>b</sup>pathos that induced him to embark on a new form: a monthly novel, but in twelve parts only. The question is how he was going to fill the last six parts. Rumour implied that he was worried by this problem himself, but, without indulging in useless speculation on this subject, we can see what likely developments the second part would hold. If Fildes and Forster were accurate in their recollections, Jasper was to be in the condemned cell in Number XII, and his confession, a lengthy one if we are to accept literally Forster's reference to 'chapters',<sup>1</sup> presumably was to occupy part of that Number (the last part might have been intended for lighter subjects such as pairing off the characters and glimpses into their future) and possibly also part of Number XI, if it could be artistically divided. As Dickens intended to follow earlier practice and publish the last two parts as a double Number, this would obviate any difficulty here. The last two Numbers would appear at the end of January, thus leaving the previous Number, the Christmas one, for Jasper's downfall. This would be seasonally appropriate if the downfall could be contrived for Christmas in the story, an obviously attractive idea in view of the prominence of Christmas already. That leaves three Numbers for the further manoeuvrings of Datchery and the development of the love interest ↗

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1. XI.ii: 'The last chapters were to be written in the condemned cell, to which his wickedness, all elaborately elicited from him as if told of another, had brought him'.

between Rosa and Tartar, both of which elements seem to need considerable space if they are to take a major place in our interest. We must not, of course, forget that the plot demands that meetings between Rosa and Tartar should be as few as possible. As we have no means of foretelling what materials for advancing his intrigues a mystery novelist will use, speculation is fruitless. There seems to be no insuperable barrier preventing Dickens from developing his story along the lines already indicated in the first part, without either overhastily precipitating his crisis or needing to introduce totally new material. This latter device was the resort of many of the Edwin Drood continuers,<sup>1</sup> and serves to make flagrantly obvious the gulf between Dickens's comparative concentration in the first part and their amorphous diffuseness in the second. I have already given reason for not agreeing with Forster's tentative speculation that the Sapsea fragment was designed for this purpose,<sup>2</sup> and when one considers such chapters as 'A Gritty State of Things Comes On', one realizes how little of pure narrative is necessary even for a long chapter, and what a fund of comic invention Dickens has to draw on in his latest creation, whose introduction into the story has come about in such a natural manner. The Billickin's popularity would surely encourage Dickens to extend her part in the novel, as providing the humorous touches to counteract the grimness of the closing scenes, one of which would possibly take us to the opium den again. An examination of Dickens's chapters and the narrative advancement in them

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1. See, for example, p. 168 below.

2. See p. 29.

would, in fact, illustrate the great difference between him and his continuers and indicate how little narrative 'fact', even in this novel where the details are so significantly selected, there is in proportion to the total content of a chapter.<sup>1</sup> Dickens, as I have suggested, is not writing a pure detective novel, but a mystery novel, with atmosphere and character interest: never in his life did he show himself at a loss to develop the detail of his work. This is where his followers fall down; not having the peculiar genius of Dickens, they have to fill out with extraneous matter, as they are unable to develop afresh the material already at their disposal.<sup>2</sup> All Dickens has to safeguard, in this novel, is that he keeps his narrative line clearly in view all the time, not allowing it to be swamped by his natural bent for the proliferation, however, selective, of detail.

What is quite remarkable about The Mystery of Edwin Drood is the concentration of its material. There is one basic centre to the novel, the betrothal of Edwin and Rosa: every character and every incident is concerned with or stems from this, whether the scene is London or Cloisterham. Only one major character, Tartar, is an unexpected addition to the dramatis personae, a character with no previous connexion with Cloisterham affairs. Datchery, whoever he is, appears in the novel

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1. Honeythunder, for example, in chapters vi and xvii, and the 'business' of the young ladies of Miss Twinkleton's Seminary, provide diversions from the narrative progress, while fulfilling their own function in the novel.
  2. The Spectator article on 'The Genius of Dickens', June 18th 1870, drew attention to his 'marvellous faculty of multiplying at will, and yet with an infinity of minute variety, new illustrations of any trait, the type of which he had once well mastered.'

because he is interested in events in Cloisterham.<sup>1</sup> The novel's action could be very briefly summarized:

Jasper, rebellious against his surroundings, provokes Neville against Edwin; then suggests a reunion on Christmas Eve. In the meantime he plans and carries out a Cathedral excursion with Durdles. Rosa and Edwin terminate their engagement. Edwin disappears, Neville is held suspect but released for want of evidence, the only tangible indication of murder being the discovery in the Weir of Edwin's watch and shirt-pin. Neville departs for London, spied on by Jasper, and makes the acquaintance of Tartar. Datchery appears in Cloisterham, Jasper declares his love for Rosa; she flees to Grewgious and meets Helena and Tartar. Most of the central characters are now in London. Jasper revisits the opium den, brooding on the sinister 'journey', and is followed back to Cloisterham by the opium woman, who had trailed him there also the previous Christmas Eve, and who meets up with Datchery and his ally, Deputy.

This takes approximately 190 pages and there is no sense on the reader's part of padding, nor of extraneous material, with the possible exception of Honeythunder's fulminations. The explanation of why Dickens can get away with this is two-fold, his bringing into play of two of his most noted characteristics: delight in character, observation, even to the minor appearances such as the two waiters in Holborn and the incorrigible Miss Ferdinand, but more especially shown, of course, in such eccentrics as Durdles and the Billickin; and, secondly, the

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1. Incidentally, the argument that Datchery must be someone already known to the reader as Dickens rarely introduced a new character in the second half of a story falls flat when we consider that Tartar appears in the story only two pages earlier.

elaboration of significant detail in the creation of atmosphere, the latter quality being of especial service in a mystery novel.

For instance, who would deny that the build-up (in the opening chapters) of drowsy Cloisterham with its quiet Cathedral precincts - 'An ancient city ... a drowsy city ... a city of another and a bygone time' (ch.iii); with the tranquillity of Minor Canon Corner, the provincial narrowness of Mayor Sapsea, the proximity of the Weir with its solitary moonlight walks and its vista of the sea, above all the local interest in the Cathedral crypt with its mouldering bones of past dignitaries, is a suitable setting for such a story? The central feature of Cloisterham, almost, one might say, the dominant feature of the novel in its association with Jasper, is the Cathedral itself with its ever-present reminder of the solemnity of life and death, of human wickedness and of the lawful life. The paragraph following Mr. Grewgious's reaction in chapter ix has been justly praised:

'Dear me,' said Mr. Grewgious, peeping in, 'it's like looking down the throat of Old Time.'

Old Time heaved a mouldy sigh from tomb and arch and vault; and gloomy shadows began to deepen in corners; and damps began to rise from green patches of stone; and jewels, cast upon the pavement of the nave from stained glass by the declining sun, began to perish. Within the grill-gate of the chancel, up the steps surmounted loomingly by the fast darkening organ, white robes could be dimly seen, and one feeble voice, rising and falling in a cracked monotonous mutter, could at intervals be faintly heard. In the free outer air, the river, the green pastures, and the brown arable lands, the teeming hills and dales, were reddened by the sunset: while the distant little windows in windmills and farm homesteads, shone, patches of bright beaten gold. In the Cathedral, all became grey, murky, and sepulchral, and the cracked monotonous mutter went on like a dying voice, until the organ and the choir burst forth, and drowned it in a sea of music. Then, the sea fell, and the dying voice made another feeble effort, and then the sea rose high, and beat its life out, and lashed the roof, and surged among the arches, and pierced the heights of the great tower; and then the sea was dry, and all was still.

This solemn aspect of the Cathedral's effect on the impressionable observer, with the contrast between the Church's antiquity and the warm immediate life outside, and yet again the implied contrast between that ephemeral human life and the eternal sea, recurs in chapter xii, where from the top of the tower can be seen:

Cloisterham, fair to see in the moonlight: its ruined habitations and sanctuaries of the dead, at the tower's base: its moss-softened red-tiled roofs and red-brick houses of the living, clustered beyond: its river winding down from the mist on the horizon, as though that were its source, and already heaving with a restless knowledge of its approach towards the sea.

and culminates in the contrasting picture of the closing pages where

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

In such a setting, Jasper's torment and evil passion are clearly meant to be seen in a more serious context than as a mere tale of sordid villainy and detection.

On a less elevated note the Cathedral plays its part in providing the sinister background for secrecy and crime. This is the spot which no one voluntarily frequents after dark, for 'a certain awful hush pervades the ancient pile, the cloisters, and the churchyard', and the inhabitants of Cloisterham feel 'the innate shrinking of dust with the breath of life in it, from dust out of which the breath of life has passed' (ch.xii). In this vicinity, near a wicket gate by a solitary



bye-path in the Monks' Vineyard, a chilling encounter can occur, which 'alone, in a sequestered place, surrounded by vestiges of old time and decay ... has a tendency to call a shudder into being' (ch.xiv).

The opium den scenes have been frequently praised for their sinister atmosphere: in fact, Dickens's presentation of Cloisterham is even more notable and sustained, and without resort to any exotic element here. In this respect Edwin Drood does fulfil the requirements of a mystery novel with a contemporary setting, of providing a background at once credible and foreboding.

For contrast we have the mild humour of the Crisparkle household, the idiosyncracies of Durdles and Deputy, the liveliness of the Nuns' House; and in the later scenes, the briskness of Tartar's 'gallant craft' and of Dick Datchery and the verbal skirmishes between Miss Twinkleton and the Billickin.

As regards character interest the central attention is directed to Jasper who occupies the opening scene and presumably would dominate the closing chapters. The basic elements in his character are put before us in chapter ii and nothing in the rest of the novel is at variance with or adds an unexpected development to this initial presentation. The usual charge against Dickens, of melodramatic over-writing, can be made here in the scenes where Jasper's feelings are momentarily out of control or unhidden, as in the proposal scene to Rosa (ch.xix)<sup>1</sup> or the breakdown in front of Mr. Grewgious (ch.xv). (The revelation to Edwin is brief and more restrained.) A reading of the following passages taken out of context illustrates this point:

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1. Cf. the criticism of the Saturday Review; p.81.

Ch. xv. Mr. Grewgious saw a staring white face, and two quivering white lips, in the easy chair, and saw two muddy hands gripping its sides. But for the hands, he might have thought he had never seen the face ...

Mr. Grewgious saw a lead-coloured face in the easy chair, and on its surface dreadful starting drops or bubbles, as if of steel ...

Mr. Grewgious saw a ghastly figure rise, open-mouthed, from the easy chair, and lift its outspread hands towards its head ...

Mr. Grewgious saw the ghastly figure throw back its head, clutch its hair with its hand, and turn with a writhing action from him ...

Mr. Grewgious heard a terrible shriek, and saw no ghastly figure, sitting or standing; saw nothing but a heap of torn and miry clothes upon the floor.

Ch. xix. This time he does not touch her. But his face looks so wicked and menacing, as he stands leaning against the sundial - setting, as it were, his black mark upon the very face of day - that her flight is arrested by horror as she looks at him ...

His preservation of his easy attitude rendering his working features and his convulsive hands absolutely diabolical, he returns, with a fierce extreme of admiration ...

'I told you, you rare charmer, you sweet witch, that you must stay and hear me, or do more harm than can ever be undone. You asked me what harm. Stay, and I will tell you. Go, and I will do it!'...

'Darling, I dare propose to you. Stop there. If it be bad to idolize you, I am the worst of men; if it be good, I am the best. My love for you is above all other love, and my truth to you is above all other truth. Let me have hope and favor, and I am a forsworn man for your sake' ...

'Reckon up nothing at this moment, angel, but the sacrifices that I lay at those dear feet, which I could fall down among the vilest ashes and kiss, and put upon my head as a poor savage might. There is my fidelity to my dear boy after death. Tread upon it!'<sup>1</sup>

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1. Felix Aylmer, op.cit. p. 132 (see p. 177 below) considers these speeches to be deliberate parody on Jasper's part.

In the first series of extracts here, a brake is put upon the melodramatic rising of Jasper's passion by the impervious figure of the bystander Mr. Grewgious, who 'Not changing his action even then ... opened and shut the palms of his hands as he warmed them, and looked down at it'. In the second series, rather less successfully, the brake is provided partly by Jasper himself in the consciousness of his behaviour, partly by the occasional references to the windows of the Nuns' House, from which a casual observer might view the scene. In each case we are invited to view the action as spectators - the descriptions of Rosa might almost be stage directions: 'She sits in the same still attitude, but shrinking a little more' - and this is the keynote to the way in which Jasper is presented throughout.<sup>1</sup> Rarely are we allowed a glimpse of the man from the inside. In his moments of self-revelation, as to Edwin or in front of the opium woman, he is out of control: never are his feelings revealed in a normal state. On the rare occasions when we see him alone, as in the Gate House before going on the expedition with Durdles, he is 'performing' - literally, at his piano, or we catch a glimpse of his momentarily 'stern' face as he enters the Gate House on Christmas Eve.

One reason why Dickens is able to present Jasper in this external way is that the choir master, though the central character, does not actively dominate many of the chapters. The revelation to Edwin, the proposal to Rosa, the unaccountable expedition and the opium den scenes spring to mind as his major appearances. At the same time, his presence

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1. We are perpetually reminded of the stage presentation Dickens possibly had in mind.

is felt throughout as an overhanging threat; in every chapter of the novel there is at least a mention of him, and this is on occasions skilfully managed by such passages as that at the close of chapter iii:

“They have come very near to the Cathedral windows, and at this moment the organ and the choir sound out sublimely. As they sit listening to the solemn swell, the confidence of last night rises in young Edwin Drood's mind, and he thinks how unlike this music is, to that discordance.

'I fancy I can distinguish Jack's voice,' is his remark in a low tone in connexion with the train of thought.

'Take me back at once, please,' urges his Affianced, quickly laying her light hand upon his wrist. 'They will all be coming out directly; let us get away. Oh, what a resounding chord! But don't let us stop to listen to it; let us get away!'

In this way Dickens carefully contrives the required concentration on Jasper, without having to present him too frequently in the full limelight, with the risk of deadening or over-playing the effects.

Though the charge of melodrama has been admitted, a qualification should be made. The successful creation of atmosphere, already discussed, goes far to carrying with it the character. Because the background is both credible and heightened, melodramatic effects are under control here. Moreover, though we see Jasper as an actor might reveal him, no one can deny that the actions do give us a fair guide to the inner state, which might otherwise have been arrived at only by pages of minute analysis.. We can only guess at the manner Dickens would have adopted for the final revelation. Would it have been a long, unbroken monologue written for an audience, as in the case of Miss Wade, or would we at last have seen the choir master alone and entered his private feelings, as to a certain extent we do with Bradley Headstone?

Many readers have assumed, on the evidence of the opium den scenes, that this revelation would be an unconscious one, stimulated by careful questioning such as the opium woman uses in chapter xxiii, while Jasper was re-enacting the crime in an opium trance.<sup>1</sup> Against this possibility is its closeness to the technique of The Moonstone, a novel specifically recalled in the passage in chapter iii referring to Miss Twinkleton, the passage beginning, 'As, in some cases of drunkenness, and in others of animal magnetism, there are two states of consciousness which never clash'. The instance of the misplaced watch here is a variation on the misplaced parcel of The Moonstone (Second Period, Third Narrative, Section 10, Collins Classics 1953, p.372) which is itself taken from Dr. Elliotson's book on Human Physiology (5th Edition, Longman, London 1840, p.646). Dickens's friendship with, and interest in the work of, Dr. Elliotson are well-known and it is also a fact that instances of split personality resulting from abnormal conditions were in the news near to the time that Dickens was writing Edwin Drood.<sup>2</sup> However, it is unlikely that Dickens, having stigmatized The Moonstone as 'wearisome beyond endurance', would have relied on a variation of its sensational and well-known dénouement for an important effect, however differently treated, in his own mystery novel. The opium den scene of chapter xxiii, just about half way through the novel, could have been intended not so much as a foreshadowing of the final exposure of Jasper, but as a help to the reader in clinching his guilt, a reinforcing of the idea

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1. It is even a possibility that Jasper himself could only hazily distinguish between what was fantasy in his crime and what reality. Cf. note, p.151.
  2. See, for example, Spectator article, January 9th et.seq. 1869, 'The Man with two Memories'.

of the opium woman as one of his detectors<sup>1</sup> and, of course, as an artistic résumé midway of the keynote struck in chapter i.

Incidentally, it is not until chapter xxiii that we realize just how brilliantly and carefully chosen is the opening of the novel.

Starting in medias res is a commonplace; but here we unwittingly start just after the clue might have been given to the whole mystery. Jasper's oriental fantasies always took place immediately after the relief of the journey: 'They couldn't begin till it was off my mind. I had no room till then for anything else'. The murder mystery in this mystery novel does not occur until chapter xiv, but it has occurred in anticipation the moment we start to read. Moreover, the opium woman was listening to him in the first chapter, a fact of which we are not sure until chapter xxiii and of which Jasper remains unaware.

There are other problems, too, related to the idea of an eventual unconscious self-revelation by Jasper. For despite Forster's indication of the novel's interest - 'the originality of which was to consist in the review of the murderer's career by himself at the close, when its temptations were to be dwelt upon as if, not he the culprit, but some other man, were the tempted' - nothing in the course of the novel suggests the impression of Jasper as an unconscious murderer. His fomenting of the quarrel between Edwin and Neville, his 'unaccountable expedition' with Durdles, are undertaken in full consciousness, and the only way of resolving these incompatibles would seem to be in accepting

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1. The opium woman despised by Jasper - 'What visions can she have? ... What can she rise to ..?' (ch.i) thus takes her place alongside other unsuspected trackers, (for example) Rogue Riderhood in Our Mutual Friend and Nadgett in Martin Chuzzlewit.

the idea that Jasper intended Edwin's death, but intended using Neville as an unconscious scapegoat, to commit the crime, not merely to be held on suspicion of it.<sup>1</sup> This certainly would be a 'curious idea ... difficult to work' and would tie in with both the content of Number III,<sup>2</sup> in which the first chapter deals with Neville's jealousy of Edwin, and that of Number V, in which Neville's isolation in London and Jasper's pursuit of him forms the subject matter of the opening chapter.<sup>3</sup> It might also explain the presence of that enigmatic title 'Flight and Pursuit', invented at a time when Dickens was surveying the general scheme for his novel.

However, this hypothesis leads in its turn to another problem. If Jasper was not anticipating the murder in his opium trance of chapter i, before Neville's appearance in Cloisterham, what was he rehearsing? And what is the significance of his warnings to Edwin in chapter ii? The obvious answer, of course, is that he was planning murder but had not yet seen the fiendish possibilities of an unwitting tool. But the final opium den scene raises yet another problem. Why does Jasper start in what seems like suspicious anger when the opium woman asks him: 'Did you never get tired of it, deary, and try to call up something else

1. 'A sense of destructive power is so expressed in his face ...' - ch.xii, the point at which, on the way to the unaccountable expedition, he sees Neville innocently talking with Crisparkle - thus takes on a more sinister significance.
2. Dickens was beginning this Number when he made the remark about 'a curious interest steadily working up to No.V'. See above, p.24.
3. We cannot, however, be sure that Dickens planned this chapter for Number V. He seems to have been getting through his material more quickly than anticipated and at one time conceived of Edwin's disappearance as occurring in this Number (see pp.286-8). The present argument would, of course, apply equally strongly to that chapter.

for a change?' This reaction is markedly the effect that would be produced by hidden guilt and suggests that Jasper is here shying away from the thought of murder. If this is so, then what vision was he talking about in the preceding conversation? And why would he, six months after the murder, only now be coming back to the opium woman to re-enact the 'journey' he has 'been away upon'? It is true that he admits to having mixed the opium for himself in the meantime but the implication from this would be that he is at present so disturbed as to be in need of her ministrations. What has more recently disturbed him is Rosa's rejection of his proposal. The possibility thus presents itself that what he had been brooding on for so long was the temptation of breaking his loyalty to Edwin by offering himself as a suitor for Rosa - 'When I could not bear my life, I came to get the relief, and I got it' (ch.xxiii, p.182). This connects closely with his explicit declaration to Rosa: 'In the distasteful work of the day, in the wakeful misery of the night, girded by sordid realities, or wandering through Paradises and Hells of visions into which I rushed, carrying your image in my arms, I loved you madly.' We could thus imagine a gradual development of Jasper's passion, from love of Rosa and jealousy of Edwin to the conception of getting rid of Edwin through Neville, and, if the murder were in fact performed by himself under the influence of opium, and not by Neville as he imagined, he would then, as Forster suggests, denounce himself under the impression that he was denouncing Neville. And Dickens's skill would have been in leading us to suspect Jasper of having planned murder from the start, when in reality he had been indulging in fantasies about Rosa. Another



problem in the final opium den scene is what 'I never saw that before ... Look what a poor, mean, miserable thing it is!' refers to. The 'poor, mean, miserable thing' sounds like a reference to a lifeless body. If Jasper had been frequently rehearsing this scene, surely he would have had this vision before. If, however, his dreams had been turned into the channel of murder by the opium woman's 'Did you never ... try to call up something else for a change?' this could be taken as his first intimation that he himself has seen the dead body.

There are obvious difficulties in this interpretation - the dangerous journey, the fellow-traveller, the struggle and so on- but these could be explained away metaphorically. Edwin is the fellow-traveller who does not suspect the presence of a rival; the dangerous journey is Jasper's proposal to Rosa which requires careful management if he is not to slip and destroy himself;<sup>1</sup> the struggle and entreaty are Rosa's - power over Rosa is as great a delight to Jasper as the desire to evoke love in her: this is compatible with his behaviour towards her in the proposal scene and throughout the novel. The metaphorical nature of these remarks throws corresponding emphasis on the contrasting 'That must be real' (p.183) at the point where he suddenly sees, apparently for the first time, the body of the victim, the 'poor, mean, miserable thing' which he has in reality, though unconsciously, destroyed.

As with all other hypotheses surrounding 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood,' this can never be satisfactorily resolved.

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1. Jasper's remark here, 'Look down, look down! You see what lies at the bottom there?' (p.181) must be taken as a reference to his own possible destruction, not that of his victim; otherwise it renders the following 'I never saw that before' meaningless, if the latter refers, as it surely must, to the body of the victim.

If we reject the likelihood of an opium confession, the alternative seems to be some further provocation to incriminating action on Jasper's part. It has usually been assumed that such action would be related to the mystery of Edwin's disappearance on the previous Christmas Eve and would be in the nature of a trap set for Jasper. An alternative possibility is that Jasper might be led into a further attack on a new victim, Tartar. In spite of, even perhaps because of, Mr. Grewgious's elaborate precautions, it is conceivable that Jasper might be made aware of a new aspirant to Rosa's affections, assuming that the 'gritty state of things' is not prolonged until the closing Number. Jasper has already tried to remove two envied rivals, Edwin and Neville: is it likely that he would tamely submit to the appearance of a third? The fact that Rosa has refused him would not necessarily be a deterrent: there is no suggestion that she had ever encouraged him and his pursuit of his one idea seems to be of that maniacal nature which would persist regardless of encouragement. Given some development which would take Tartar to Cloisterham, the scene of the attack is conceivable - the Cathedral Tower, utilizing Tartar's known coolness with heights; and the time - the coming Christmas Eve. As for the Number, possibly Number X, the Christmas Number. This is a possible variation of the Tartar/Datchery theory.

The rest of the characters of Edwin Drood fall basically into the two groups of heroes/heroines and supporting rôles. Of the former we have, as in the previous novel, contrasting pairs, Rosa and Helena, Edwin and Neville, with Tartar and Mr. Crisparkle rather on the fringe, their feelings not yet avowed. Rosa, with her mixture of immaturity

and good sense, is cast in similar mould to Bella and earlier child-heroines. One of the reasons, perhaps, why many readers are more sympathetically disposed towards Rosa and Bella than towards their forerunners is that their respective lovers find fault with them, whereas, for example, in the case of Dora, David's bouts of exasperation are always swamped by the aura of youthful love with which he surrounds her. Helena is a more unusual heroine for Dickens, with her positive qualities and the likelihood of her playing an active rôle in the story's development. Was Dickens perhaps influenced by Wilkie Collins here and his leaning towards striking female characters, as in the Marian/Laura pairing of The Woman in White?<sup>1,2</sup>

Helena's prospective lover, Canon Crisparkle, is an interesting character. On his first appearance he seems to be cast for a rôle of rather light satirical comedy directed at the clerical hierarchy, with his grave corrections of Tope's grammar in deference to the Dean. However, the direct description of him pays genuine tribute to his good qualities - 'cheerful, kind, good-natured, social, contented, and boy-like ... Minor Canon and good man' - though still with emphasis on

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1. Wilkie Collins himself has an amusing note on the subject of paired heroines in 'A Petition to the Novel-Writers' (My Miscellanies, 1863): 'I know that it is a rule that, when two sisters are presented in a novel, one must be tall and dark, and the other short and light. I know that five feet eight of female flesh and blood, when accompanied by an olive complexion, black eyes, and raven hair, is synonymous with strong passions and an unfortunate destiny. I know that five feet nothing, golden ringlets, soft blue eyes, and a lily brow, cannot possibly be associated, by any well-constituted novelist, with anything but ringing laughter, arch innocence, and final matrimonial happiness.'
  2. As has frequently been pointed out, one of Helena's exploits, the disguise as a boy, borrows details from the notorious and topical case of Constance Kent, the child murderess, on whose case Wilkie Collins also draws in his presentation of Rosanna Spearman in The Moonstone. For details of the Kent case, see The Rebel Earl and Other Studies, William Roughead, W. Green and Son, Edinburgh 1926, pp. 51-2.
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his youthfulness (he is, in fact, 'within five years of forty', ch.vi) and his propensity for 'muscular Christianity'.<sup>1</sup> This impression is borne out in the domestic scene in the second Number (ch.vi) where we see the pride of the china shepherdess's heart shadow boxing before breakfast 'while his radiant features teemed with innocence, and soft-hearted benevolence beamed from his boxing-gloves'. A certain note of comedy is not, however, incompatible with Dickens's presentation of his heroes; 'My Sept!' is perhaps no more undignified an appellation than 'Trot'. The incongruity stems more from the contrast with the extreme dignity and seriousness of Helena. But as soon as the Minor Canon is shown in his rôle of 'Coach' of the young, particularly a young man so much in need of guidance as Neville, a subtle, though not unwarrantable, change is effected in the reader's feelings; as Crisparkle's <sup>e</sup>st<sup>r</sup>ling qualities appear in action, he seems to take on a greater dignity and maturity, even in his submission to ministrations from the herb-closet. He even makes a firmer plea on Neville's behalf to the Dean than one would have expected from their first exchange. This evoking of the reader's respect is achieved both through Crisparkle's own behaviour and through the deference and admiration, not merely of the impressionable Neville, but of his more powerful sister:

'I should not,' said Neville, pressing his hand upon his face, 'have needed so much as another minute, if you had been less patient with me, Mr. Crisparkle, less considerate of me, and less unpretendingly good and true. Oh, if in my childhood I had known such a guide!'

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1. *cf.* Dickens's speech at the University College Hospital dinner, 12th April 1864: 'holding, as I do, that muscular development of anything that is good is strong presumptive proof of soundness of condition'. K.J.Fielding, Speeches of Charles Dickens, Oxford 1960, p.326.

'Follow your guide, now, Neville,' murmured Helena, 'and follow him to Heaven!'

There was that in her tone which broke the good Minor Canon's voice, or it would have repudiated her exaltation of him ...

'Who but you, sir?' replied Helena. 'What is my influence, or my weak wisdom, compared with yours!' ...

She took the hand he offered her, and gratefully and almost reverently raised it to her lips.

'Tut!' said the Minor Canon, softly, 'I am much overpaid!'  
(Ch.x)

If this is, among other things, an incipient love scene, it is one without sentimentality or coyness. But I think to many readers the prospect will come as a surprise, in view of the Minor Canon's first appearance, though we have Helena's blushes in the beanstalk country to support the romantic interpretation.<sup>1</sup>

Neville is a fairly straightforward representation of a young man ill-treated in youth and resentful, articulately aware of his own shortcomings. His 'Oh, if in my childhood I had known such a guide!' may be compared with Steerforth's, 'I wish to God I had had a judicious father these last twenty years!' (ch.22), but there is none of Steerforth's casual selfishness in Neville, and it is likely that, if intended for survival, he would emerge strengthened in self-control by suffering and by the combined encouragement of his sister and his tutor. Edwin, likewise a young man with well-defined faults, would presumably emerge, if at all, sobered by experience. The sobering note is, indeed, present at his last appearance in his recognition of his own lack of earnestness and consequent loss of Rosa, in his

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1. For further comment on the characters of Helena and Crisparkle see ch. V. pp. 234-5.

nostalgic view of Cloisterham and his kindness to the opium woman, but whether this is intended as a premonition of the future or as a softening of our feelings towards him before his death, we have no means of knowing.

Tartar's minor rôle in the unfinished novel gives little opportunity for extended character development, but it seems likely that we have seen all essentials of this frank and vigorous nature in the first meeting.

It is not my intention to effect a roll-call of the remainder of the novel's characters, though this does not imply their lesser importance. In fact, such characteristically Dickens figures as Grewgious, Durdles and Deputy constitute a large part of the novel's appeal, helping to create the illusion of authentic and recognizable local background. Many writers have called attention to some or other of the topical elements and portraits from life, the most notable of the latter being Tope and Durdles,<sup>1</sup> and the events of the story have been pretty thoroughly established as taking place in the early 1840s.<sup>2</sup> The topography of Rochester has inevitably been closely scrutinized by these writers. Allusions topical to the date of writing have been detected in the speeches of Honeythunder and in the brief humorous account of Bazzard's dramatic circle, though the identity of Bazzard's original has not been satisfactorily settled. In addition to these

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1. See, for example, Robert Langton, Charles Dickens and Rochester, T. Oldroyd 1889; William R. Hughes, A Week's Tramp in Dickensland, Chapman and Hall 1891; Edwin Harris, John Jasper's Gatehouse, Mackays, Rochester 1931 and pamphlet The Rochester of Edwin Drood in the Duffield Collection.
  2. Percy T. Carden, The Murder of Edwin Drood, Cecil Palmer, London 1920, Appendix II.

fairly well-discussed topics, it seems likely that Durdles's solemn reference to his provision for Deputy as 'a sort of a - scheme of a - National Education' (ch.v), a line to the writing of which Dickens gave some thought,<sup>1</sup> has some bearing on the Educational debates prior to the 1870 Act, and possibly<sup>2</sup> also that the satirical presentation of the Dean at the end of chapter xvi - 'In point of fact, Mr. Crisparkle, keeping our hearts warm and our heads cool, we clergy need do nothing emphatically' - carries something more pointed than merely general satire. It will be remembered that in the preliminary survey of the novel's characters Dickens appeared to be intending for some prominence 'The Dean', 'Mrs. Dean' and 'Miss Dean'.<sup>2</sup> Deputy is one of those vividly realized street arab characters who appear to be rooted in real life and it has been pointed out that his 'Widdy widdy wen!' chant, far from being original to Dickens, is an only slightly altered variation of a verse used in a popular children's game.<sup>3</sup> Such details as these run as a kind of stiffening thread through the sustained 'mystery' atmosphere, contributing authenticity where the latter effects the necessary excitement and tension.

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1. MS shows alterations here; see p. 229.

2. See p. 212.

3. Professor Kathleen Tillotson has drawn my attention to this. See English Dialect Dictionary under 'Widdy-Widdy-Way'.

ii) John Jasper and his Relationship to other Dickens Characters

In Jasper's character and situation there are three main features, of which the second and third may be linked, the third being given greater prominence as the plot develops and in accordance with the plot's demands.

First, he occupies a position of respectability and trust, doing work for which he is apparently eminently suited, a situation which would generally be thought to be an enviable one. Edwin's remarks in chapter ii are a fair indication of the general view:

' ... your being so much respected as Lay Precentor, or Lay Clerk, or whatever you call it, of this Cathedral; your enjoying the reputation of having done such wonders with the choir; your choosing your society, and holding such an independent position in this queer old place ... '

Secondly, he hates this position and resents the assumption of his contentment in it. The minute Edwin starts to speak of his life as not being 'laid down to scale, and lined and dotted out for you, like a surveyor's plan' anguish overcomes him and he explains:

'I hate it. The cramped monotony of my existence grinds me away by the grain ... It [the cathedral service] often sounds to me quite devilish. I am so weary of it. The echoes of my own voice among the arches seem to mock me with my daily drudging round. No wretched monk who droned his life away in that gloomy place, before me, can have been more tired of it than I am. He could take for relief (and did take) to carving demons out of the stalls and seats and desks. What shall I do? Must I take to carving them out of my heart?'

'I thought you had so exactly found your niche in life ... '

'I know you thought so. They all think so.'<sup>1</sup>

Thirdly, Jasper is in love with Edwin's fiancée, Rosa. This, indeed, is presumably the hidden cause of his break-down here, a cause which he

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1. See p. 14 for Dickens's abhorrence of the mechanical way in which the Canterbury service was performed.



cannot bring himself openly to avow to Edwin. Edwin's comparison of his life and Jack's had its origin in his reflection on his own pre-determined engagement to Rosa: 'You can choose for yourself' refers specifically to one aspect of life, choosing a wife, precisely what Jack cannot do, though when Jack comments on this question of choosing, he makes it refer to his vocation: 'It's too late to find another now.' Far from being 'made for' his vocation, he must 'subdue' himself to it, which, as he remarks 'with a grave cheerfulness' - he has by this time regained control of his feelings - 'is much the same thing outwardly'.

The existing story offers no evidence as to the relative priority of these two causes for Jasper's rebelliousness against the conditions of his life: it is probable that the concluding portions of the novel would have developed, through Jasper's own confession, our knowledge of his earlier state. Without this evidence it can only be a matter for speculation whether falling in love with Rosa led Jasper to extend his feeling of hopelessness and discontent to a review of his whole life, or whether latent dissatisfaction with life in general was brought to a head and focussed in the new experience of one obviously impossible attainment. The fact that the love motive is given predominance as the novel progresses may be due to its obviously greater susceptibility of plot development. Jasper has a rival in love; as regards his career there is no such easy focus for jealousy, nor is the latter type of story, perhaps, capable of rousing such intensity of feeling. Similar feelings are involved in both cases: resentment against the existing state, aggravated by the knowledge that no one else would suspect grounds for discontent, and jealousy towards the person to whom life offers opportunities denied to

himself, in this case aggravated by close ties and personal feelings of affection towards the successful rival. In this latter respect the situation in Edwin Drood is unique and more complex and intense than in any preceding novel. The position in which the author places us with regard to Jasper and the surrounding characters leads us to a certain judgement, whether this is consciously acknowledged by Jasper or not, that the failure is due to something in Jasper himself, though at the same time our sympathies with him are stirred.

Edwin Drood is unique not only in the condition mentioned above, but, more strikingly so, in the prominence given to Jasper as the central character of interest. Preceding novels, however, reveal similar studies in dissatisfaction, in varying degrees of importance in the novel's total plan. The closest of these to Jasper, in feeling and situation, is Bradley Headstone in Our Mutual Friend, the novel nearest in time to Edwin Drood. It is interesting to remember here the praise accorded to the conception of Bradley Headstone in some contemporary reviews.<sup>1</sup>

Headstone, like Jasper, is a man who has apparently got on successfully, in life: he has risen from humble origins to a position of some respect, and gratitude for such advancement might, by outsiders, be considered due from him for such favourable experience.<sup>2</sup> Dickens, however, makes it perfectly clear that Headstone's life is a misery; and a misery partly for the same reason as is Jasper's existence - its deadly, mechanical

1. See p. 12.

2. C.F. the opium woman's remark to Jasper in chapter xxiii: 'But you got on in the world ...' If this is a reference to social advancement, not just to progress in the world of opium-smoking, it opens interesting speculations, which, however, are not developed elsewhere.

monotony. The difference between the two is that Jasper, with his beautiful singing and musical talents, his desire for colour which informs his opium dreams, is, we feel, capable of transcending the routine of his profession, if only the spirit within him were in harmony with his task: services in a cathedral such as Cloisterham's are a far cry from the daily routine of the board-school room, the outcome of a training such as Headstone's. Bradley Headstone himself is conceived as a dull, plodding character, his innate tendencies strengthened by the education he has received and is condemned to passing on to pupils, with rare exceptions as limited and imperceptive as he. We sympathize with Headstone for his very dullness which makes his struggles so crude: is it any less agony to be condemned by dullness than by any perhaps more attractive limitation? It may be that part of Headstone's wretchedness lies in the very cause assigned for gratitude: his having been developed so far that he is the more aware of his prison bars. Headstone is uneasily conscious of the precariousness of his new position, perpetually on the defensive lest he should somehow be found wanting:

There was a kind of settled trouble in the face. It was the face belonging to a naturally slow or inattentive intellect that had toiled hard to get what it had won, and that had to hold it now that it was gotten.<sup>1</sup>

Advancement in life has, for him, brought with it this attendant wretchedness, an unacknowledged awareness of possible inferiority. Yet dull as he is, some sparks remain in Headstone's sullen nature, some traces of

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1. Bk.II, ch.i. Note the seriousness of tone here, which invites the reader to pay attention and enter into Headstone's trouble, even if not to be personally drawn to him. Contrast, for example, the very different way in which George Eliot says: 'Mr. Casaubon was nervously conscious that he was expected to manifest a powerful mind'. Middlemarch, Book III, ch.29.

the 'animal', 'fiery (though smouldering)', overlaid by the outward decencies demanded of his profession, and this latent passion aggravates the uneasiness of his social bearing. All in all, Headstone is a potentially dangerous character; his habitual suppression is hardly maintained, and when the fire is applied he chafes against his bondage with less of subtlety but more immediate passion than Jasper. The spark that awakens the smouldering to an uncontrollable blaze is the advent of love, love with its attendant jealousy, in the persons of Lizzie Hexam and Eugene Wrayburn. As in the case of Jasper and Rosa, everything suggests that there is more than the figure of a rival to set the gulf between the two: as Rosa confides to Helena the fear and repulsion inspired in her by the thought and nearness of Jasper (ch.vii) so, on Headstone's first meeting with Lizzie, when he offers her his arm and she draws back, 'He looked round with a start, as if he thought she had detected something that repelled her, in the momentary touch.' (Bk.II, ch.i). Neither character finds it possible to accept or act on this suggestion: in each case the thwarted emotions are turned towards a more acceptable interpretation, concentrated on a rival who, it is believed, stands as a barrier and possesses advantages denied to the unsuccessful lover. Jasper feels the contrast between his humdrum existence and Edwin's position on the threshold of a new life - at least, so would his reactions to Edwin's remarks in the scene already referred to, and the means he chooses to rouse Neville's envy against Edwin in chapter viii, suggest:

'The world is all before him where to choose. A life of stirring work and interest, a life of change and excitement, a life of domestic ease and love! ... consider the contrast, Mr. Neville. You and I have no prospect of stirring work and interest, or of change and excitement, or of domestic ease and love. You and I have no prospect (unless you are more fortunate than I am, which may easily be), but the tedious, unchanging round of this dull place.'

The motive here is obvious: it is the turn the incitement takes that is significant. Edwin's casual manner of accepting his good fortune both in career and in love is clearly galling to Jasper who feels he would give so much for his opportunities.

Bradley Headstone's resentment of Eugene Wrayburn is both more openly expressed - he has no notion of dissembling his feelings, nor, presumably, any ability to do so - and more justifiable. Wrayburn has effortlessly all that Headstone struggles so hard and fruitlessly to achieve: all the marks of a gentleman which mechanical education cannot bring. Wrayburn is so insolently aware of his superiority and so cutting in his apparent unconsciousness of any need to conceal his feelings before one so animal and ludicrous that Headstone's passion flares until his whole being is filled with rage against the lawyer, rage whose very impotence adds further fuel: one cannot even be angry to advantage without being a gentleman. The meeting between them in Book II, chapter vi, arouses ambivalent feelings in the reader. Eugene is a prospective hero in the novel; his airy nature is one which evokes liking; his friend Mortimer shows great affection for him: Bradley Headstone, on the other hand, is sullen, narrow, repelling, invariably ill at ease, the one good point in his favour initially being his interest in Charley Hexam. And yet in this scene, though all the social

advantages go to Wrayburn and the schoolmaster departs 'with a consciously bad grace and stiff manner', no reader can fail to sympathize with Headstone's sufferings, the more intensely the clumsier their manifestation, under the light cruelty of Wrayburn with his contemptuous address of 'Schoolmaster':

Composedly smoking, he leaned an elbow on the chimneypiece, at the side of the fire, and looked at the schoolmaster. It was a cruel look, in its cold disdain of him, as a creature of no worth. The schoolmaster looked at him, and that, too, was a cruel look, though of the different kind, that it had a raging jealousy and fiery wrath in it ...

'In some high respects, Mr. Eugene Wrayburn,' said Bradley, answering him with pale and quivering lips, 'the natural feelings of my pupils are stronger than my teaching.'

'In most respects, I dare say,' replied Eugene, enjoying his cigar, 'though whether high or low is of no importance. You have my name very correctly. Pray what is yours?'

'It cannot concern you much to know, but - '

'True,' interposed Eugene, striking sharply and cutting him short at his mistake, 'it does not concern me at all to know. I can say Schoolmaster, which is a most respectable title. You are right, Schoolmaster.'

It was not the dullest part of this goad in its galling of Bradley Headstone, that he had made it himself in a moment of incautious anger. He tried to set his lips so as to prevent their quivering, but they quivered fast ...

'You have given yourself much trouble, Schoolmaster,' observed Eugene, blowing the feathery ash from his cigar. 'I hope it may prove remunerative.' ...

'I don't know, Mr. Wrayburn,' answered Bradley, with his passion rising, 'why you address me - '

'Don't you?' said Eugene. 'Then I won't.'

He said it so tauntingly in his perfect placidity, that the respectable right hand clutching the respectable hair-guard of the respectable watch would have wound it round his throat and strangled him with it. Not another word did Eugene deem it worth while to utter, but stood leaning his head upon his hand, smoking and looking imperturbably at the chafing Bradley Headstone with his clutching right hand, until Bradley was wellnigh mad.

It is a cruel scene, for Bradley is never seen other than to disadvantage, and one almost feels that it is Dickens, as well as Eugene, who is the tormentor. Eugene's conduct is inexcusable, yet we are deliberately invited to place ourselves outside Headstone's feelings and watch him suffer, as if he were a biological specimen subjected to an experiment in the cause of scientific observation. The impersonal use of the definite article instead of the possessive - 'the respectable right hand', 'the respectable hair-guard', 'the respectable watch' - reinforces this feeling of detachment, running counter to the pull of the natural sympathies roused for the sufferer.<sup>1</sup> The sense of being a curious spectator of Headstone's misery is maintained even in the moment when he most openly acknowledges his own natural disadvantages:

'... Oh, what a misfortune is mine,' cried Bradley, breaking off to wipe the starting perspiration from his face as he shook from head to foot, 'that I cannot so control myself as to appear a stronger creature than this, when a man who has not felt in all his life what I have felt in a day can so command himself!' He said it in a very agony, and even followed it with an errant motion of his hands as if he could have torn himself.

Eugene Wrayburn looked on at him, as if he found him beginning to be rather an entertaining study.

As Headstone, in the grip of his 'red and white heats of rage', leaves the scene, painfully conscious of his abjection, the seal is set on our divided feelings by Eugene's casually clever taunt:

'A curious monomaniac ... The man seems to believe that everybody was acquainted with his mother!'

- a remark in appallingly bad taste. Earlier in the scene we were directed to see Headstone as the one lacking in taste and the discriminating

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1. Cf. the use of 'the Jasper face' in ch.ii of Edwin Drood.

refinement that comes from culture:

The boyish weakness of this speech, combined with its great selfishness, made it a poor one indeed. And yet Bradley Headstone, used to the little audience of a school, and unused to the larger ways of men, showed a kind of exultation in it.

One cannot imagine such a treatment of, for example, Nicholas Nickleby in an encounter with Sir Mulberry Hawk, yet the offensiveness of Eugene in this scene is as flagrant as the callousness of the earlier villain. Nicholas, of course, is the hero and Bradley is not; Sir Mulberry is a villain and Eugene is not. But the striking point is that whereas in the earlier novels there is never any question of divided sympathies between hero and villain, here we are at least allowed some feeling for Headstone. He does behave badly, but under great provocation: his villainy is not innate but the product of natural inadequacy coupled with social disadvantage and unfeeling treatment. The division into black and white is no longer so clear-cut: the reader is made more aware of the underlying humanity even of those destined to be the villains of the story. It is noticeable that many of the commentators on Edwin Drood have written defensively of Jasper.

An exception to the above claim with regard to the later villains would seem to be necessary in the case of a work even nearer in time to Edwin Drood than is Our Mutual Friend. No Thoroughfare was the Christmas Number of All The Year Round for 1867, written in collaboration with Wilkie Collins. Mention has been made of possible plans for the dramatization of Edwin Drood.<sup>1</sup> In the case of No Thoroughfare the

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1. See p. 48.



dramatization was actually made, the details being confided to Collins in the absence of Dickens in America. The play was put on at the Adelphi Theatre under the management of Mr. Benjamin Webster, with Dickens's actor friend Charles Fechter in the rôle of Obenreizer, and was later produced in France as L'Abîme, again with Fechter in the rôle of the villain. Dickens's intense interest in the dramatized version is shown in his letters to Fechter and others - 'I never did so want to see a character played on the stage as I want to see you play Obenreizer' (February 24th)<sup>1</sup> - and in his suggested criticisms of the production. It is conceivable that the success of this play, which has obvious features in common with Drood, might have inclined him towards considering dramatization of the latter. Boucicault, whose name has been mentioned in this connexion, was apparently enthusiastic over the reception of No Thoroughfare, encouraging Collins and Fechter to look to a probably<sup>2</sup> success with it in America.<sup>2</sup> Dickens's tribute to Fechter's acting<sup>3</sup> - 'in the highest degree romantic ... fervour in his love-making ... passionate vehemence ... always united to a true artist's intelligence ...' - indicates those qualities which served him in the rôle of Obenreizer and would make him a suitable model for a dramatic conception of Jasper.

The main difference that strikes one on reading No Thoroughfare between the characters of John Jasper and Obenreizer is that the latter is an out-and-out villain, for whom no sympathy is sought. Yet this

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1. See also letter of May 22nd regarding the waterfall scene.
2. Dickens's letter to Fechter, February 24th.
3. Atlantic Monthly, August 1869, quoted here from The Works of Charles Dickens, Standard Edition, Volume XIX, pp.576-9.

reaction must be modified in view of Dickens's letter to Fields on January 15th, commenting on the stage version:

... Of course I knew that Fechter would tear himself to pieces rather than fall short, but I was not prepared for his contriving to get the pity and sympathy of the audience out of his passionate love for Marguerite.

The Obenreizer of the stage version is, in fact, a slightly softened conception. The similarities of situation of the two characters are notable: each is resentful of the favoured social position of a rival, each is jealous of the rival's success with a young girl, whose situation would appear to remove her from a possible love-relationship with himself. Jasper's ward is betrothed to Rosa; Marguerite is herself the ward of Obenreizer. The latter's motives for hating Vendale are thus tabulated in the narrative version of No Thoroughfare:<sup>1</sup>

He had always had instinctive movements in his breast against him; perhaps, because of that old sore of gentleman and peasant; perhaps, because of the openness of his nature; perhaps, because of his better looks; perhaps, because of his success with Marguerite; perhaps, on all those grounds, the two last not the least.

(Act III. In The Valley)

Even the one striking physical characteristic of Obenreizer is suggestive of Jasper:

... a certain nameless film would come over his eyes - apparently by the action of his own will - which would impenetrably veil, not only from those tellers of tales, but from his face at large, every expression save one of attention. It by no means followed that his attention should be wholly given to the person with whom he spoke, or even wholly bestowed on present sounds and objects. Rather, it was a comprehensive watchfulness of everything he had in his own mind, and everything that he knew to be, or suspected to be, in the minds of other men.

(Act II. New Characters on the Scene)

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1. The dramatized version is markedly inferior, missing what one would have thought to be obviously effective scenes.

This recalls, not so much the involuntary film which comes over Jasper's eyes in chapter ii, as his brooding watchfulness of Edwin - and of Rosa's portrait - in the same chapter, and of Edwin and Neville in chapter viii. The unsuspecting trust of the intended victim towards his ill-wisher is another common feature.

These similarities of situation naturally lead one to consider the possible parallels in plot. One parallel is, indeed, not hypothetical but actual: the use made by the villain in each case of drugs to make his victim drowsy. The situation in No Thoroughfare where Vendale sleepily imagines some hand stealing towards his breast pocket is repeated in Drood in the episode of Durdles and the keys (ch.xii). The setting for the attempted murders is vastly different - in No Thoroughfare the dramatic scene of the Swiss Alps in a snow-storm; though Obenreizer's sardonic repeated references to guiding Vendale to his 'journey's end', and the actual scene of the chasm's brink in which the final struggle takes place, remind one of Jasper's metaphorical journey with a fellow-traveller:

'A hazardous and perilous journey, over abysses where a slip would be destruction. Look down, look down! You see what lies at the bottom there?' (ch.xxiii)

The last confrontation between Obenreizer and Vendale, an effect which, surprisingly, was omitted from the stage version, rather militates against the hypothesis of a similar outcome for Edwin Drood three years later, when it would be somewhat in the nature of an anticlimax. Act III of No Thoroughfare (narrative version) ends with the dramatic tableau:

She broke from them all, and sank over him on his litter, with both her loving hands upon the heart that stood still.

The heart, however, has stood still only for theatrical purposes: in the later scene of Obenreizer's meeting with the Swiss notary in the inn, the latter's eyes continually turn towards a significant second door of the room, so frequently as to lead Obenreizer's suspicions to the notion of an eavesdropper - all this in order to lead to the dramatic throwing open of the door to reveal 'Vendale ... before the murderer, a man risen from the dead.'

No Thoroughfare is a melodramatic piece of work. Its comparative brevity (the usual two ordinary numbers of All The Year Round) would have allowed no great scope for character development - and Dickens is usually more melodramatic in short stories such as Hunted Down than in his novels - even had the plot not been further complicated by a mystery birth intrigue. It is in situation rather than in mood or attitudes that it resembles Edwin Drood. As regards character presentation Bradley Headstone is much nearer to Jasper than is Obenreizer.

Our Mutual Friend and No Thoroughfare are the only two works under consideration here in which feelings of rivalry and resentment leading to attempted murder are given major prominence. But in several of Dickens's later novels there are studies of similar motives at work and the interesting point is that in only one of these cases is the character in question a villain treated unsympathetically in the manner of earlier villains such as Jonas Chuzzlewit and Ralph Nickleby,<sup>1</sup> another pointer

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1. I specify these two, as there is at least one point in each novel where the reader feels that a major cause of these villains' hatred is consciousness of inferiority and disadvantage: in Martin Chuzzlewit, ch.xlvi, a reference to the occasion when Tom Pinch had knocked down Jonas, and in Nicholas Nickleby, ch.iii, when Ralph and Nicholas are face to face for the first time.

to Dickens's increasingly ambivalent, less 'black and white' attitude to character. Indeed in Great Expectations, the other novel of the last decade of Dickens's life, jealousy of a social superior and rival in love is felt both by the hero Pip, with whom we are meant to sympathize, towards Bently<sup>a</sup> Drummle, and, in turn, by the shadowy villain Orlick, towards Pip:

'How dared you to come betwixt me and a young woman I liked?  
... You was always in Old Orlick's way since ever you was a  
child ... You was favoured, and he was bullied and beat.'

(ch. liii)

This latter case, which does lead to attempted murder, is obviously intended to be seen as a very minor parallel to the major theme of Pip's uncertainty in life. A Tale of Two Cities, again a highly dramatic work, conceived while Dickens was acting in Wilkie Collins's The Frozen Deep, and itself given later popular dramatization as The Only Way, treats a different version of the favoured rival story, in which the ruined life is redeemed by self-sacrifice, and our feelings are much more obviously worked upon for Sidney Carton's tear-damped pillow than for the successful Darnay's sobriety and moral force. In this case, the emotions are drawn one way, the moral judgement the other: we are not meant to condone Carton's behaviour, that of

the man of good abilities and good emotions, incapable of their directed exercise, incapable of his own help and his own happiness, sensible of the blight on him, and resigning himself to let it eat him away ...

(Bk. II, ch.v)

but perhaps to draw a contrast with the patience and energy which have helped to recover Dr. Manette from an equally powerful blight:

He was now a very energetic man indeed, with great firmness of purpose, strength of resolution, and vigour of action.

(Bk. II, ch.x)

In the same way, in Edwin Drood, we may note a parallel in Jasper's disfavour between his reactions under disappointment and those, much earlier, of Mr. Grewgious, a man whose 'Angularity' -

Who could have told, by looking at Mr. Grewgious, whether he had ever known ambition or disappointment? (ch.xi) -

covers feelings of great delicacy and chivalry, the survivals of his steadfast romantic attachment.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Grewgious had known disappointments in his career, too; here, also, he accepted and made the best of his lot: and Dickens invites our respect:

The largest fidelity to a trust was the life-blood<sup>s</sup> of the man. There are sorts of life-blood that course more quickly, more gaily, more attractively; but there is no better sort in circulation. (ch.xi)

Against such a background is Jasper's desperation and yielding to be considered. It would be interesting to know what outcome in life Dickens had planned for those others with a grudge against existence - primarily Neville, whose fierce self-consciousness is tempered and balanced by his sister's independent self-command:

'Your sister has learnt how to govern what is proud in her nature. No doubt she has suffered deeply ... Another and weaker kind of pride might sink broken-hearted ...'

(ch.xvii)

and, in a minor, but possibly interesting rôle, Bazzard, of whose gloomy susceptibilities Mr. Grewgious is so careful. So many are the cases of present or past disappointment and grievance to be resolved in Edwin Drood.<sup>2</sup> This is one obvious pattern of character/grouping discernible in the novel.

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1. This is so obvious that it makes glaring the failure in taste of that continuation which allowed Grewgious to show a lover's feelings towards Rosa. See p.167.

2. Cf. a similar situation in Dombey and Son where Carker the Junior and Walter Gay were at one time considered as possible parallel characters. Noted in Dickens at Work, pp.98-9.

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Mention was made of the revulsion which both Jasper and Bradley Headstone rouse in the women they love. Dickens is deliberately making us feel some personal unpleasantness in the characters, not necessarily vicious but either unattractive or sinister. In the case of Jasper, this is accounted for, to the readers, in his opium scenes; in the case of Bradley Headstone, it seems to be gratuitous dislike on Dickens's part. Both are in the pitiful position of feeling deep emotion which cannot be returned. Twice before Dickens had made studies of a similar nature, both of them women, Rosa Dartle and Miss Wade, both victims of an 'unhappy temper', the former tormented by her deep love of Steerforth and awareness of his weakness, the latter so determined to feel the world's branding of her as an inferior as to pervert every natural emotion, a study of pathological jealousy and need for possession, in this case a character unable to accept and believe in the love which is offered her. I think most readers would agree that there is something melodramatic in the presentation of both these characters. With Miss Wade Dickens clearly had difficulties<sup>1</sup> and the device of giving her a chapter of written self-revelation is not entirely satisfactory, mainly because her perverted feelings become so blatant.<sup>2</sup> The more dramatic revelation of Rosa Dartle's position is more effective, though even here the curious intensity of her nature seems excessive in relation to her setting in the novel. Bradley Headstone is much more convincing, planted before us as he is in his dull respectability and struggling intellect: his reactions to Eugene are entirely credible.

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1. Forster, VIII, i.

2. Likewise, Little Dorrit is less convincing and attractive in her letters to Clennam (Book II, chs. iv and xi) than in her actions.

With Jasper, Dickens is obviously trying something very different; almost, one feels, taking the bull by the horns and presenting a wholly exotic character in keeping with the violence of his emotions. What most rouses interest in the unfinished novel is not just the plot outcome, but whether Dickens would have been able to present in the second part Jasper's unmasking, presumably his self-revelation, without falling into melodrama here.

The presentation of Bradley Headstone in the final scenes had not posed the same problem. Headstone's resentment of Eugene had already been made fully explicit to the reader: his few appearances in the chapters after his murder attempt concentrate on his dwelling on the manner of the crime and, to a lesser extent, his apprehensions of detection; there is no note of remorse, no further development of his feelings towards the victim - in his case a man towards whom his feelings of jealousy are undivided - and, of course, there is no confession scene - in this novel. The keynote of his last appearance is struck in Book IV, chapter vii, 'Better to be Abel than Cain':

Now, too, was he cursed with a state of mind more wearing and more wearisome than remorse. He had no remorse; but the evil-doer who can hold that avenger at bay, cannot escape the slower torture of incessantly doing the evil deed again and doing it more efficiently ... The state of that wretch who continually finds the weak spots in his own crime, and strives to strengthen them when it is unchangeable, is a state that aggravates the offence by doing the deed a thousand times instead of once;<sup>1</sup> but it is a state, too, that tauntingly visits the offence upon a sullen unrepentant nature with its heaviest punishment every time.

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1. Contrast Jasper's constant enacting of the crime in the opium den (ch.xxiii). The difference in Jasper's case is that he, on all occasions but the last, found relief in committing the murder in imagination, before he had fully made up his mind to it, a dangerous toying with fantasy that, presumably, eventually became reality.



Bradley toiled on, chained heavily to the idea of his hatred and his vengeance, and thinking how he might have satiated both in many better ways than the way he had taken. The instrument might have been better, the spot and the hour might have been better chosen. To batter a man down from behind in the dark, on the brink of a river, was well enough, but he ought to have been instantly disabled, whereas he had turned and seized his assailant; and so, to end it before chance help came, and to be rid of him, he had been hurriedly thrown backward into the river before the life was fully beaten out of him.<sup>1</sup> Now if it could be done again, it must not be so done. Supposing his head had been held down under water for a while. Supposing the first blow had been truer. Supposing he had been shot. Supposing he had been strangled. Suppose this way, that way, the other way. Suppose anything but getting unchained from the one idea, for that was inexorably impossible.

The Manuscript of Our Mutual Friend provides added witness of Dickens's concentration on this aspect of Headstone's torment. This chapter was the last of No.XVII, which was over-written, and deletions, of considerable length though not of substantial importance, were made of passages indicative of Headstone's mental state after the attempted murder. One of these, which had been intended to conclude the paragraph immediately following the passage: quoted above, merely reiterates the key ideas expressed there, in keeping with the Number Plan note for the chapter:

Pursue Bradley, and unrepentant state of mind<sup>2</sup>

The deleted passage runs:

He was neither sorry for having done it, nor pressingly afraid of being found out. His misery was, that he must think of it, must take himself to task for having done it ill, must incessantly reconstruct the scheme and re-do the deed.

Another, and much longer excision, occurring just before the final brief paragraph of the chapter referring to Riderhood's successful fishing

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1. As Eugene escaped, so might Edwin: but the argument in favour of Dickens's not using the same outcome twice is probably the stronger.
  2. See Ernest Boll, 'The Plotting of Our Mutual Friend', Mod.Phil. vol.42, No.2. November 1944, pp.96-122.

activities and thus clinching for the reader Headstone's impending doom, builds up a nightmare of feverish, monotonous but futile activity, a kind of wild parody of Headstone's daily schoolmastering life, with its key word, 'mechanical' (Book II, ch.i), through which the presence of the river, so powerful a symbol in Our Mutual Friend, runs like an inevitable fate:<sup>1</sup>

But he must be up and doing. He must be ever doing the deed again and again, better and better, with more and more of precaution, though never in a swifter way. His head had got to ache with the sound of blows; in their monotonous repetition they had begun to go to a horrid tune; he could vary the preliminaries and the attendant circumstances in doing the act again, but the act, if his mind had ever been able to change the manner of it, would be changed no more. The same blows without diminution of number or force, the same effect from the blows, the same slipping of his foot upon the grass, the same strained face fallen back and turned up to the moon, the same face drifting down the stream.

The river ran in his thoughts distractedly. Whatever he planned in correction of the weak details of his scheme that could never be recalled, the river ran through all. On his way to do the murder the river was always meeting him as if to keep him back. On his way back from doing the murder, the river ran before him as if to tell the tale. Lock ho! Lock! But in recalling the cry (he in his fancy lying on the bed in the Lock-house) it was the river itself that seemed to call out to be let through to outstrip him.<sup>2</sup>

The treatment of Bradley Headstone's end proves disappointing for anyone hoping to find there clues as to Dickens's intended treatment of Jasper. On many counts, Headstone is closer here to an earlier villain, Jonas Chuzzlewit, than either of these two is to Jasper: neither Headstone nor Chuzzlewit, it is explicitly stated, feels remorse,

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1. Cf. the atmospheric use of the waterfall planned by Dickens for the stage version of No Thoroughfare, Letter to Fechter, May 22nd 1868.
  2. Manuscript, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, quoted from The Text of 'Our Mutual Friend': A Study of the Variations between the Copy Text and the First Printed Edition, by F. X. Shea, S. J., being part of a Ph.D. thesis for the University of Minnesota, 1961.

whereas one assumes Jasper's feelings at least to be more complicated - and he had already realized the futility of his crime in its aim of banishing a rival, as early as chapter xv; moreover, in situation, Headstone and Chuzzlewit are brought before the reader immediately after their crimes (in each novel at the conclusion of the seventeenth ~~Number~~) when preoccupation with the deed would be the natural reaction, whereas the whole design of Drood demands a blank in the reader's knowledge at this stage. The greater mystery and complication of Jasper's feelings and situation, as well as his greater prominence in the novel, lead overwhelmingly to the conviction that, apart from the interest of plot unravelling, the author's intention would be to concentrate his art in the closing scenes on a dramatic self-revelation by Jasper which would make explicit the dichotomy which has from the start been implicit.

#### Chapter IV

##### i) Continuations, Conjecture, Critical Approaches

In spite of Chapman and Hall's vigorous disclaimer of any continuation of Edwin Drood, there were some who were quick to cash in on the opportunity offered by an unfinished novel by the country's most popular novelist; and thus began the long series of continuations, speculations and controversies, which has made Edwin Drood the target for detective, rather than literary criticism.

On the whole, the early versions consisted of either dramatizations, or attempts to finish the novel, in the spirit of the original; the later approach has been rather one of discussion of various problems raised by the novel's content, rendered more scholarly since the printing of the number plans and comment on the manuscript by W. Robertson Nicoll in 1912.

It is not my purpose here to discuss in detail this mass of commentary. The later contributions are easily accessible and are referred to by most writers on the subject. I shall raise briefly the major points at issue which these writers have discussed, without dealing exhaustively with individual works. The earlier major productions, those of the 1870s, I shall examine individually, not so much for their literary or critical value, but for the curious circumstances of their publication or their attitude to Dickens.

The earliest Drood offshoot was intended as neither continuation nor speculation; it was, in fact, inaugurated while Dickens was still alive, and took the form of an ingeniously ridiculous burlesque poking fun at

all the author considered the weaknesses of Dickens's manner, under the pretence of illustrating why American authors could not hope to reach the literary eminence of English ones. It does, therefore, in a very extreme way, come into the category of literary criticism, much as the Judy parody, 'Rude Dedwin', does.<sup>1</sup> The Cloven Foot by 'Orpheus C. Kerr' (said to be a pun on the phrase 'office-seeker'; the author's real name was R. H. Newell) first appeared in the pages of Punchinello, a comic weekly published in New York, from June 11th to November 5th 1870, under the title 'The Mystery of Mr. E. Drood'. A sample of it subsequently appeared in the Piccadilly Annual, published by John Camden Hotten, for 1870 (December) along with Fields' 'Some Memories of Charles Dickens', Bret Harte's poem and 'Hunted Down'. It was published in volume form in America with a new title, The Cloven Foot, but the old title was retained in England, Duffield claims, because Miss Braddon was at the time writing a novel called The Cloven Foot, but, in fact, Miss Braddon's novel was too late in date (1879) to have influenced this decision. According to Duffield, the English reprints omitted the explanatory page announcing it as an adaptation to American ways of a typically English novel, and it was scathingly denounced in England. It was obviously unfortunate for Newell that Dickens died when he did.

It must be borne in mind that the author's avowed purpose was to illustrate his contention that 'the notorious lack of the higher order of imaginative writing in this Country is due rather to the physical, social, and artistic crudity of the Country itself, than to its deficiency in that order of genius which has given to older lands their

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1. See p. 86.

greater poets, artists, and novelists'<sup>1</sup> and a glance at the chapter headings will indicate the standard and type of humour which he brings to bear to this end: ch.1) Daylight in the Morn - Dawnation in the English version; 2) A Dean, and a Chap or Two Also; 6) Insurance in Gospeller's Gulch (Philanthropy in Minor Canon Corner); 8) A Daggery Type of Foetalkraphy (Daggers Drawn) - a humour which is carried into the story in such details as the heroine's name, 'Flora Potts, of course called the Flowerpot'.<sup>2</sup> The opening paragraph,<sup>3</sup> a deliberately nonsensical jumble completely devoid of 'atmosphere', shows how biased Orpheus C. Kerr is:

The Cloven Foot opening paragraph:

A modern American Ritualistic Spire! How can the modern American Ritualistic Spire be here? The well-known tapering brown Spire, like a closed umbrella on end! How can that be here? There is no rusty rim of a shocking bad hat between the eye and that Spire in the real prospect. What is the rusty rim that now intervenes, and confuses the vision of at least one eye? It must be an intoxicated hat that wants to see, too. It is so, for ritualistic choirs strike up, acolytes swing censers dispensing the heavy odor of punch, and the ritualistic rector and his gaudily robed assistants in alb, chasuble, maniple and tunicle, intone a Nux Vomica in gorgeous procession. Then came twenty young clergymen in stoles and bivettas, (sic) running after twenty marriageable young ladies of the congregation who have sent them worked slippers. Then followed ten thousand black monkeys swarming all over everybody and up and down everything, chattering like fiends. Still the Ritualistic Spire keeps turning up in impossible places, and still the intervening rusty rim of a hat inexplicably clouds one eye. There dawns a sensation as of writhing grim figures of snakes in one's boots, and the intervening rusty rim of the hat that was not in the original prospect takes a snake-like - but stay! Is this the rim of my own hat tumbled all awry? I' mushbe! A few reflective moments, not unrelieved by hiccups, must be d'voted to co-shid-ERATION of th' posh'bil'ty.

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1. Apology, p.10. (The references are taken from the American publication in volume form, 1870.)
  2. P.36, Orpheus C. Kerr was not the only critic who took exception to 'little Rosebud'. Cf. p. 87, Judy's Poppitt'.
  3. Again, compare the mangling of this in Judy.
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Does Kerr expect us to believe that Americans have never heard of the East, that there is no opium in America? His Jasper, Mr. Bumstead, is a crudely drawn, foolish alcoholic, his Edwin a boy of fourteen, his Rosa an arch monstrosity, more like a juvenile Miss La Creevy or Lavvy Wilfer than Dickens's Rosa, and his Sapsea (Sweeney) a judge, that being the American equivalent of auctioneer - one who sells to the highest bidder. Yet is all this perhaps no more overdrawn than the American scenes of Martin Chuzzlewit? There are occasional indications, too, that he can catch something of Dickens's style and the rhythm of his sentences, but this soon tails off, and the material is so guyed as to jettison all flavour of the original. Sometimes it is Dickens who is the target, sometimes England, sometimes America, whatever will give the most wildly ridiculous burlesque. The ring becomes a stay-lace, with which Rosa's mother laced herself to death, Helena is Magnolia Pendragon,<sup>1</sup> an overwhelmingly boring blue-stocking, and Tartar, the gloomy editor of a comic paper, attempts at the end a joint suicide with Mr. Bumstead, who, characteristically, has not murdered, but literally mislaid Edwin, along with his beloved umbrella, in a vault, in one of his drunken stupors, and only remembers this when led by Mr. Tracey Clews, (Datchery/Bazzard) to re-enact the scene, an idea which Mr. Clews gleaned from 'one of the greatest of English writers --- in his very last work'.<sup>2</sup>

Two characteristics of Dickens Mr. Kerr feels to merit special attack - his use of coincidence and the inordinate proportion of outdoor exercise which his novel contains. It is to underline this latter point that he alters Tartar's delightful river trip to a depressing walk - at another

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1. An impressive sounding name, but not strikingly over grandiloquent compared with 'Olympia Heyridge' which Dickens himself at one time considered. See p. 234.

2. pp. 251-2.

point in the novel a footnote confides to us that the most difficult part of the original to adapt to American practice was the 'truly extraordinary amount of solitary sauntering, social strolling, confidential confabulating, even<sup>ing</sup> rambling, and general lingering, in the open air'<sup>1</sup> - and the same incident allows him to expose a structural artifice in the original:

Ordinary readers, while admiring the heavy humor of this unexpected open-air episode, may wonder what on earth it has to do with the Story; but the cultivated few, understanding the ingenious mechanics of novel-writing, will appreciate it as a most skilful and happy device to cover the interval between the hiring of Mrs. Skammerhorn's room, and the occupation thereof by Flora and her late teacher - another instance of what our profoundly critical American journals call 'artistic elaboration'.<sup>2</sup>

The first appearance of Tartar, too, provides the opportunity to expose the weakness of Dickens's dependence on coincidence and to gibe at those over-enthusiastic critics who rush to acclaim anything from the master's pen:

And here we have an example of that difference between novels and real life which has been illustrated more than once before in this conscientious American Adaptation of what all our profoundly critical native journals pronounce the 'most elaborately artistic work' of the grandest of English novelists. In an equivalent situation of real life, Mr. Dibble's [Grewgious's] quandary would not have been easily relieved; but, by the magic of artistic fiction, the particular kind of extemporized character absolutely necessary to help him and the novel continuously along was at that moment coming up the stairs of the hotel.<sup>3</sup>

One does not have to look far for the weakness in this specious and apparently shrewd criticism: who but the novelist determined Mr. Grewgious's quandary? One could hardly expect a novelist to oblige the critics by

1. p.148.

2. pp. 235-7.

3. pp.221-2. According to Mackenzie, however, op.cit., p.308, 'The general opinion on the portion of The Mystery of Edwin Drood already published, is not overpoweringly favorable.'



inventing characters to whom he could assign no place in the novel's development. The timing can be criticized, but that is not quite the stand that Mr. Kerr takes. The footnote to this page reiterates the denial already made with reference to the Datchery chapter, which in Dickens Kerr found 'perhaps the least felicitous page of fiction ever penned by the great novelist',<sup>1</sup> that The Cloven Foot was in any way specifically designed as a burlesque or caricature of the original!

The first part of the prefatory Apology to The Cloven Foot had been critical in general terms of Dickens's unfinished novel, which Orpheus C. Kerr considered fell far below the author's usual standard and in which he found signs of strain - 'a revelation of the tired Worker in the Work never to be finished':

The Story, opening with an elaboration of masterly purpose in which the strength of intense concentration for a moment counterfeits the strength of spontaneity, soon halts with the halting power of the Story-teller so near his rest; then turns intractable and prone to break beneath the relaxing hand uncertain of its former cunning ... The half of the novel which we have, is unmistakable evidence that another half could not possibly have formed a whole in any way equal to the standard which the author's previous triumphs had erected for himself. To read it critically, is to believe readily the current report, that its writer regarded it with peculiar uneasiness, as a task in which he was anything but confident of artistic success, and that, after committing its first monthly numbers to the press, he expressed to several<sup>2</sup> friends a fear that it might injure his literary reputation.

More particularly, Kerr felt that this type of premeditated story and central character was unsuitable for the spontaneity of Dickens's genius, and that he showed lack of facility in building up the necessary characteristics of Jasper:

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1. p.197.

2. pp.7-9. Cf. pp.11-31 above. So easily does rumour grow.

The art of Dickens, like that of all great genius, comes by the immediate inspiration of his unpremeditated sympathy with what, to others, might seem the most unlikely of human subjects; and it becomes a mere forced and lifeless imitation of itself, when, as in this case, anticipated and pledged for a deliberately complicated plot and what is called a psychological study of abnormal character. Mr. Jasper, the central personage of the Mystery, is an unwholesome monstrosity ... and, from his first appearance in the narrative, there is an overwrought laboriousness of mystification about him which, in illustration of extremes meeting, has very soon the awkward effect of making him no mystery at all. The design of representing a man with a dual existence, in one phase of which he intends to, and thinks he does,<sup>1</sup> commit murder, while in the other he confounds the deed and doer with a personality distinct from his own, is kept so nervously apparent at the beginning, as a justification of the plotted dénouement, (sic) that any reader fairly skilled in the necessary artistic relations of one part of a story to another, must derive therefrom a premature knowledge of what the designer supposably wishes to conceal for the time being. The author could scarcely have been without some presentiment of this likelihood, while striving to manipulate an artificial type of character so wholly unnatural to his wholesome, straightforward genius; and the depressing effect upon himself is plainly to be seen, not more in further spasmodic excesses of shade, than in the falsity of his unequalled Humor to itself, in such a mechanical 'side light' as Mr. Sapsea.<sup>2</sup>

There were, in the 1870s, two audacious attempts to pass off as 'authentic' continuations of The Mystery of Edwin Drood. The first of these, John Jasper's Secret, originally appeared, anonymously, in the American weekly, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, from April 29th to September 2nd 1871. The first part carried with it, for the benefit of uninformed

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1. Note that Orpheus C. Kerr aligns himself with those who think that Edwin escaped.
  2. pp.9-10.

readers, a Supplement, condensing Dickens's half of the story, six monthly parts, into eight pages. It subsequently appeared, also anonymously, in the London weekly, Chimney Corner, from August 19th to December 16th 1871.<sup>1</sup>

The first instalment, in Frank Leslie's Illustrated, introduced the sequel as 'by English Writers', and the Preface, presumably by the authors themselves, also contained the implication of English origin and furthermore of acquaintanceship with Dickens, without, however, claiming this outright. This may have been sheer ingenuousness on the authors' part, an expression of a genuine feeling, not unusual with respect to Dickens, of loving familiarity with the author through his works - but one wonders. The tone certainly either misled later publishers or opened the gate for deliberate misrepresentation. The Preface, in effect an explanation of how the continuation came to be written, reminded readers of the speculations as to the possibility of a sequel after Dickens's death, and the subsequent disappointment when it was known that no material for such a sequel existed. But, claimed the authors, Dickens had not been entirely reticent, and had 'unwittingly' supplied far more hints than he would probably have believed. The following extract shows clearly enough the general gist:

All these, with many more particulars, laboriously but lovingly procured, have fallen into the hands of the writers of this concluding story, who believe that they are conveying a benefit as well as a pleasure to the world in setting partially at rest the thousands of speculations to which the non-explanation of the 'Mystery' has given rise. They have written in the fullest love and admiration of the unfinished original work, as well as of the great novelist who so suddenly laid down his

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1. It had been announced on February 25th to appear the following month, on March 25th, but for some reason publication was delayed. This is perhaps the reason why some authorities give Chimney Corner as the original publisher.

wonderful pen, to the grief of all lands and all time; they have carried out, however feebly, what they have fully traced and identified as the intention of the writer, every intrinsic and extrinsic fact and hint being carefully considered. Thus they make no apology, because they believe themselves to have been really offering homage to a great name in faithfully gathering up materials, and completing, it may be unskilfully, what its bearer left merely a brilliant fragment. That they have failed to sustain the delicate shades of character of the actors in the original story, only to be imparted by the one, or to gem the conversation of those characters with that irresistible oddity of blended wit and pathos for which that one was unequalled in the age or the language - these defects no one can know more profoundly than the writers themselves; and for these they make the only apology connected with the affair: they have done their best.

No close imitation of the style of MR. DICKENS has been attempted, as it would have been, had there been any intention of foisting a pretence upon the public.<sup>1</sup> If something distantly approaching his manner has been frequently assumed, a sufficient explanation will be found in the atmosphere which necessarily surrounded those who have devoted months to the studies indispensable to their task, and in the anxiety naturally felt to make the contrast between the two works as little as possible apparent to the non-critical reader.

Since a large portion of this story was written, a new motive for its completion has been supplied (had one been wanting) in two or three dramatic 'continuations' and 'conclusions' of the original story, made or commenced by writers in America, where MR. DICKENS is well known to have had a host of readers and admirers. In these, so far as knowledge of them has reached the writers of this concluding story, it is not too much to say that the American entrepreneurs have principally shown the absence of their alleged national characteristic of keenness, by falling into the delicate traps of pretence in plot and action, so skilfully set, in the earlier portions of Edwin Drood, by the writer who mystified the whole body of readers through a long portion of the career of the Golden Dustman, in Our Mutual Friend.

Apparently there were four early editions of John Jasper's Secret, two in volume form, two in eight monthly parts running from October 1871 to May 1872, all published by Peterson of Philadelphia, two in England, two

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1. Why this protest at all, one wonders. Why not, then, a straightforward avowal of authorship?

in America.<sup>1</sup> According to a letter of November 13th 1926, to Howard Duffield from James B. Russell, of 40 Middlesex Street, Lowell, Mass., of these four editions the American monthly parts one, and that alone, was ascribed to Henry Morford and wife: the other three were anonymous; but, says Duffield, in a footnote to a pamphlet<sup>2</sup> on this subject in the Duffield Collection, signed 'A Dickensian', 'No confirmation of this statement can be discovered'. He was obviously unable to obtain a copy of the edition under dispute. In 1878 a French edition of John Jasper's Secret, published by E. Dentu and called Le Crime de Jasper, ascribed the authorship to 'Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins'. This was the work which elicited Collins's outraged denial of any connexion with a continuation to Edwin Drood. His letter to Georgina on the subject, March 18th 1879, is quoted by Nuel Pharr Davis:<sup>3</sup>

... I am obliged to worry you with my affairs. I am bringing an action against the man who has written (or translated) a conclusion to Edwin Drood, and put my name to the published French book, with Dickens's. It is an outrage offered to Dickens's reputation to associate his great name with rubbish which is utterly unworthy of it - setting my own injury out of the question. The formal declaration which I enclose may be wanted at the trial. If you feel the slightest hesitation about signing it, tear it up and say nothing about it. If not, you will be doing me a kindness, if you let me have it back at your earliest convenience.

I ought perhaps to add that the only object of the action is to force the man to declare, by public advertisement, that I have never written a conclusion to Edwin Drood and to take my name off the title of the book ...

That Georgina supported Collins in his protect<sup>5</sup> is indicated by a subsequent

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1. According to Duffield, the English monthly parts version commands a higher price in the auction room than Edwin Drood itself. His collection contains a Heffers' catalogue, cat.337, dated in pencil 1930, citing the price for it as £47. 10s.
  2. The Case for Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens, Jnr., Authors of 'John Jasper's Secret'.
  3. Op.cit. p.290. Duffield had been unable to find any conclusive evidence of Collins's denial.

letter (March 28th) from Collins to Frederic Chapman, which is preserved inside the British Museum's copy of the novel:

Miss Hogarth agrees with me that the book which I send to you with this note ought to be seen by your firm.

The person responsible for the fraudulent use made of Dickens's name and of mine is one Bernard Derosne - employed as a translator. I have never written a line of the work attributed to me, and I am bringing an action against Derosne in Paris which will be probably decided in two or three days' time.

The agent (and friend) who is managing the matter for me in Paris has recently compared the French book with Edwin Drood - and finds that there is not even a pretence of translating Dickens's uncompleted story. His name also has been used to sell a book which contains nothing of his writing.

I should add that M. Dentu (the publisher) has undertaken to remove my name from the title-page and cover of Le Crime de Jasper.

This would seem to have been decisive enough, but it was not the end of the story. Twenty years later the ascription was being made to Wilkie Collins<sup>and</sup>, not Dickens himself, but his son. In 1898, 1901 and 1905 R. F. Fenno and Company of New York published three editions of John Jasper's Secret, the first two of which were certainly attributed to Charles Dickens junior and Wilkie Collins. Was this attribution, one wonders, in good faith, or was it deliberately made at an opportune moment when neither writer was alive to disprove it?<sup>1</sup> With regard to the third edition, the pamphlet<sup>^</sup>/writer seems unable to make up his mind <sup>^</sup> and he is at variance here with the letter from Russell. According to the pamphlet, the third edition, 1905, had added on the fly-leaf 'Formerly attributed to Henry Morford and Wife', but the back of the book read Collins. His use of 'but' here to introduce a fact one would

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1. Collins died in 1889, Charles Dickens junior in 1896. Morford had died in 1881.

expect in the circumstances indicates that the writer has got his facts mixed, a surmise which is borne out by the letter which asserts that the 1905 edition on the fly-leaf was said to be by 'Henry Morford - formerly attributed to Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens Junior', but that on the back was 'Wilkie Collins'. It sounds, then, as if by 1905 Morford was established as the author, in spite of the English tone of the Preface included in all seven editions. Why the Morfords had not claimed the book as their own earlier, say in 1878, is difficult to explain, as they were apparently anxious to take the credit for it later.<sup>1</sup> A note from H. Snowden Ward in Notes and Queries on April 23rd 1904<sup>2</sup> stated, apparently on Mrs. Morford's authority, that she had arranged with Fenno and Company that her husband's name should appear on any new edition. According to this writer, some intermediate publisher had stepped in between Peterson and Fenno, and put the names of Charles Dickens junior and Wilkie Collins on the title-page after they and the real author were dead. This may be a mistaken recollection of the 1878 French edition, but unless Collins's denial had received no publicity, there seems to have been some wilful persistence in error on the part of the publishers. Henry Morford and his wife had been in England for several months in the summer of 1871, living in London and visiting Rochester - so far their Prefect was genuine.<sup>3</sup> ? Prefec

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1. A Texan by the name of Edmond Perret wrote to Duffield on April 12th 1931 to inform him that he was the possessor of an autographed presentation copy of the 1901 edition with the erroneous title-plate assigning authorship to Collins and Charles Dickens junior, signed by Morford and his wife; though how this could be, if Morford died in 1881, as Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography claims, he does not explain. Possibly his copy was signed by Mrs. Morford who seems to have outlived her husband.
  2. January-June 1904, pp.331-2.
  3. Henry Morford, an American journalist who travelled frequently in Europe, also wrote The Rest of Don Juan in 1846. Appleton, op.cit.
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And now what of John Jasper's Secret itself? The first, and most lasting, impression is of lack of immediacy - too many generalizations, too great a fondness for wordy, ornate phraseology, coming between the reader and the characters depicted. This is particularly noticeable with regard to Jasper - the writers conscientiously endeavour to take us into Jasper's mind and make us share his apprehensions, but it all seems to be happening at such a remove from the character we knew that Dickens's Jasper disappears from view in a mist of metaphysical verbiage. At least this shows us what Dickens's Jasper was not: particularly if he had writing for the stage in mind, Dickens knew what he was about when he was translating Jasper's probable inner thoughts and feelings in terms of outward physical reaction. We may know as much of Jasper by this means and by our own intuition as by any amount of explanation.<sup>1</sup> And this leads to a second characteristic of John Jasper's Secret: the writers' inability to leave anything - incident, joke, explanation - to the reader's imagination. To a certain extent this had been a characteristic of early Dickens, particularly in respect of jokes, but his style had undergone a certain pruning and restraint in this respect as his skill as a novelist and presumably his appreciation of his readers' reactions developed, though that he was still criticized for this is shown by the irritation with which the Vanity Fair reviewer seized on an example in Edwin Drood - that of Mrs. Crisparkle and the china shepherdess.<sup>2</sup> It is a characteristic, too, of Wilkie Collins, almost always far more

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1. In the same way, the poster advertising the Drood play, see p.49, defines by comparison the gulf between its melodrama and Edwin Drood's restraint.

2. See p.85.



prone than Dickens to underestimate the mental capacity of his readers, and, in respect of this particular habit in the authors of John Jasper's Secret, one could not deny the authorship to Collins.<sup>1</sup>

A third characteristic is one which besets many of the writers who try to write at reasonable length a second half to Dickens's novel; namely, the inability to do so without opening out fresh intrigues and introducing further characters extraneous to the concentrated plot line. Again, admittedly, this was an early characteristic of Dickens (though in relation to *Datchery* it has been repeatedly pointed out that Dickens rarely introduced a new character in the second half of a novel) but it seems out of keeping in this novel with its limited cast, scene and action,<sup>2</sup> and it dissipates what was in the original a concentrated interest, while revealing the paucity of the writers' invention and their inability to proceed along the lines laid down by the original author.

Such exotic elements as Little Crawshe with his peculiar deformity and the 'bandog' vision are an intrusion of foreign elements into this setting, though the former is not at all an unlikely inhabitant of a Wilkie Collins story, and the writers of John Jasper's Secret have certainly not given more licence to their development than have some later commentators.<sup>3</sup> With all this on the debit side, John Jasper's

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1. Even the turn of phrase is somehow reminiscent on occasions of Collins, as, for example, in: 'Facts ascertained; immediate results given; after-consequences of the encounter unknown. And still not all even of the immediate results as yet indicated.' p.21, and in this particular form of non-sentence: 'She has half a suspicion ... This thought, not for long, fortunately; for the very next words of the other dispel it ...' p.23, London publication 1872, from No.342 Strand.
  2. See pp.114 et seq. for critical discussion of Edwin Drood.
  3. See below, pp.183-4 for reference to the Thuggee theories.

Secret does occasionally show a flash of humour, or some more serious feeling, not unworthy in a sequel to Edwin Drood - for example in a pun at the expense of Sapsea's pomposity, a droll reference to Mr. Grewgious's wistful look at the piano, a passage of arms between the Billickin and Miss Twinkleton, or in the 'Thunders of Doom' chapter, with its cathedral setting, its livid storm effects, and its telling use of the lines in the Creed: 'From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead', to the sound of breaking glass and organ music, pealing out over the white, awed faces of the congregation. The final survey of the characters, 'Tying the Threads', evokes some feeling, for example for Durdles and his sculptured head, and sustains both the rhythm of the sentences and the appropriateness of the fates dealt out in a manner not altogether unworthy of Dickens, but it is true to say on the whole that even where the 'form' of the original is caught, the sentiment is perceptibly coarsened and the expression less subtle, so that the authors inevitably either overdo, or lose the feeling of the original characters.<sup>1</sup>

The second of these 'authentic' continuations far outstripped John Jasper's Secret in the audacity of its claim - being nothing less than an attempt to foist off on the public a completion by Dickens himself, in spirit. The Mystery of Edwin Drood Complete By Charles

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1. For example, to make Grewgious contemplate, even while accepting the impossibility of, marriage with Rosa seems a false move, as does Rosa's designating of herself as 'a poor little chit' p.138.

Dickens, published by T. P. James at Brattleborough, Vermont towards the end of 1873, soon, no doubt, became, as a subsequent (1874) cover proclaimed, 'The Novel of the Season'. It was later denounced by Charles Dickens the younger as a 'disgraceful and impudent American imposture',<sup>1</sup> by a young man fraudulently posing as an illiterate mechanic; but A. Conan Doyle, among others, seems to have taken it more seriously, along with two other works of the same species from the spirit pens of Oscar Wilde and Jack London.<sup>2</sup> A work published in 1878, Rifts in the Veil,<sup>3</sup> contains a chapter entitled 'An Alleged Post-Mortem Work by Charles Dickens' which gives details of the 'Spirit Pen' Drood, mainly culled from American newspapers. Apparently Dickens told the writer that he would benefit financially from the work, and gave him advice as to procuring a copyright and writing to Sampson Low in England, who would probably 'be glad to negotiate for advance sheets'. He also wrote him encouraging little notes from time to time, for example, 'You have no idea how much interest this matter is exciting here among the hosts by whom I am surrounded. This is only the beginning of what is to come years hence.'<sup>4</sup> According to this article, the writer, James himself, was a very ordinary, uneducated man, a printing office foreman at the Vermont Record and Farmer, and this would seem in keeping with the product of his pen, a not altogether unskilful, but far from

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1. 1923 Introduction to Edwin Drood, p.xiii.
  2. 'The Alleged Posthumous Writings of Great Authors', Bookman, December 1927. A newspaper cutting preserved inside the 'Spirit Pen' copy at Dickens House refers to an address by Conan Doyle on 'Spiritualism and Bolshevism' reporting a séance at which Boz said: 'Edwin is alive and Crisparkle is hiding him'.
  3. Rifts in the Veil, A Collection of Inspirational Poems and Essays Given Through Various Forms of Mediumship, published by W.H.Harrison, 38 Gt. Russell Street, 1878.
  4. P.37.

sophisticated imitation of Dickens. Some of it that is bad is bad in Dickens's vein, only more so: one would not expect Dickens to produce anything quite so 'little Nell-ish' as Bessie, Jasper's bastard, particularly at this stage of his career; there is a noticeably fair<sup>i</sup>ly story/pantomime effect in places, for example when Rosa goes out to walk, unprotected ... 'Poor Rosa! Where is Mr. Grewgious, with his words of counsel ...?' and the episode of Bessie's dream of her mother and herself in the garden, the beautiful fruit, and the man with black eyes parting the branches and seizing the foolish mother, to the accompaniment of her warning cry, 'Child, beware of gaudy baubles; I trusted, was deceived, and now behold my fate!' (ch.xxiii, p.238) comes straight from the blackest and whitest melodrama. Again is shown what an unskilful writer would make of Dickens, how far he himself transmutes the basic material of his work. Jasper, too, is sheer melodrama villain, as soon as the writer tries to take us into his thoughts, with his stilted outcries against 'that black-skinned dog' who came in his way when 'success would have crowned my efforts', and made him 'the miserable man I am to-day!' (ch. xxvii, p.274). This, of course, would be the part of the novel difficult to get across, and again one feels that Dickens was perhaps wise and knew what he was doing, within his own limitations, when he translated so much of Jasper's inner feeling into outward behaviour. Acting too conscientiously on a hint from Dickens (Edwin Drood chapter xv), the spirit pen again shows his lack of literary subtlety by allowing himself too many climaxes with Jasper falling insensible to the ground, none of which climaxes he is able to work up to anything effective, and we are far indeed from the precincts

of Cloisterham when he comes to Datchery's adventures on a cannibal island! An occasional hint from Dickens has been acted on more successfully, notably on the lighter side, such as Durdles' remark that he heard a noise from the Cathedral Tower and looked up, 'with a deal of emphasis on the last word, as meaning that most people would have looked down' (ch.xxiv, p.241), and the description of Fopperty Padler as a man of so mixed a countenance that even a skilled physiognomist would have been hard put to it to know his true character might have been borrowed from the pages of Dickens. But on the whole, one feels that Dickens's spirit was not well served. The story ends with Jasper going mad at an interview with the dying Bessie, and confined to a private asylum from which he breaks out the following Christmas Eve and is found on Christmas morning dead on her grave, shrouded in snow, whose purity might wash away even his sins. Perhaps one should note that in this version, purporting to come from Dickens himself, Edwin survives, to marry Rosa.

The one straightforward continuation in this early group under discussion came in 1878 from the pen of Gillan Vase (Elizabeth Newton).<sup>1</sup> This is a much 'softer' version than the others, avoiding the exotic 'opium-den side' of the story, presumably because this was not the writer's forte, but doing quite well with the less dark elements, albeit blurring the directness through over <sup>A</sup>sentimentality and resorting, as do most of

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1. Gillan Vase, A Great Mystery Solved, Remington and Co., London 1878.

them, to padding to fill out the story. Again one sees the difficulty for any writer in taking up the characters of another; little flexibility is possible as the continuer did not originally think up these creations for himself and he must show that he is able to write in character. However, Gillan Vase had studied her material well, and although her innovations such as the introduction of the bricklayer (vol.2, ch.2) are too episodic for Edwin Drood, elsewhere, when she is merely building on an already existent Dickens character, she is able to invent both with consistency and propriety. Her more attractive humorous touches include a picture of Miss Twinkleton going to call on Mr. Sapsea, and spending ten minutes bobbing backwards and forwards on the doorstep, alternately stepping<sup>in</sup> and and then curtsying herself out again in a re-accession of modesty (vol.2, ch.4, p.58) and Deputy gloatingly catechizing Datchery about the habits of 'ghostesses' with 'holes for hies' and 'Do you think the worms would creep hin, and the worms would creep hout, Dick?'<sup>1</sup> Gillan Vase catches something, too, of the more romantic vein of the bean-stalk country (Edwin Drood, ch.xxi) as the approaching figure of Tartar mingles, in the eyes of Rosa, between waking and sleeping on the shore, with her vision of the figure-head of his yacht:

Mr. Tartar! who from head and upper part, came into sudden possession of a body and legs, in a manner which would have been miraculous out of the land of dreams, and which startled Rosa, not a little, even there; for she was looking now with her eyes wide open - her hat fallen off, and her hair dishevelled - right into the blue orbs of the sea-lieutenant.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Vol.2, ch.7, p.137. Mrs. Crisparkle's assertion of superiority over her son in interpreting Rosa's probable feelings (vol.2, ch.10, p.201) on the grounds that she has been a girl herself, 'and she presumed that he would not venture to assert that he had ever been one, or would hardly expect (sarcastically) to be believed if he did' is quite Dickensian, too. 2. Vol.1, ch.11, p.243.

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But Tartar is not destined for Rosa in this version. Sentiment impels the author to bring Rosa and Edwin together again, both somewhat chastened, after Rosa, her looks gone through illness, has done her best, in true Dickensian-heroine fashion, to reconcile herself to an old maid's future. Sentiment has affected the conception of Jasper, too, at one point, inspiring the by no means ineffective scene in which he dreams himself back into his innocence and hears Eddy calling him, only to awake to the reality of his present guilt.<sup>1</sup> The scene in which Jasper leaps into the river with Rosa (vol.2, ch.14, pp.294-5) - neatly contrived to fit in other elements of the story, such as Crisparkle's swimming prowess and reminiscence of her mother's fate - she manages, remarkably enough, to make moving, rather than melodramatic. Gillan Vase has worked on a hint found elsewhere in Dickens in her interpretation of the Jasper/Edwin relationship, seeing Jasper as a kind of Miss Wade figure whose own sense of inferiority turns every friendly gesture to poison. Her Jasper has hated Edwin from boyhood, because of the latter's great popularity, resenting the way all the good things have come to Edwin.<sup>2</sup> Yet another example of Gillan Vase's borrowings from Dickens's other works is her device of having the escaped Edwin pass himself off as a clerk to work in Mr. Grewgious's office, a stratagem too close to the situation in Our Mutual Friend to be effective here. Taken all in all, however, A Great Mystery Solved is, in its quiet unpretentious way, the most consistent in standard of these early continuations.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Vol. 2, ch.12, p.239.

2. This seems a very possible way of understanding Jasper's character. See below, pp.135-9.

3. W. Robertson Nicoll considered it the only continuation worth looking at: The Problem of 'Edwin Drood', Hodder and Stoughton [1912], Preface p.xi

In the same year that Gillan Vase's continuation appeared Richard A. Proctor was starting his series of articles on the Drood mystery, which were to culminate in book form in Watched by the Dead (1887).<sup>1</sup> He was the earliest of the critics who have made the problems raised by Edwin Drood their particular study. Among the most eminent of these are J. Cuming Walters, Andrew Lang, Henry Jackson, Sir William Robertson Nicoll, and, more recently, Richard Baker and Sir Felix Aylmer. Edmund Wilson, C. Day Lewis and 'Michael Innes', have also given their attention to this work, and one must not omit, as witness to the wide popularity of The Mystery of Edwin Drood, the 'Trial' of John Jasper staged on January 7th 1914 by a host of eminent Dickensians, including Chesterton, Cuming Walters, Matz, Bransby Williams (as Durdles), and Shaw, which was as sensationally reported in the press as one would expect any real murder trial to be, and the Edwin Drood night of the Dickens Fellowship on April 11th 1928, at which Percy Carden mentioned the fact that bits of Dickens's manuscript were pasted over, and the newspapers' report of this sent hordes of people flocking to the Victoria and Albert Museum to see what was hidden beneath the pasted slips. Among all the excitement one small boy is reported to have asked in wonder, 'Mummy, who is Edwin Drood?' (Daily Sketch, April 12th).<sup>2</sup>

A list of the major relevant writings on the Drood problems will be

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1. Published by W. H. Allen & Co., Proctor had earlier written under the pseudonym 'Thomas Foster', e.g. 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood', Belgravia Magazine, June 1878.
  2. Most of the daily papers featured a report, with such headlines as 'What Does Slip Pasted on MS. by Dickens Conceal?' (Sketch). The Daily Chronicle reproduced the tomb scene from the cover, and an Evening Standard reporter on April 13th revealed the 'Mocking Find' that one of the hidden phrases so far deciphered reads: 'And you hold your secrets tight, you do!'



found in the Bibliography: here, the intention is merely to draw attention to the major problems discussed.

Foremost among these is the question, 'Alive or Dead?' A host of ingenious suppositions have been put forward to account for Edwin's ability to escape from the three-fold hazards of drugging, strangling and quicklime with the possibility in addition of ejection from the top of a Cathedral tower, and have been in turn equally vociferously derided by the opposition. The popular theory seems to be that Jasper had some sort of seizure in mid-murder.<sup>1</sup> The advocates of the escape theory then have to find some means of accounting for Edwin's prolonged silence, and the favourite reason for this is usually some version of Proctor's Watched by the Dead idea. Edwin perhaps wished to make sure of Jasper's murderous intentions, or he wished to bring his would-be killer to repentance. The stumbling-block to this theory is that if one provides Edwin with an ally from among the characters of the story, to help him in his escape and subsequent return, one automatically indicts that ally of callousness towards Neville, unjustly suspected, and Rosa, unnecessarily mourning, though not, it must be admitted, for long. Indeed, one of the supports of the Edwin-alive theory is that the book is otherwise too lighthearted in allowing Rosa to enjoy the pleasures of the magic garden, with mere perfunctory lip-service to 'Poor, poor Eddy', so soon after her tragic bereavement, and that this apparently destined happiness for her and Tartar would be jarred by the final discovery of Edwin's body. It might be jarred even more, of course, by the discovery of Edwin alive, and this is the great 'internal'

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1. Cf. Wilkie Collins's Miss or Mrs? pp.54-4.

stay<sup>1</sup> of the 'dead' addicts: there is no place left for Edwin in the story,<sup>2</sup> with Rosa pairing with Tartar and Helena with Crisparkle. By the same token, and because he bears the marks of gloom about him, many critics uphold Forster in causing Neville to perish, sometimes, as Forster suggests, with a violent end, sometimes pining away with consumption under the shadow of unjust suspicion. Alternatively, he is allowed literally to 'follow' Crisparkle, as Helena recommends,<sup>3</sup> by entering the church, a neat way of keeping him celibate.

There are few critics who acquit Jasper of murderous intentions towards Edwin - the most notable and obstinate exception being the latest contributor to the Drood mystery, Mr. (not<sup>w</sup> Sir) Felix Aylmer in The Drood Case, 1964. Aylmer also follows Orpheus C. Kerr (and again few others, among them Gillan Vase who shows a soft spot for Jasper) in accusing Rosa of flirtatious encouragement of Jasper: in these pages<sup>4</sup> his 'straight' narrative reads remarkably like the earlier writer's burlesque.

The second major problem bears on the identity of Datchery: few accept him as a newcomer, on two major counts: one, a piece of internal evidence, the frequent references to Datchery's large head and shock of white hair and his apparent awkwardness with his hat, all suggesting a wig as part of a disguise; two, a piece of 'external' deduction, that

1. The main 'external' stay is, of course, Forster, followed by Fildes, Charles Dickens junior, etc. See above, pp. 7, 27, 43.
2. Some writers even claim to be able to see the marks of death on Edwin from the start.
3. Ch. x p. 72.
4. Chs. 10 and 11, pp. 105-138.

Dickens rarely introduced a new character in the second half of a novel.<sup>1</sup> People tend to forget that all we have in existence is just under the first half of a novel. It has been pointed out, too, that many of Dickens's 'detectives' are of the amateur variety. The possibility that Datchery might have been familiar to one of the characters in *Cloisterham*, hence the necessity of disguise, though not yet to the reader, does not, so far as I can recollect, seem to have been put forward, though it is a possibility worth considering - if one is convinced of Datchery's previous connexions - in view of the unsuitability in some aspect or another of all the possible candidates we already know.<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to pick a 'favourite' candidate for this rôle, so many of the book's characters have been put forward - notably Drood himself (Watched By the Dead), Tartar, Helena, Neville, Grewgious, and his clerk Bazzard - but undoubtedly the one who has aroused the fiercest controversy is Helena and this question of Datchery's identity has been as hotly debated as anything in the book.

Helena's claims to the rôle stem mainly from the information we are given as to her past adoption of masculine disguise when running away,<sup>3</sup> and her stalwart defence of Rosa and Neville against Jasper of whom she would not be afraid 'under any circumstances' --- 'Let whomsoever it most concerned, look well to it!'<sup>4</sup> The vague information that she has

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1. These speculations are, of course, linked to Dickens's own remark relative to the curious interest in Nos. 5 and 6 which he hoped would be suspended to the end.
  2. One might ask the critics, too, in how many of Dickens's novels a disguised 'detective' turns out to be a well-known character. The concentration, in plot and dramatis Personae, of Edwin Drood causes difficulties here.
  3. See p. 130 for a likely original for this aspect of Helena.
  4. Ch. vii.

'left the Nuns' House to attend her brother's fortunes',<sup>1</sup> is also used in support of her claim, though the difficulty (which affects Tartar too) is that she is known to be in London after Datchery has arrived in Cloisterham. That vague phrase opening chapter xviii, 'At about this time', referring to Datchery's arrival in Cloisterham, is perhaps more perplexing than any other phrase in the whole book. Did Dickens mean it to be vague, leaving himself the loophole that 'At about this time' does not necessarily mean between the last incident mentioned and the next - admittedly unlikely, and an unsatisfactory device to hang a whole web of mystification on so slender a peg,<sup>2</sup> or did he mean the chapter to be taken as one of a chronologically progressing sequence? Before examination of the manuscript was carried out, it was occasionally assumed that Dickens had misplaced the chapter, but the evidence of careful thought here invalidates that suggestion.<sup>3</sup> So far away from literary criticism, so far into the realm of detection does the question of Datchery and Helena lead that one reads serious and lengthy disquisitions on the quantity and type of food a young woman may reasonably be expected to consume without undue difficulty. The sanest comment on the Helena suggestion seems to be that of G.K. Chesterton, that Helena cannot be Datchery as the notion is aesthetically so absurd. If no other character's claims can square with the facts, then it is better to assume that Dickens slipped in one or two particulars than to accept that he

1. Ch. xix.

2. But no more unsatisfactory than the other possible supposition that Datchery commuted.

3. See p. 269 for discussion of MS.

failed in the very basis of his art.<sup>1</sup>

Tartar runs into the same time difficulty as Helena, but more pronounced in his case as, until Rosa's arrival in London, he has no concern whatsoever in the matter. On his side, however, are the undeniable fact that, of all the characters, he is nearest in temperament to Datchery and most likely to be able to carry off the impersonation, and the secondary artistic consideration that he 'needs' a rôle in the story. Forster's belief that Neville perished in assisting Tartar to unmask the murderer strongly supports the notion of his playing a detective rôle,<sup>2</sup> to offset which is the fact that, unless he were to move between Cloisterham and Staple Inn, where he might be seen by Jasper with the Cloisterham party, he would have no need of disguise, unless it was felt that the incongruity of a dashing young ex-naval officer's settling in such a sleepy community as Cloisterham would evoke unwanted speculation.

Apart from anything else Neville seems without the necessary stamina and persistence for the part - he is not one of the favourites - and Grewgious, though with a certain dryness and with age in common with Datchery - the only character with the latter qualification - is usually thought to be too indispensable in Staple Inn to be deployed at length elsewhere. This leaves, apart from Drood, automatically cut out by the 'murder' devotees, Bazzard, Mr. Grewgious's taciturn clerk,

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1. Daily News, Nov. 2nd 1905, review of A. Lang's The Puzzle of Dickens's Last Plot: 'It is better to think that Dickens made a mistake in writing this sentence or that sentence than that he made a mistake in writing the book'. See also Criticisms and Appreciations of Charles Dickens' Works. Dent. 1911. p.226.
  2. See p.129 for an alternative suggestion as to Tartar's possible rôle in the unmasking scenes.

mysteriously 'off duty' somewhere when Rosa arrives in London. His great qualification, apart from being in Grewgious's confidential employment and being the only other person who knows of Edwin's possession of the ring - according to Forster, and Dickens himself perhaps,<sup>1</sup> a vital point in establishing identity and guilt at the end - is his devotion to the drama, which may at some time have given him acting experience and contacts. Against this asset of what must be considered on most counts the strongest candidate must be set the undoubted drawback of his gloomy, stolid, positively sulky temperament, so unattractive as to make the division fairly equal between those who range him actively on the side of the good, in the Datchery rôle, and those who suspect him of treachery and counter-spying on Jasper's behalf. Are we to think of him as constitutionally and willingly capable of the assumption of such a personality as Datchery's?<sup>2</sup>

Other problems posed by the novel are relatively minor ones, with the exception of one exotic and very individual line of reasoning, to be discussed last, which throws a different colouring over the whole novel. The question of who marries whom does not find universal agreement. For the most, commentators settle for Rosa/Tartar and Helena/Crisparkle, but Edwin sometimes returns to marry Rosa,

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1. Ch. xiii. 'Among the mighty store of wonderful chains that are for ever forging, day and night, in the vast iron-works of time and circumstance, there was one chain forged in the moment of that small conclusion, [not to tell Rosa about the ring] riveted to the foundations of heaven and earth, and gifted with invincible force to hold and drag.'

2. Dickens may, of course, have deliberately made Bazzard taciturn, so that we should have little, in the way of characteristic speech habits, to turn back to, in trying to identify him with Datchery. It could be argued that the brusqueness of his first lines in chapter xi has something in common with the way in which Datchery addresses Deputy.

occasionally to marry Helena, or to remain a bachelor. Occasionally, too, Neville is allowed the happiness of marriage with Rosa.

The manner of the murder and its discovery has frequently been carefully discussed, and all the possible hints provided by Dickens have been brought into play: the keys, the quicklime, the Sapsea vault, the black scarf, the ascent of the church tower, the whereabouts of the betrothal ring. The most controversial of these items is the quicklime, which causes argument as to its preservative or corrosive qualities, and as to the likely degree of accuracy of Dickens's knowledge of its properties. Dickens was obviously providing his clues - and, possibly, false clues - with care; every detail has potential significance and for this reason no one can know which details were to be finally used by the author in his 'murder'. As with the question of Helena/Datchery, Chesterton again makes the same comment on the heated arguments with which partisans of one theory or another support their cause:

... the detective novelist actually desires to keep his readers off the point ... Thus the whole conflict between a critic with one theory ... and a critic with another theory ... becomes eternal and a trifle farcical.<sup>1</sup>

The one detail which perpetually puzzles commentators is the shriek which Durdles heard the previous Christmas Eve, the recounting of which brings such a fierce reaction from Jasper. Opinion is divided as to whether this represents some real or ghostly occurrence of a prophetic nature.

It is one of the suggested titles, 'The Mystery in the Drood Family', which opens up the possibility of wider ramifications to the story.

It is argued that the situation as it stands, with Edwin's disappearance

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1. Criticisms and Appreciations; pp. 226-8.

and assumed death, is not sufficient to warrant the reference to 'the Drood Family' and that the author's consideration of this title indicates some further mystery in the family background, hinted at in chapter ii, where Edwin refers to the possibility of a hidden skeleton 'even in Pussy's house - if she had one - and in mine - if I had one -'. This is the line taken by the latest Drood critic, Sir Felix Aylmer,<sup>1</sup> who builds up an elaborate plot of Egyptian intrigue, mixed marriages, illegitimacy and vendettas, on the two-fold basis of the time-sequence of the novel's events which has been worked out by earlier critics,<sup>2</sup> and his own conviction of Jasper's innocence which stems from his reading of the passage:

Once for all, a look of intentness and intensity - a look of hungry, exacting, watchful, and yet devoted affection - is always, now and ever afterwards, on the Jasper face whenever the Jasper face is addressed in this direction. And whenever it is so addressed, it is never, on this occasion or on any other, dividedly addressed; it is always concentrated.<sup>3</sup>

The most colourful and exotic version of this 'family mystery' notion places great emphasis on the Eastern background in which Dickens so thoroughly steeps that part of his story which is not confined to an English cathedral town. Jasper's frequenting of opium dens, and his dark colouring, Edwin's Egyptian connexions, the Landlesses' arrival from Ceylon, are sufficient within one short story to set detective minds wondering on the possible connexions, and the answer produced with remarkable conviction is Thuggee: Jasper is a member of a devoted band

1. op.cit.

2. See p.133.

3. Ch. ii.



of stranglers.<sup>1</sup> It is amazing how many parallels can be adduced once this line of reasoning is started and the various omens regarded in Thuggee are examined. Jasper's carrying of the black scarf is, of course, the starting point; his devotion to Edwin could be explicable here, too, as Thugs proper considered they were 'saving' not merely destroying their victims. The rooks haunting the Cathedral (they also used to haunt David Copperfield's house at Blunderstone, but nothing is made of that); the vicinity of running water; the sanctity of stone-masons; the burial of the body: these, and many more details are, or might be, pressed into the argument, and there is a certain fascination in adding to the evidence.<sup>2</sup> Much energy is expended, too, in proving Dickens's knowledge of and interest in Thuggee. The one overwhelming drawback to this theory is the one which also applies to Sir Felix Aylmer's speculation: namely, that it robs the characters of all significant interest.<sup>3</sup> The Thuggee theory, moreover, in a sense leaves us where we started - with the enigma of Jasper: what induced him to become a member of this band in the first place?

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1. The main exponents of this theory are the Americans, Howard Duffield and Edmund Wilson.
  2. One detail I have not seen adduced elsewhere I might add to the growing pile: I noticed in a copy of the Spectator for February 6th 1869 that 'Tope' (properly 'stūpa', a mound, Sanskrit) is the word used in India for 'a tumulus erected over a burial-place'. Some were solid stone pyramids with a coating of lime and might contain sacred relics. (From a review of Tree and Serpent Worship ... in India by James Fergusson.)
  3. A passage from Bulwer Lytton's A Strange Story, a novel often adduced as a 'parallel' to Dickens's, with its elements of Thuggee and mesmerism, is peculiarly apposite here: 'The fiend comes to Faust, the tired seeker of knowledge; Heaven and Hell stake their cause in the Mortal's temptation. And what does the Fiend to astonish the Mortal? Turn wine into fire, turn love into crime. We need no Mephistopheles to accomplish these marvels every day!' Sampson Low, Son, & Co. 3rd edn. 1862, vol.2, pp. 191-2.

Speculators on 'the Mystery' have not confined themselves to the words of the published novel. Quite properly, along with all the evidence to be found in manuscript, the illustrations have been taken into consideration, and it will be convenient to consider this aspect next.

ii) The Illustrators

Charles Collins, Wilkie Collins's brother and Kate Dickens's first husband, was the originally chosen illustrator and worked on the novel between September and December 1869,<sup>1</sup> producing an 'excellent' cover and at least six preliminary sketches<sup>2</sup> before he was constrained by ill-health to give up work. Not unnaturally his evidence was sought by the speculators anxious to know the novel's conclusion. Kate Perugini, his wife at the time when he was working on the novel, was under the impression that he knew little of the total design<sup>3</sup> and this is certainly the impression given by his own letter on the subject to Daly when the latter was contemplating a dramatized version of Drood:<sup>4</sup>

Brompton, May 4, 1871.

Dear Sir:-

The late Mr. Dickens communicated to me some general outlines for his scheme of Edwin Drood, but it was at a very early stage in the development of the idea, and what he said bore mainly upon the earlier portions of the tale.

Edwin Drood was never to reappear, he having been murdered by Jasper. The girl Rosa not having been really attached to Edwin, was not to lament his loss very long, and was, I believe, to admit the sailor Mr. Tartar to supply his place. It was intended that Jasper himself should urge on the search after Edwin Drood and the pursuit of his murderer, thus endeavoring to direct suspicion from himself, the real murderer. This is indicated in the design, on the right side of the cover, of the figures hurrying up the spiral staircase emblematical of a pursuit. They are led on by Jasper who points unconsciously to his own figure in the drawing at the

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1. See Calendar of Composition. pp. 10, 20.
  2. According to Felix Aylmer, The Drood Case, pp. 18-20, there were seven preliminary sketches, one of which (of Jasper?) has unaccountably disappeared.
  3. Art.cit. Pall Mall Magazine, June 1906, p.650.
  4. See p. 51.

at the head of the title. The female figure at the left of the cover reading the placard 'Lost' is only intended to illustrate the doubt entertained by Rosa Budd as to the fate of her lover Drood. The group beneath it indicates the acceptance of another suitor.<sup>1</sup>

As to any theory further it must be purely conjectural. It seems likely that Rosa would marry Mr. Tartar and possible that the same destiny might await Mr. Crisparkle and Helena Landless. Young Landless himself was to die perhaps, and Jasper certainly would, though whether by falling into the hands of justice or by suicide or through taking an overdose of opium, which seems most likely, it is impossible to say ...<sup>2</sup>

Most of this is very close to Forster's recollections on the subject.

When Collins had to give up the illustrating, Fildes took over, supplying all the accompanying illustrations for the monthly parts, and touching up and altering certain details of the cover. Collins's original sketches (presumably all but one) fortunately survived in the possession of Lady Dickens long enough to be photographed for The Dickensian (vol. xxv. No. 211) and they are reproduced, along with the two versions of the cover, in Sir Felix Aylmer's The Drood Case.<sup>3</sup>

What one gathers about Fildes' knowledge of the story bears out the impression that the illustrators were told all that was necessary for their sketches, and no more.<sup>4</sup> Fildes' conjecture about the long black

1. Mrs. Perugini, in her article, p. 650, expressed her belief that this figure was meant for Tartar, but she also thought the higher figure on the stairs was his, perhaps in this following Forster's suggestion about Tartar's part in the unmasking of Jasper, but thus losing her husband's impression of symbolical significance in the effect of self-denunciation.
2. The Life of Augustin Daly, pp. 107-8.
3. Between pp. 14 & 15, 86 & 87, 158 & 159.
4. Fildes' letter to The Times Literary Supplement, 1905, bears this out with reference to Collins: 'Collins told me he did not in the least know the significance of the various groups in the design; that they were drawn from instructions personally given by Charles Dickens and not from any text ...'

scarf has already been referred to: clearly, then, that was one most important feature of the story Dickens had not intended to disclose to him. W.H. Chambers gives insight into the method of procedure by which author and illustrator worked together.

Fildes told me he used to go down to Gadds Hill and Dickens would act the scenes he wanted illustrating, and Fildes would get his models in London and so complete the picture.<sup>1</sup>

This seems to tie in with what Fildes has elsewhere said as to there being no necessity for local accuracy in his sketches.<sup>2</sup> As time went on, it appears, as recorded by D. Croal Thompson,<sup>3</sup> Dickens grew to place more confidence in his illustrator:

Fildes took extraordinary pains to follow the story of Edwin Drood from month to month, and he was so shrewd in his guesses towards the mystery that Dickens became afraid he would be unable to keep the public from guessing too soon the point he was so carefully concealing. Yet Fildes really knew very little more than a careful reader of the book could divine, and the mystery - which was probably the mystery of the way the discovery of the murder came about - remains as much a mystery as ever. To quote our artist's own words: 'He did, at my solicitation, occasionally tell me something - at first charily - for he said it was essential to carefully preserve the "mystery" from general knowledge to sustain the interest of the book, and later, he appeared to have complete confidence in my discretion'.<sup>4</sup>

Even so, the amount that Fildes knew appears to have been little beyond what anyone might deduce from the story. One fact does emerge from

1. Letter to Howard Duffield, 28th November 1927. The reference to Fildes' habit of going to Gadds Hill may not be very accurate. Dickens was in London most of the time Fildes knew him.
2. W.R. Hughes, op.cit. p.129 quotes Fildes as saying: 'I never felt the necessity or propriety of being locally accurate to Rochester or its buildings. Dickens, of course, meant Rochester; yet, at the same time, he chose to be obscure on that point, and I took my cue from him...'
3. See also A. Meynell, Century Magazine, Feb. 1884; 'How Edwin Drood was illustrated.'
4. The Life and Work of Luke Fildes, R.A., The Art Journal Office, Xmas, 1895, p.27.

Fildes' recollections, namely that the last illustration of the book had been decided on before Dickens's death, presumably well in advance of some of the preceding scenes, and when only six of the drawings, i.e. for the three numbers already published, had been completed:

Dickens, during the time I knew him - from December, 1869, to June, 1870 - lived opposite the Marble Arch, where I often saw him, and, on his return to Gad's Hill, he invited me to stay with him there to go over the ground together to visit the scenes where the story was laid. I remember well the twenty-fourth and last was decided on, and we were to visit the scene, where he told me he himself had not been since he was a child. Only twelve drawings were made, and six of them after Dickens' death. I was going down to Gad's Hill on the 10th of June, and my luggage was packed ready to go, when I read his death in the morning paper.<sup>1</sup>

This twenty-fourth sketch, we learn elsewhere, was to be of the condemned cell, presumably with Jasper as its occupant.<sup>2</sup>

As for the actual illustrations, presumably Dickens had already discussed with Fildes those which the artist was subsequently able to

1. Ibid. pp. 27-8.

2. Hughes, op.cit. p.140, and Harry How, Strand Magazine, August 1893. Mr. Aylmer, The Drood Case, pp. 205-7, seems disposed to suspect Fildes' accuracy here, as also in the case of the black scarf, in view of the fact that Jasper's presence in the cell is not mentioned until the 1893 interview. I have already commented on Fildes' reference to the black scarf incident (see pp.43-4); I see no substantial grounds for doubting his general accuracy here: to assign validity to a statement of 1891, or thereabouts, (the date of Hughes' book) but not to one of 1893, regarding an episode of 1870 seems strange as a basis for serious argument and the very fact that Fildes is not presumptuous in leaping to a conclusion predisposes one to accept what he does say: 'He wanted to show me some scenes he intended introducing in Edwin Drood, particularly one for the 24th drawing, a cell in Rochester gaol he remembered seeing when a child, and had never seen since. He wished me to do Jasper in the condemned cell - what bearing that may have upon the true mystery of Edwin Drood will never be known, for it never appeared.'

produce for the last three numbers, or at least those for parts IV and V.<sup>1</sup> According to Kitton<sup>2</sup> the titles for the last six sketches - "Good-bye, Rosebud, Darling!", 'Mr. Grewgious Has His Suspicions', 'Jasper's Sacrifices', 'Mr. Grewgious Experiences a New Sensation', 'Up the River' and 'Sleeping It Off' - were supplied by Fildes himself. It will be remembered that the subject matter of the earlier illustrations is as follows:

Number I: Jasper in the Opium Den ('In the Court') and Edwin and Rosa together on the seat near the Cathedral at the end of their first walk ('Under the Trees').

Number II: One scene from the Crisparkles' dinner party ('At the Piano') and one from the subsequent quarrel in Jasper's apartments ('On Dangerous Ground').

Number III: Helena thanking Mr. Crisparkle for his solicitude over Neville ('Mr. Crisparkle is Overpaid') and the 'Cathedral' group, on the occasion of the discussion of Jasper's proposed excursion with Durdles ('Durdles Cautions Mr. Sapsea Against Boasting').

Proofs of the first two numbers were not received from the printers until December 2nd,<sup>3</sup> by which time Charles Collins had given up the illustrating.<sup>4</sup> It is clear, therefore, that Collins had no text to work from while he was trying out sketches, but the correspondence in general subject matter between his sketches and those subsequently produced by Fildes indicates that certain scenes at least were selected

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1. Proofs exist corrected in Dickens's hand for Part V, and at least part of the copy which was sent to Fildes is known to be still in existence in America. See below pp. 263-6.
  2. Charles Dickens and His Illustrations, 1899, p. 216.
  3. See p. 21.
  4. See p. 20, Dickens's letter to F. Chapman, Nov. 28th.

already in Dickens's mind.<sup>1</sup> The opium den scene was an obvious choice for an exciting opening, and two preliminary sketches of this are found in Collins's work, each showing Princess Puffer, the Chinaman and the Lascar, in addition to Jasper, whose appearance varies from an impression of diffidence (perhaps intended for revulsion or temporary remorse) in the one, to a more menacing, decisive air in the other, as he bends over the bed. The figure in the second sketch is altogether a darker, more clearly defined individual and seems rather less like Collins's Jasper on the cover than does the other. These were, however, only sketches and it is difficult to make precise differentiations of significance, as does Mr. Aylmer.<sup>2</sup> A second chosen subject was obviously the Crisparkle dinner party, and here again we have two tentative illustrations, one with the party gathered round the table, the other depicting the later scene at the piano. The third pair of illustrations cannot be located so precisely: they represent presumably some members of the 'Cathedral' group - the Cathedral can be seen in the background each time - and may signify Dickens's looking on ahead to Number III; but he probably did not begin to write this number until Collins had retired, and it seems more likely that this was tentatively tried out as the second illustration for Number I and that the two prominent figures are the Dean and Minor Canon Crisparkle (looking rather more like a Minor Canon in one sketch than the other! And whose

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1. Until proofs arrived, Dickens would not be certain of the material for each Number. See pp. 21-2 for his necessary rearrangement of Numbers I and II of this novel. We cannot know, however, whether those illustrations not found in Collins were not yet chosen by Dickens or whether it was just that Collins had not yet got around to attempting them.

2 ~~β~~. Op. cit. pp. 19-20.



dog?) with Tope in the background in one and possibly Jasper and another, unidentified, walking away in the other. Of these conjectures, only the Dean seems certain; the other figures must merely be deduced from what we know of the content of chapter ii, and it may be borne in mind that as regards detail, Collins was in the dark, (His dinner party sketches are not an accurate illustration of the occasion as described, even as regards the persons present: he has five ladies and four men instead of vice versa.) If it were the case that these 'Cathedral' figures were intended for Number I, presumably Dickens relegated them to a later number where Sapsea and Durdles could be added to the picture, in favour of an illustration of Rosa and Edwin to counterbalance the grimness of the Jasper picture and interest the readers in the young hero and heroine from the start.

As regards the cover, Fildes not only touched up, but actually altered some of Collins's drawing, though nothing, it would appear, of great significance. The centre of the picture in both drawings contains the title, but in Fildes' more finished production a small sketch of certain significant items is added below the wording, namely Durdles' dinner bundle, key and spade. The surrounding scenes are basically the same on both covers, but on the earlier one the second and third of the three figures rushing up the staircase, with a glimpse of a fourth in the background, are police officers. This may not mark a change of plan on Dickens's part so much as a misapprehension on Collins's, for which there was ample time for correction. If the former, then presumably Dickens decided that greater interest and concentration would be achieved by keeping the whole mystery and detection essentially private within a closed circle of known characters. Datchery, then, may have

been a later invention when this notion took shape, a compromise between the two ideas, a known character masquerading as an unknown for the purpose of spying on Jasper. There is some slight alteration in appearance or positioning in some of the other sketches, but the only one which shows difference in any marked particular is the lower right, in Fildes depicting the Chinaman in the opium den. The corresponding figure in Collins's sketch is not so clearly defined and I think if one were asked completely out of context what the figure represented one would say a young girl. But one would be ill-advised to build any conjectures in relation to the story on this possibility.<sup>1</sup> Collins's sketches are all unfinished and indistinct compared with Fildes'; some of his men are rather effeminate in face; and it is just possible that what looks like a woman's skirt is intended as the rather loose and short trouser legs of the Chinaman as depicted in his opium den illustrations, and that the ill-defined object between his left foot and the chair is the round hat which he is wearing in the other sketches.

The cover illustration which has given rise to the greatest number of conjectures is basically the same in both, and would therefore appear to have been part of a definite and clearly visualized plan in Dickens's mind. It is the only illustration occupying a central position, and

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1. Some commentators build up for Jasper and the opium woman a sinister past relationship, often involving seduction, usually of her daughter, sometimes with an illegitimate child as the issue. This figure could be pressed into service in this rôle, as daughter or granddaughter to Princess Puffer, depending on how old one thinks she is. Several writers have pointed out the ageing effects of opium and suggested that Princess Puffer may be much younger than she appears. See, for example, Philip Collins, 'Inspector Bucket Visits the Princess Puffer', Dickensian May 1964, pp. 88-90. An alternative theory as to the relationship between Jasper and Princess Puffer is that he is her son.

the eye is obviously intended to linger on this finally at the foot of the page. This illustration, as most readers know, depicts a man, presumably Jasper, just emerging from a doorway and shining a lantern on a motionless figure in coat and hat, with left hand raised towards his coat fastenings, possibly holding something small momentarily concealed from view. This figure certainly looks like Edwin, particularly so in Collins's pair of figures. (Edwin appears with Rosa in a sketch at the top, and this, I think, with its air of negligent condescension is Collins's best, most individual figure.) Fildes may have been instructed to make the resemblance less obvious - there must be some air of mystery about the figure - but this is pure conjecture, as are the various speculations which have been developed from this sketch. For, that the lantern-bearing figure is meant to be making some startling discovery is obvious, and one cannot imagine any more startling discovery, whether real or faked, to evoke a guilty reaction, than that of Edwin by Jasper. Consequently, whether Edwin in the flesh or not, the figure must be got up to look like him, and no certain conclusion as to its identity can therefore be drawn from its detectable likeness to him. One critic has, I remember, drawn attention to the fact that the coat appears to be buttoned right over left, thus indicating a female - Helena - in disguise, but this detail, if indeed so, is not noticeable in Collins's sketch, although from the close correspondence between the two figures in matters of dress, not found to a comparable degree in other figures on the cover, it would appear that Dickens had clearly indicated the necessary dress for the 'mystery' figure from the start. The incongruous fastening may therefore be either illusory, or an innovation of Fildes, or a later instruction from Dickens, and may

or may not have significance. The question of identity, like the 'dead or alive' question which underlies it, cannot be solved from any incontrovertible reading of the cover; though what appears plain from the care with which Dickens apparently gave his instructions for this figure's appearance, is that it had an extremely important rôle in the story in his mind right from the start.

Chapter VEdwin Drood: The TextMaterial Consulted in Collation

1. Manuscript - Victoria and Albert Museum
2. Surviving Proofs - (a) Proofs to Printers of Number V;  
Victoria and Albert Museum  
  
(b) Fragment of Proof to Fildes, owned by  
Colonel Richard Gimbel; seen in  
photographs
3. Monthly Parts
4. First American Publication in Every Saturday
5. Charles Dickens Edition

Descriptions of each of these follow.

1) The Manuscript

The contents of the bound volume of the manuscript, now in the Forster Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, are as follows:

a) Projected titles -  $\frac{1}{2}$  page; reproduced below immediately preceding collation; see p. 212.

b) Chapter headings for Number VI -  $\frac{1}{2}$  page, i.e. the right half of the Number Plan. A pencil note records: 'From Mrs. Forster added May 1887'. There is no explanation of what happened to the left half sheet.

c) The Sapsea fragment - five  $\frac{1}{2}$  sheets, numbered in ink - top centre, Dickens's usual procedure - 6 to 10, but in pencil in the right corner 2 to 6. In the Life (XI.ii) Forster does not make it clear that his finding 'Within the leaves of one of Dickens's other manuscripts' was incomplete: in fact his inclusion of a title suggests otherwise. The obvious inference is that Forster invented the title: if he had found it on a manuscript he would presumably have found the missing sheets. The fragment begins, 'Wishing to take the air' and is substantially as Forster prints it except for the following errors:

Opening paragraph, fourth sentence, Forster omits one of the characteristics of the Eight Club:

... during eight months of the year; our annual subscription was eight shillings each; we played ...

1. My underlining

Paragraph 8, fifth sentence:

the pursuits by which a man got his goods together (Forster: 'the business by which ...'. The word 'pursuits' is repeated later in the sentence, presumably with intention.)

Paragraph 10, opening sentence:

'I was alluding, Mr. Sapsea,' said Kimber, 'when you came in, to a stranger ...'  
(Forster omits 'when you came in')

Section II, sixth sentence:

The phrase in parenthesis may be intended as 'my generosity almost overpowering him'. (Forster 'overpowered'. It looks as if Dickens tried both forms here.)

In addition to these points, Forster occasionally takes liberties with the punctuation.

A further observation of possible significance is that the Sapsea fragment is written in a mixture of blue and brown ink, i.e. it begins in blue with some brown corrections, then changes to brown ink with, towards the end, some blue corrections, then blue for everything. Apart from a few corrections and marks to the printers, brown ink does not take over in manuscript of the novel until No.III, chapter x, 'Smoothing the Way', from, 'And I say now, that I think ill of Mr. Neville' (p.66, l.24) to 'a saccharine transfiguration' (p.68, l.8). After this there is no brown ink, except for an occasional mark for the printers, until No.V, where it starts again in chapter xvii, 'Philanthropy, Professional and Unprofessional', from, 'But I should like you to do it' (p.134, ll.35-6) plus a few corrections earlier in the chapter, and continues to 'whether he is adverse or ...' (p.135, l.25). After this there are only occasional marks in brown. It seems possible that Dickens was writing the

Sapsea fragment on the latter of these two occasions, as a preliminary try-out for his 'A Settler in Cloisterham' chapter. The fact that Poker is a young man is not a very helpful pointer to the identity of his later 'double' Datchery.

d) Number Plans. These follow the pattern described by J. Butt and K. Tillotson in Dickens at Work, pp.25-7. There is an introductory page headed 'Mystery of Edwin Drood. No. Plans'. Eleven pages in all (a double, XI and XII, for the last Number) were prepared, i.e. in each case the right hand half has been headed 'Mystery of Edwin Drood - No. VI'. A blank sheet has been inserted in the place of No.VI, which was not discovered until later. The sheets from VII to XI/XII are, unfortunately, blank; even No.VI, without its left half, on which the likelihood is that Dickens would have written something, tells us nothing beyond chapter titles and the fact that there was to have been one more chapter, unnamed, in the Number. Individual Number Plans are reproduced in the following pages, introducing the textual discussion of their respective Numbers.<sup>1</sup>

e) A list of chapter headings from i to xx, i.e. in the final ordering, not in the order in which they were written. The one discrepancy between this list and that of Monthly Parts is, of course, that Chapter xx 'Divers Flights' refers to Monthly Parts chapters xx and xxi, since the division was not made by Dickens.<sup>2</sup>

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1. pp. 215-16; 232-3; 252-3; 269-70; 286-7; 338-9.

2. See below, p. 289.



f) The manuscript of the novel. This is complete except for one page comprising the first five paragraphs of chapter xi, MP pp.75-6. Writing is on one side of the page only and the handwriting is small and extremely difficult to read, as there are innumerable deletions and insertions. Once or twice a much altered passage has been rewritten on the back of the page. Occasionally a slip is pasted over the page, presumably when the original slip had become illegible, and one can see that curious fingers have tried to prise off some of these slips in pursuit of clues.<sup>1</sup> At one point the pasted over slip has been removed and pasted on the blank page opposite; the traces of brown substance, presumably glue, are visible where the slip has been removed. This is in chapter ii, MP p.9, ll.16-31, from "'I have been taking opium"' to 'thus addressed him;', the passage where, in Edwin's presence, Jasper succumbs to the opium effects. The following can be deciphered of Dickens's original version:

'I have been taking ... opium for a pain - an agony [I?] sometimes have [?] Its effects steal over me like a blight or a cloud, and pass. You see them in the act of passing. <There is no cause for alarm.> Put those knives out at the door - both of them.'

'My dear Jack, why?'

'It's going to lighten; they may attract the lightning; put them <away> in the dark.'

With a scared and confounded face, the younger man complies. No <lightning> ensues, nor was there, for a moment, any passing likelihood of a thunderstorm. He gently and assiduously tends his kinsman who by slow degrees recovers and

flash

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1. Notably at ch.xxiii, p.183, l.43 - p.184, l.12, from 'But she goes no further ...' to 'into the room', the opium woman's watch over Jasper. There seems no obvious reason for a pasted over slip here, as there appears to be still room on the page to write the corrected version. What is decipherable below the superimposed slip runs to this effect: "'So far I might a'most as well have never found out how to set you talking," is her commentary; "you are too deep to talk too plain (?) and you hold your secrets tight, you do!"

clears away[?] that[?] cloud or blight. When he, (Jasper), is quite himself and is as it were once more resolved [with? into?] that concentrated look, he lays a [tending? touching? tender?] hand upon his nephew's shoulder and thus addresses him:<sup>1</sup>

As one might expect, this passage has excited attention as being a clear hint of Jasper's murderous propensities under opium, with difficulty held in check by the strength of his better feelings towards Edwin.

The first page of each Number in manuscript is headed with its Number; there are two pages initially headed No.III, one subsequently crossed out, as this was the point at which Dickens had to write another chapter for inclusion in II. The pages of this chapter, ix, are not numbered except in pencil. The number of manuscript pages to a Monthly Part is as follows:

No.I	23 + 4½ (i.e. 'Mr. Durdles and Friend' from No.II)	= 27½
No.II	22½ - 4½ (see above) + 9½ 'Birds in the Bush'	= 27½
Nos.III, IV and V (as written)		= 27
(At a cursory glance I can see no obvious reason why V was too long, whereas IV had to have insertions and III just came to the necessary length. V is densely written, but then so is the whole <u>Edwin Drood</u> manuscript)		
No.VI		= 20
(i.e. one chapter short. The flourish below the last sentence of manuscript denotes that 'The Dawn Again' is complete)		

Scattered over the manuscript, usually in pencil or brown ink, are various compositors' names - Taylor, Thompson jun., King, Oxley, Holiday etc. - not necessarily at the end of a page, and instructions

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1. Rounded brackets are part of the text, square brackets denote a query on my part, angular brackets enclose an author's deletion which in some cases has the final choice of phrase superimposed on it.

to the printers (William Clowes and Sons) such as: 'Printer.  
White line here', or 'Printer. Please observe that the scraps  
of Diary at ~~[bottom of?]~~ folios 8 and 9 are to be printed in a  
smaller type'.

2) The Proofs

See note on end leaf.

a) Victoria and Albert Museum proof to printers

(An envelope bears the direction: 'Mr. Day - Messrs. Clowes and Sons, Duke Street') This survives only for Number V as written, i.e. including the first chapter of published Number VI.<sup>1</sup> Most of it is in the form of page proofs, i.e. from MP p.129 to MP p.162, 1.9, 'gradually and dimly in the room'. The numbering on the proof itself runs from 129 to 160. Following this is one galley proof numbered 161, which, presumably for insertion in the book in which it is bound, has been cut in two. In the margin of the galley 1.50 and 1.100 have been numbered in ink, presumably by the printers. The words 'By Tuesday' are written on the back of the first part in the same ink, which is not that used for proof corrections. The type of proof correction does not substantially vary from page to galley: deletions apparently on grounds of length appear on both. A reasonable deduction from this seems to be that the number was received by the printers in stages<sup>2</sup> and that the first part had gone through a first stage of proof while the rest was still being set up in galley. Length deletions, therefore, could not be made until the whole Number appeared in print.

b) Fragment of proof to Fildes owned by Colonel Richard Gimbel

What I have seen, in reproduction, of this proof is identical in printed matter to V and A proof, but less fully corrected. The sources of information as to Gimbel's proof are as follows:

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1. See below, p. 289.
  2. Cf. p.24, Dickens's reference to the last two-thirds of his 'precious child'.

- i) The Duffield Collection at Dickens House contains two photographs (pencil note ascribes ownership) with an overlap in material. The first, headed 161, begins at p.162, l.10 of MP and ends at p.164, l.3. The second begins at p.163, l.12 and continues to the end of the chapter. The material, therefore, corresponds to that of V and A galley.
- ii) Yale University Library Gazette, vol.37, no.2, October 1962, contains a list of the items displayed in a recent exhibition of Dickens material from Colonel Gimbel's collection on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Dickens's birth. Item 144 is the Edwin Drood proof sent to Fildes of which the Yale Gazette reproduces the portion from MP p.164, l.6 to the end of the chapter, i.e. a repetition of part of the above. The descriptive note for this item gives no indication of the extent of the proof owned by Gimbel.
- iii) Yale University Library Gazette, vol.36, no.4, April 1962, prints an address on 'Dickens's Manuscripts' by John Butt, given at Yale on February 6th in connexion with the exhibition. This article opens up new problems with regard to the proofs owned by Colonel Gimbel. In the first place it seems as if Gimbel possesses a complete set of proofs, though not necessarily with full annotations, or at least a more complete set than that in the V and A; for at one point Professor Butt refers in general terms to a set of page proofs sent to the illustrator of Edwin Drood for his guidance, and at another point he refers specifically to 'over-matter' at the end of chapter ix, attached, in the exhibition, to the proof of p.64. Butt comments that

'this copy of the proof does not happen to show his hand at work'. If one makes the reasonable inference that p.64 represents the end of Number II, one would not expect to see Dickens's hand at work, for the deletions had already been made and this is borne out by the comment that the 'over-matter' is 'attached'. It sounds as if Gimbel possesses both the final printing together with fragments at least of an earlier proof. If chapter ix without deletions were sent to Fildes, Dickens must have acted very quickly, for he was writing the extra chapter while negotiating with his new illustrator;<sup>1</sup> in fact his negotiations do not seem to have been finalized before the Number was completed and one would therefore expect Fildes to receive the MP version of chapter ix.

In the second place Professor Butt refers to Dickens's last proof correction, on p.160 of the set exhibited, that is, he says, on the last page of the fifth Number. Page 160 is the last page of the fifth Number only in MP as printed. There could hardly have been a correction by Dickens here. On the V and A galley proof we can see a correction by Dickens as late as p.165 (MP) 161 (Galley) and Gimbel himself possesses a copy of this, though less fully corrected, which was exhibited. In the V and A proofs p.160 takes us part way through chapter xxi, which could hardly be referred to as the end of a Number. Is the inference from all this that Gimbel possesses, in addition to galley 161, a later set of proof with the over-matter removed and the material which eventually became chapter xxi included, and that V and A proofs were reverted to when the final decision as to printing was

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1. See pp.20 et seq.

made after Dickens's death? Number V was read to Forster on May 7th,<sup>1</sup> which would give time for two stages of proof to be prepared. But for Professor Butt's reference to a correction by Dickens on p.160, one would assume this set to be the final printing of MP ending at chapter xx. Another puzzling point to be considered here is that Professor Butt's opinion is that all surviving proofs are first proofs.

Thirdly, Professor Butt refers to his belief that Dickens deleted from Number V because he wished to save space to include the short chapter xxi which he had already written. But as we know from the manuscript Dickens did not write MP chapter xxi as chapter xxi.<sup>2</sup> Was Professor Butt merely referring to it in this way to identify it for his audience? This leads us back to the assumption that Number V as referred to by Professor Butt above did not include chapter xxi and that if p.160 of Gimbel's proof is the end of Number V, it must be Number V as printed in MP. Once again the question arises: how does it come to have a correction by Dickens? And, if this proof does end at MP p.160, does Gimbel have any proof of MP p.161 to p.162, 1.10? The simplest explanation of this difficulty is that Professor Butt's reference to p.160, intended p.160 of MP, i.e. the 161 galley, but this still leaves the discrepancy in the reference to chapter xxi.

N.B. I am about to write to Colonel Gimbel in the hope that he will resolve these problems.

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1. See p.32.

2. See below, p. 289.

3) Monthly Parts

Publishers: Chapman and Hall; printers: William Clowes and Sons.

Six monthly parts, April to September 1870; price ls., the price of the September Number raised to ls. 6d.

32 pages to a Number, 52 lines to a normal page,<sup>1</sup> plus the 'Edwin Drood Advertiser' which, for the April issue, contains more pages than does the text of the Number. 'Cork Hats Advertisement' in Number II guarantees authenticity of original issue.<sup>2</sup>

The cover design has been reproduced in accessible publications, the most recent of which, Felix Aylmer's The Drood Case, 1964, prints it side by side for comparison with Collins's original sketch.

Two illustrations to each Number, placed together at the beginning between 'Advertiser' and text. In Number VI they are preceded by one page reproduction from 1868 Dickens photograph, one title page with Fildes' sketch of Rochester. After the text, one page list of Dickens editions, title page of Edwin Drood without illustration, the now familiar note as to the unfinished state of the novel and list of chapters and of illustrations.

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1. See exception noted below, p. 290.

2. See Thomas Hatton and Arthur H. Cleaver, Bibliography of the Periodical Works of Charles Dickens, 1933.



4) Every Saturday

The dates of publication in Every Saturday are given on p.35. As can be seen from this table the normal practice was to include one or two chapters per week, except in Number VI where chapters xxii and xxiii were split between numbers, perhaps in order to spread out the last Number as far as possible. There was always a gap of at least a week between one Monthly Number and the next, and if the first Saturday happened to fall very early in the month publication was deferred until the following week, as in April, June and July. The editors of Every Saturday were not always au fait with the state of affairs in London, perhaps understandably at the time of Dickens's death,<sup>1</sup> when they were unaware how much of the novel was in hand. A preliminary announcement of Edwin Drood on January 1st in 'Personals' had stated: 'Mr. Dickens has finished his new novel' and on April 2nd the notice heralding publication of the opening chapters the following week claimed, 'The various instalments of the story will be accompanied by all the original engravings from designs by Mr. S. L. Fildes'. There is no obvious explanation why this claim was not made good: the plates were presumably sent by Chapman and Hall,<sup>2</sup> but not only did the Every Saturday editors omit some, but they provided their own captions for others, as follows:

April 9th	In the Court
April 16th	Under the Trees
May 7th	Mr. Jasper Accompanies Miss Rosebud (At the Piano)
May 14th	The Quarrel (On Dangerous Ground)

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1. See pp. 46, 333. The announcement of Dickens's death was not made until July 2nd, the news having arrived just too late for the previous number.

2. See p.34.

June 11th	By the River	(Mr. Crisparkle is Overpaid)
June 25th	Mr. Durdles	(Durdles Cautions Mr. Sapsea Against Boasting)
July 16th	Mr. Grewgious	Breaks the News to Jasper (Mr. Grewgious Has His Suspicions)
August 13th	Jasper's	Sacrifices
August 20th	Mr. Grewgious	Experiences a New Sensation
September		-----

Every Saturday also 'improves' from time to time on punctuation, and, at least on one occasion, on Dickens's expression. Otherwise the printing is reasonably accurate though not up to Monthly Parts standard, particularly as Monthly Parts was set up from manuscript. Towards the end the editors of Every Saturday were obviously receiving incompletely corrected copy.<sup>1</sup>

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1. See below, pp. 266-7, 283-5.

5) Charles Dickens Edition, Chapman and Hall

[1875]

This has not been a major source in collation for the establishment of an authoritative text, as it is highly unlikely that Dickens was sufficiently far advanced in his preparations as to have had time to improve on Monthly Parts for a new edition, even those Numbers which were published before he died. Though there is a slight possibility of author's authority for discrepancies between CD and MP in Numbers I, II and even III, CD deviations in IV to VI cannot have been authorized by Dickens. Variants in spelling, punctuation and other accidentals presumably reflect a difference in house rule, permitted by Dickens in other works. Though Clowes were the printers of some novels in CD edition, Edwin Drood was printed by Virtue and Co. The two printing houses must have reached some agreement on house practice.<sup>1</sup>

Major deviations between MP and CD edition are noted in the following collation. New material in CD is, of course, the running headlines. These, which were probably supplied by Wills, are as follows:

Chapter i	---
Chapter ii	Mr. Jasper is taken poorly; A Welcome Visitor; A little Talk about Pussy; Mutual Confidences.
Chapter iii	Miss Twinkleton's Seminary; A Delightful Birthday; Lumps of Delight.
Chapter iv	Mr. Sapsea; The late Mrs. Sapsea; Durdles.
Chapter v	A Cock-shy; The Mysteries of Durdles's Craft.
Chapter vi	Muscular Christianity; Mrs. Crisparkle receives a Letter; A Model Philanthropist.
Chapter vii	The Reverend Septimus's New Inmate; A Mutual Understanding; Helena and Rosa.
Chapter viii	High Words; The Stirrup Cup; A Bad Beginning.

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1. These last conclusions were reached by John Butt and Kathleen Tillotson in their examination of different editions of various novels.

- Chapter ix Strange News penetrates into the Nuns' House; Rosa's Guardian; An Angular Subject; Rosa confers an Honour on her Guardian; Mr. Grewgious does his Duty.
- Chapter x Mr. Crisparkle indulges in a Reverie; A Capital Place for an Explanation; Mr. Crisparkle exacts a Pledge; Mr. Jasper's Diary.
- Chapter xi A Mysterious Inscription; Dinner for Three; Mr. Grewgious paints the Portrait of a Lover; A Trust fulfilled.
- Chapter xii Mr. Sapsea takes an Airing; Preparations for an Expedition; The Expedition in Progress; Durdles has a Dream.
- Chapter xiii Breaking up; Edwin and Rosa under a new Aspect; A Disappointment for Miss Twinkleton's Young Ladies; Under the Trees.
- Chapter xiv Neville finds himself one too many; Principally concerning Jewellery; Mr. Jasper is in capital Spirits; A boisterous Christmas Eve.
- Chapter xv Neville's Pedestrian Tour receives a sudden Check; Wanted - Edwin Drood; Mr. Jasper's Spirits experience a Fall.
- Chapter xvi Mr. Jasper finds some Crumbs of Comfort; Mr. Crisparkle makes a Discovery; Mr. Jasper registers a Vow.
- Chapter xvii Philanthropic Views; Mr. Crisparkle on the Platform; A Lesson on Pride; Neville makes a New Acquaintance.
- Chapter xviii Dick Datchery; The worshipful the Mayor in his Element; Mr. Datchery is introduced to Durdles.
- Chapter xix Mr. Jasper exerts his Evil Influence; Mad Love.
- Chapter xx Rosa flees for Protection; A Preux Chevalier; The Thorn of Anxiety.
- Chapter xxi Mr. Crisparkle meets with an old Friend; Mr. Grewgious has an Idea.
- Chapter xxii In the Country of the Magic Bean-stalk; An Enchanted Repast; Billickin's; Declaration of War; Battledore and Shuttlecock.
- Chapter xxiii Mr. Jasper obtains Leave of Absence; Mr. Jasper smokes a Pipe; A Brief Vision; Mr. Datchery makes a New Acquaintance; Princess Puffer; The Last Addition to the Score.

Manuscript List of Projected TitlesFriday Twentieth August, 1869

	Gilbert	Alfred
		Edwin
	Jasper	Edwyn
	Michael	Oswald
		Arthur
The loss of James Wakefield		Selwyn
Edwyn		Edgar
	Mr. Honeythunder	
James's Disappearance	Mr. Honeyblast	
		The Dean
		Mrs. Dean
<u>Flight</u> <u>And</u> <u>Pursuit</u>		Miss Dean
<u>Sworn</u> to <u>avenge</u> it		
<u>One</u> <u>Object</u> <u>in</u> <u>Life</u>		
A <u>Kinsman's</u> <u>Devotion</u>		
	<u>The</u> <u>Two</u> <u>Kinsmen</u>	
The Loss of Edwyn Brood		
The loss of Edwin Brude		
The Mystery in the Drood Family		
The loss of Edwyn Drood		
The flight of Edwyn Drood		
		Edwin Drood in hiding
The Loss of Edwin Drude		
The Disappearance of Edwin Drood		
The Mystery of Edwin Drood		
Dead? Or alive?		

Collation: Preliminary Note

For chapters i to xvi, MP I to IV, proofs to printers have not, so far as we know, survived, but there is no reason to doubt that they were read and corrected by Dickens. For chapters xvii to xxi, MP V as planned, the corrected proofs show the transition stage from MS to MP. Chapters xxii and xxiii come in a different category from the above, as Dickens is unlikely to have seen proof of any of this, even allowing for the possibility of his sending the material to the printers in stages. For these two chapters, therefore, manuscript is the authoritative guide to the text Dickens intended. For chapters i to xxi, on the other hand, Monthly Parts, not manuscript, provides the basic authoritative text, though it will be shown that the changes from manuscript to print are of differing natures, some more meriting consideration for reintroduction of the original reading than others. In the case of any of Dickens's novels there might be an argument for reintroducing those passages which were presumably excised mainly out of consideration of length, but, in fact, in Edwin Drood this sort of cut seems to have taken place mainly in chapter ix which in itself was written as an afterthought.<sup>1</sup> Examination of the manuscript suggests the likelihood that in some cases where MP shows a different reading, the printers made an error in setting up type, producing an unsatisfactory result and that Dickens then improved the reading without recourse to his original words.<sup>2</sup> In these cases, should one restore the original reading or accept that which was thus

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1. See also p. 290 for the relevance of this fact in helping to determine policy with regard to treatment of cuts in No. V.

2. This process can clearly be seen on occasions in No. V for which proofs do exist. See, for example, p. 318.

arrived at by printers and proof-correction? There are, too, occasions of minor importance where it appears as if a mis-reading by the printer was just allowed to stand, perhaps missed by the proof-reader. If the manuscript reading seems preferable in the general context, there is a good case for restoring it here.

Apart from this, the manuscript affords interest in showing Dickens's first thoughts, and speculations arise relating to the subsequent probable course of the story. Were some passages deleted or changed as giving away too many clues too early? Alterations actually in the manuscript indicate those passages which Dickens felt needed great care in the writing. Finally, some of the minor changes which Dickens made in words and phrasing give rise to speculation as to the motives at work: often the change seems to be made in the interests of euphony; sometimes perhaps in the cause of greater accuracy.

In order to facilitate reference to Monthly Parts in the following discussion, manuscript variations are treated Part by Part, in each case preceded by the relevant Number Plan.

P.T.O.



[Number I Plan - left hand]

Opium-Smoking

Touch the Key note

"When the Wicked Man" -

The Uncle and Nephew:

"Pussy's" Portrait

You won't take warning then?

Dean

Minor Canon. Mr. Crisparkle

Uncle and Nephew

Gloves for the Nuns' House

Churchyard

Cathedral town running throughout

Mr. Jasper

Verger

Peptune

change to Tope

Inside the Nuns' House

Miss Twinkleton, and her double existence

Mrs. Tisher

Rosebud

The affianced young people. Every love scene [orphans?<sup>1</sup>], a  
quarrel more or less

Mr. Sapsea

Old Tory Jackass

His wife's Epitaph

Jasper and the Keys

Durdles down in the crypt and among  
the graves. His dinner bundle

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1. This word, or phrase, can not be satisfactorily deciphered. W. Robertson Nicoll, The Problem of 'Edwin Drood', 1912, reads, 'after'; Aylmer, op. cit., 'after this'. The word seems to me to be not 'after'. John Watt, typescript at Dickens House, reads, 'of theirs'; this is a possible interpretation of the writing, but seems rather a loose and unnecessary expression.

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Number I Plan - right hand

(Mystery of Edwin Drood. - No. I.)

Chapter I

Prologue

The Dawn

change title to The Dawn

Opium smoking and Jasper

Lead up to Cathedral

Chapter II

a Dean, and a Chapter also <sup>1</sup>

Cathedral and Cathedral town Mr. Crisparkle

and the Dean

Uncle and Nephew

Murder very far off

Edwin's story and Pussy

Chapter III

The Nuns' House

Still picturesque suggestions of Cathedral Town

The Nuns' House and the young couples first love scene

Chapter IV

Mr. Sapsea

Connect Jasper with him (He will want a solemn donkey  
bye and bye)

Epitaph brings them together, and  
brings Durdles with them

The Keys.

Stoney Durdles.

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1. Title squashed in as if inserted later.

Number I (chs. i - v)

The most striking change in this Number is, of course, the one we already know about, namely the transposition of a chapter from Number II - originally chapter viii - to the end of Number I where it became chapter v. Some rewriting of this chapter is not, therefore, unexpected and it may be that the primary cause of major changes here is the altered position of the chapter. This will be borne in mind when the manuscript for chapter v is examined - for convenience in referring to Monthly Parts along with this Number instead of in its original position.

NOTE: Throughout the collation of MP, for the opening pages of chapters, lines are counted from the first line of narrative for that chapter (i.e. chapter heading and title not included).

Chapter i

There is little significant variation here. The title is still 'The Prologue', an indication that this was written before the corresponding note in Number Plan, and the opium woman's tool (p.2.1.24) is a needle not a 'little horn spoon', as in Monthly Part and in the manuscript for chapter v, written as part of the second Number. It could be that Dickens had started to write chapter i before the second visit to the opium den<sup>1</sup> and made the change as a result of his fresh observations.

On two or three occasions it appears that indecision at the manuscript stage was not finally resolved until the words were seen in

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1. See p. 11.

print: phrases inserted above the line after deletions are later removed again, as at p.1, 1.16, where after 'awry' manuscript has 'so that he who is recumbent on the bedstead on the lower side touches the floor'; p.2, 1.11, where in the phrase 'More nor three shillings and sixpence', manuscript first tried 'nor', then replaced it by 'than'; and p.2, 1.34, where the sentence beginning 'Said Chinaman', in manuscript began 'As he lies on his back, the said Chinaman'. In this last instance the words omitted in Monthly Part are, in manuscript, separated from the following words by crossings out and so it is just conceivable that the printers missed them.

Sometimes a phrase is changed, as for example 'flash in the sunlight' (p.1, 1.9) which replaces 'reflect the sun'; 'vague period' (p.1, 1.16) which replaces 'centuries', and 'with his hand to his forehead' (p.2, 1.3) which replaces 'deliriously'; on other occasions it is merely the order of words which alters, usually to give a smoother reading, as at p.1, 1.2, where 'grey square massive' becomes 'massive grey square', and at p.2, 1.1, where 'a querulous whisper that rattles' becomes 'a querulous, rattling whisper'. Occasionally a word or an emphasis is dropped, as at p.1, 1.5, where the word 'is' in 'What is the spike ...' was underlined; p.1, 1.21, where the original phrase was 'meanest, squalidest, and closest' (MP: 'meanest and closest'); p.2, 1.5, which originally read 'as she chronically shivers and complains' (MP: 'as she chronically complains'); and p.3, 1.17, which had the word 'wild' inserted above the line to give the reading 'There has been wild chattering'. In the absence of proofs one can only assume that these alterations were initiated by Dickens and not the result of mis-reading by the printers, but there is in the first chapter one example of what

looks like a possible printers' error uncorrected, though, as Dickens's words are not always easy to decipher, one cannot be certain. In the opening lines of the book, p.1, ll.1 & 2, the word intended on those first two occasions might have been 'Town', not 'Tower', a reading which would give meaning to the otherwise pointless 'its' of l.3.

For the first chapter the variations have been recorded in some detail, but even so the record is not, nor is intended to be, complete: it would be a cumbersome task to make an exhaustive report of alterations. For the following chapters the record will be more selective: important changes will be treated fully; for other cases representative examples will be chosen where considered relevant.

### Chapter ii

In this chapter the immediately noticeable changes are two recurring ones, the first made before the novel reached proof stage: the name 'Peptune' is deleted in manuscript and replaced by 'Tope' and the word 'crow' is replaced by 'rook', presumably at proof stage. The Number Plan prepares us for the change of name, but what was the reason for it? Perhaps 'Peptune' sounds too airy and gay for the Cathedral verger. I indicated earlier<sup>1</sup> an interpretation of the word 'Tope' which the advocates of the Thuggee motif would find significant, but I would not propose this as the reason for the name finally chosen, though perhaps if Dickens was aware of this meaning he might consider it appropriate to the verger's calling. For the change of 'crow', to 'rook' I can suggest no reason: presumably the word 'crow' would include any significance which might pertain to 'rook'.

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<sup>1</sup>. P.184.

The title of chapter ii was first written as 'A Dean as well as a Chapter'; perhaps Dickens preferred the rhythm of the phrase by which he replaced it in manuscript. The fact that only the second phrasing is written in the Number Plan does not necessarily indicate that Dickens wrote his chapter notes afterwards, as the title is squashed in at the side, presumably inserted after the notes had been written. The same thing appears to have occurred in the notes for chapter v (vi in MP), where the title 'Philanthropy in Minor-Canon Corner' is inserted in a balloon.

In manuscript greater prominence is given to the triumph of Mr. Tope's vocabulary by the use of a dash before the words 'DAZED' and 'DAZE' (p.4, ll.43 & 48). There is no reason to suppose that the printers and not Dickens were responsible for this alteration, but shortly afterwards occurs a change which was surely a printers' error and unintentionally allowed to stand. The last words of p.4 according to manuscript should be 'asks the Dean', the tense which context requires, rather than the isolated past tense of Monthly Parts. Another possible minor change which might have been the work of the printers is that of 'any' to 'every' in the words: 'I expect the deaf fellow every moment' on p.6, l.2. The word 'any' is, I think, intended in manuscript, though not well written and it is difficult to be certain.

Some hesitation is noticeable over the descriptions of characters in this chapter: the words 'kind' and 'good man' did not feature in manuscript in the list of Mr. Crisparkle's qualities (p.5, ll.37 & 38); Dickens was uncertain how to express the required guess at Jasper's age, trying 'five or six and twenty' and then deleting the first two words before settling, presumably in proof, for the indefinite 'some'

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(p.6, l.6); and at first, as finally in Monthly Parts, Rosa's age at the time of her portrait was not specified. The words 'of sixteen at the utmost' were then inserted above the line after the word 'schoolgirl' (p.6, l.14) to be subsequently removed again presumably in proof. It is possible that Dickens deliberately left us with no indication of Rosa's age in case he found himself entangled in dates later in the story. But, as it stands, there would have been no discrepancy or awkwardness and in fact this is about the age we should imagine Rosa to be. Assuming from the tone of references to it that the portrait is fairly recent - it has certainly not hung in Jasper's room for 'years', as he is made to assert in chapter xix<sup>1</sup> - we should have at the opening of the story a heroine of about seventeen, compatible with her behaviour which fluctuates between childishness and womanly independence, and a hero of about twenty. Here again Dickens took precautions against being pinned down too exactly, changing 'less than half a dozen years' in manuscript to 'half a dozen years or so' in Monthly Part (p.7, l.45) in reference to the age difference between Edwin and Jasper, but we know that Edwin's twenty-first birthday was imminent. The betrothal would have taken place about ten years previously.

### Chapter iii

This chapter contains one important change: the addition of the account of Rosa's birthday party, almost a page in length (p.15, l.51-p.16, l.46). The immediate reason for this is clear: Dickens, finding himself six pages short in the Number, decided to rectify

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1. See below, p. 319.

matters by transposing the last chapter of Number II, 'Mr. Durdles and Friend' to the end of Number I, thus gaining for the first part five extra pages - the alterations subsequently made in this chapter had no appreciable effect on the length. He then needed one more page and underlining of the delicate relationship between the young couple and, particularly, of Rosa's conflicting reactions, apparently suggested itself as a useful addition. Certainly, although the inserted passage adds nothing of substance to our knowledge of Edwin and Rosa, it does add to the effect: its mixture of teasing playfulness and momentary deeper insight exactly captures the difficult poise of their association. One can see why Dickens chose this situation to elaborate: the first chapter is effective in its brevity; the second has already given us sufficient hints of the situation between Jasper and Edwin; the material of the fourth is about to be extended anyway with the addition of chapter v, and the necessities of the story dictate a limit to subsequent encounters between Rosa and Edwin. Purely practical though the original reason for the passage may be, the reader would surely not gladly forgo it now.

Other alterations are of minor importance: 'crows' is still being written for 'rooks'; the watches in the pawnbroker's were in a 'cold' perspiration, not a 'slow' one (p.13, l.4); Miss Twinkleton was, it seems, 'a sprightly Miss Twinkleton whom the young ladies have never seen' rather than 'a sprightlier Miss Twinkleton than the young ladies have ever seen' (p.13, ll.46-7), though this passage, like the previous one, is rather difficult to make out conclusively; and the order of Mrs. Tisher's ladylike qualities was originally 'a weak back, a



suppressed voice and a chronic sigh' whereas Monthly Part (p.14, 11.7-8) reverses the second and third. Some of these changes may have been caused by the printers as they all occur in passages not easily legible, though one must always bear in mind that difficulties in manuscript arising from such causes as insertions over the line indicate indecision in the writer's mind at the outset. Rosa's change of phrase from 'an orphan without a will of one's own' to 'an engaged orphan' (p.15, 1.11) is a happy one, at once more appropriate, more ridiculously appealing and less cumbersome, and there are other slighter changes which were presumably made to give a smoother reading.

#### Chapter iv

Apart from the concluding lines, there are few changes of any importance here. Two small changes in material are the substitution of 'Spear' (p.23, 1.2) for 'Bow and arrow' - Why? Was Dickens having misgivings as to the habits of Esquimaux? - and the removal of the phrase 'and overlooking the churchyard' from the description of Durdles' home (p.26, 1.5). In fact, he seems to live further away than this from the centre: he has to pass the Travellers' Twopenny on his way home; but Cloisterham is small and these two facts might not be incompatible: the topography cannot necessarily be ascertained minutely. There may be significance attaching to where Durdles lives, but, if so, we do not know precisely what.

In manuscript the chapter ended with a speech from Durdles. Instead of 'deigning no word of answer' to Jasper's persistent enquiries about

his nickname, made presumably to gain time for examining Durdles' keys (p.27, l.43), he finally got out of the room

with the sulky retort:

'How does the fact stand, Mr. Jasper? The fact stands six on one side to half a dozen on t'other. So fur as Durdles sees the fact with his eyes, it has took up about that position as near as may be.'

This speech was replaced by the slightly longer paragraph<sup>1</sup> recording an ensuing backgammon session between Mr. Sapsea and Jasper and concluding with Jasper's departure, late in the evening, for his own home. The reason for the change presumably was to make a smoother transition between chapter iv and the newly inserted chapter v, which begins:

'John Jasper, on his way home through the Close ...'

#### Chapter v

(See Number Plan for chapter viii, Part II)

The events of this chapter, comprising Durdles' explication to Jasper of his work among the tombs and the encounter with Deputy on the way back past Travellers' Twopenny, originally took place when Jasper was on his way home from Canon Crisparkle's after warning him against Neville's 'murderous' behaviour towards Edwin, on the evening of Neville's arrival in Cloisterham. Again the major alteration comes at the end of the chapter, and in this case it is one of considerable interest. The passage in Monthly Parts on p.32 from l.5 to l.23 describing the

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1. It seems likely that the original ending was shorter still: the passage in manuscript from 'But the stoney one' to the end is pasted over the bottom of the page so as to prevent reading of what is beneath. But it can be seen that what lies beneath contains only about half this amount of writing.

activities of the 'hideous small boys' hanging around Travellers' Twopenny is of no particular significance to the story, but it replaces one which certainly was. The manuscript version is as follows:

As Durdles and Jasper come near a woman is seen crouching and smoking in the cold night air on a seat just outside the door which stands ajar.

Of a sudden, Jasper stops, and looks at this woman - the lighter-colored figure of Durdles being between himself and her - very keenly.

'Is that Deputy?' she croaks out in a whimpering and feeble way; 'where have you been, you young good for nothing wretch?'

'Out for my Elth,' returns the hideous sprite.

'I'll claw you,' retorts the woman, 'when I can<sup>1</sup> lay my fingers on you; I'll be bad for your Elth! (O me, o me, my breath is very short!) I wanted my pipe and my little spoon, and ye'd been and put 'Em on a shelf I couldn't find.'

'Wot did yer go to bed for then?' retorts Deputy, quite unabashed. 'Who<sup>2</sup> ha' thought yer was<sup>1</sup> going to get up agin?'

'You'<sup>3</sup>. You might ha' known I was like to do it.'

'Yer lie!' says Deputy, in his only form of contradiction.

Jasper, touching Durdles on the shoulder, and laying his finger on his lips when that worthy looks round, leads the way onward gingerly enough. He more than once or twice looks back, but utters no word until they have reached the corner of the lane; then he casually remarks in a subdued voice that he is well out of any unseemly quarrel or discussion in such a place, and glances back again. All is still. Next moment a stone ...

The Number Plan shows that Dickens's purpose had been to 'Carry through the woman of the 1st chapter'; the 'No' by the side records his change

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1. The manuscript spellings look rather like 'con' and 'wos'. The opium woman, however, uses 'can' on p.110, l.28. I cannot find another example of 'was/wos' to check Deputy's speech, but he is rather more likely than the opium woman to be given a debased pronunciation.
  2. It is just possible that the word in manuscript is 'Whod', but there is no apostrophe.
  3. The inverted comma is repeated here by mistake in manuscript. Dickens invariably uses double inverted commas for speech. I have used single, as elsewhere in quotations from printed texts. As regards Dickens's conventions of punctuation, an interesting point to note here is his use of initial capitals to denote missing letters in 'Elth' and 'Em'.

of purpose which presumably occurred when he saw the first eight chapters in proof and decided he must switch chapter viii to Number I. The 'No' would be a note for future guidance: at the time he was busy with Readings and could ill spare time for the novel. It is not particularly surprising that Dickens should remove this passage from Number I, for the opium woman has already made her appearance in these pages and he would not want to over-emphasize her rôle. Moreover, there is no motive for her appearance in Cloisterham at this point, unless we are to assume that Jasper has already paid a second visit to her den. At the end of Number II, however, Jasper might well have been to London again - he has presumably obtained some sort of drug from somewhere with which he dopes the mulled wine; or she may even have had some reason for following the Landlesses. (The fact that Edwin is staying with Jasper and therefore aware of his movements is an objection that holds likewise of the night before Christmas Eve, when he is certainly to be assumed as having visited her.) Certainly, too, this would be a good opportunity for the opium woman to add to her knowledge of Jasper's behaviour: there is considerable activity in Cloisterham that night following on the events of the dinner party. Why, then, did Dickens not insert a similar reference to her at the end of the new chapter viii, originally vii, as he very easily could have done, with <sup>eleven</sup>~~six~~ pages of fresh material to produce? Perhaps he had by this time had the idea of bringing her to Cloisterham on a still more fateful evening - Christmas Eve - and felt that too many appearances would both detract from her effectiveness, turning her into a melodramatic figure of Nemesis, and make it the less

likely that her discovery of Jasper's identity could be so delayed.<sup>1</sup> While on this subject, it is convenient to anticipate events of a later Number and point out that her appearance on Christmas Eve, when she was avowedly trying to track Jasper,<sup>2</sup> considerably perplexes the reader's detective instinct. For when had Jasper had the opportunity to slip up to London? Dickens specifically sends him abroad in Cloisterham 'early' on Christmas Eve; he has 'services' at the Cathedral, and was walking with Canon Crisparkle after Vespers<sup>3</sup> - to say nothing of the fact that he betrays none of the after-effects that were evident on the first occasion. On that first occasion, too, when he had been in the opium den all night he was hard put to it to get back in time for Vespers. He could hardly, therefore, have visited London during the day; and the same argument holds almost as good for the previous evening. If he could manage a three hour journey<sup>4</sup> and be out shopping early the next morning, how did the opium woman come to be still pursuing a fruitless search for him late in the afternoon? In spite of all these obstacles one must acknowledge that the evening before Christmas Eve is a dramatically suitable occasion for a visit to the opium den: at the end of chapter xiii Jasper witnesses a fervent parting between Edwin and Rosa: it is indeed highly likely that 'Ned' would be a threatened name on his lips that night. One must perhaps accept that Dickens, in spite of an effect to the contrary, was not thinking of the time schedule when he filled Jasper's Christmas Eve: after all, he is making no attempt to

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1. On p.186 she specifically states that she has been in Cloisterham only once before.

2. See pp.110, 184 and 186.

3. pp.111-12.

4. pp.184-5, ch.xxiii. Six o'clock and nine o'clock are specifically mentioned.

conceal from us the opium woman's interest in Jasper at this point.<sup>1</sup>

To return to the immediate events of chapter v, there are two other places in the account of Jasper's activities where deletions were made - brief ones this time - one presumably, the other certainly, because of the changed position of the chapter. When Durdles refuses Jasper's offer to carry his bundle (p.29, ll.8-9) the passage in manuscript runs:

'... Shall I carry your bundle?'

'Not on any account,' says Durdles. Jasper pats it and it clinks.

'Not on any account,' repeats Durdles, adjusting it.

In the text as printed it is not two pages since Jasper was clinking the keys in Mr. Sapsea's sitting-room. What would have served as a useful repetition of a motif in chapter viii, might be considered irritating in chapter v. The other occasion is at the end of the chapter when Jasper returns home and 'finds his fire still burning' (p.32, l.31); he had also originally found 'on the hearth some glittering fragments of the late commotion', that is of the quarrel between Edwin and Neville.

The removal of the phrase 'with inscription finished' from the description of Mrs. Sapsea's monument (p.29, l.14) was obviously likewise necessitated by the changed chronology, but why also deprive the 'former pastrycook and muffin-maker's' gravestone of its distinguishing feature - 'with extinguished torch' (l.18), so that it becomes the only characterless monument in the survey? Surely this is a slip of the printers? The passage contains many deletions

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1. Unfortunately there is no further reference to the opium woman in Number Plans. No notes were made for the last chapter but it is surprising that she is not mentioned in the notes for chapter xiv.

and the writing is small. The qualification 'in his only form of polite contradiction' was added in Monthly Part to Deputy's words, 'Yer lie, I did', on p.29, l.30, clearly because a similar phrase had disappeared along with the deleted passage at the end.

Dickens seems to have been in some perplexity as to how most neatly to phrase his possibly topical reference to National Education. Manuscript bears evidence of indecision and crossing out before the phrase was eventually written as 'a sort of a - National Education', to be further amended in Monthly Parts to 'a sort of a -scheme of a - National Education' (p.29, ll.50-51). Another expression which he apparently found unsatisfactory - perhaps insufficiently clear - was a fragment of Durdles's speech on p.31, l.21, where in manuscript he said: 'That hammer of mine's a wall - Durdles's work'. The insertion of the explanatory 'Say' at the beginning of the sentence was probably responsible for the change from the characteristic 'Durdles's' to 'my' later on, in order not to disturb more than one line of type. A little earlier in the chapter Dickens seems to have found a whole paragraph relating to Durdles unsatisfactory, for another six or so lines could have been retained without crowding. In Jasper's speech on p.30, ll.34-40 the last sentence was, in manuscript, separated from the rest by the following, admittedly rather indirect, reflection on the ways of Durdles:

'... than in mine.'

As the mental state of Durdles, and of all his sodden tribe, is one hardly susceptible of astonishment in itself, so it is one hardly susceptible of any reasonable interpretation by other minds. But it happens to fall out tonight - just as it might have happened to fall out quite the other way - that Durdles rather likes his position in the dialogue, and chuckles over it.

'Indeed,' adds Jasper smiling, ' I am beginning to ...'

Twice in this chapter Monthly Parts differs from manuscript in the spelling of words where a debased form of speech is intended. Manuscript gives 'Wen' as Deputy's version of 'When' (p.29, l.1) as it also does later in the novel in chapter xviii (p.141, l.39) where it became 'when', uncorrected, in proof. Dickens was not consistent over this as 'when' appears in manuscript at p.141, l.37 and p.187, ll.43 & 46. The other word is Durdles' 'an't', in manuscript twice; 'ain't' and then 'ani't' in Monthly Part (p.29, l.50; p.30, l.15). The other variation of mild interest in the chapter is the removal of the epithet 'under-handed' from the description of Deputy's 'delivery' at Durdles (p.28, ll.33-4).

In Number I there are no significant variations between the text of Monthly Parts and that of the first American publication in Every Saturday: the most interesting one is that Every Saturday gives the price of opium as 'more nor shilling and sixpence' instead of 'more nor three shillings and sixpence'. Charles Dickens edition reveals a few minor and also insignificant variations, in most of which cases, as we should expect, Monthly Parts and Every Saturday agree with manuscript. For example:

	<u>MS, MP &amp; ES</u>		<u>CD</u>
p.3,l.13	his knife	this knife	p.2,l.47
p.6,l.7	whisker	whiskers	p.5,l.22
p.6,l.43	outer coat	outward coat	p.5,l.51
p.7,ll.28-9	his place at table	his place at the table	p.6,l.28
p.11,l.18	overcoming Me	overcoming me	p.9,l.40
p.13,l.8	in its many gardens	in many gardens	p.11,l.12
p.19,l.52	serious little thing	little serious thing	p.16,l.43



At one point where the texts differ collation with manuscript is impossible as the phrase was inserted after the manuscript stage. The variation is, fortunately, immaterial. MP (p.9, l.23) and ES read 'at the fire'; CD (p.8, l.8) 'on the fire' in the phrase following the manuscript words 'Not relaxing his own gaze' describing Jasper's spasm in Edwin's presence.

In three places spelling and punctuation are superior in CD: these are commonsense corrections:

	<u>MP</u>	<u>CD</u>
p.12, l.41 of ch.iii	citizen's minds (no apostrophe visible in MS)	citizens' minds (also <u>ES</u> )
p.28, l.45	it's ... name (also MS & <u>ES</u> )	its ... name
p.30, l.15	ani't (MS an't)	ain't (also <u>ES</u> )

P. T. O.

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*[Faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.]*

[Number II Plan - left hand]

Bring in the other young couple. Yes

Neville and Olympia Heyridge - <sup>or</sup><sub>^</sub> Heyford?

Neville and Helena Landless

Mixture of Oriental blood - <sup>f</sup>on [?] imperceptibly <sup>acquired</sup> [refined? nature?]<sup>✓</sup>]<sup>1</sup>  
in them. Yes

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1. Again, these words are difficult to read. Nicoll reads 'or imperfectly acquired mixture', but the second word is much more like 'imperceptibly'. Aylmer has 'imperfectly' deleted by Dickens in favour of 'imperceptibly'. Another possible interpretation is 'or imperceptibly [imagined? ingrained?] mixture'.

[Number II Plan - right hand]

(Mystery of Edwin Drood. - No II.)

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Chapter V

Philanthropy in Minor-Canon Corner

old Mrs. Crisparkle

The Blustering Philanthropist

China Shepherdess

Mr. Honeythunder

Minor Canon Corner

Chapter VI

More Confidences than one

Neville's to Mr. Crisparkle.

Rosa's to Helena

Piano scene with

Jasper. She singing;

he following her lips.

Chapter VII

Daggers Drawn

Quarrel (Fomented by Jasper). Goblet. And then  
confession to Mr. Crisparkle

Jasper lays his ground

Chapter VIII

Mr. Durdles and friend

Deputy engaged to stone Durdles nightly

No

Carry through the woman of the 1st chapter

Carry through Durdles's calling - and the  
bundle & the Keys

John Jasper looks at Edwin asleep.

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Number II (chs. vi - ix)

There are no number plans for chapter ix, 'Birds in the Bush', except for a reference in the left hand plan for Number III: 'Rosa's Guardian? Done in No. II'. The discrepancy in the numbering of the chapters, vi to viii in Monthly Parts being v to vii in manuscript, is, of course, owing to the altered position of chapter viii (v).

Chapter vi

There are no substantial alterations in this chapter; Dickens's greatest hesitancy seems to have been over the question of names. As Number Plan indicates Helena was at one time in Dickens's mind 'Olympia' and the surname 'Landless' was only selected after variations on a different sound - 'Heyridge ... Heyford' - had been tried.<sup>1</sup> This hesitancy is reflected in the crossings out in manuscript. Throughout chapters vi and vii the name as finally settled appears only as a replacement of the alternative version and this is interesting in view of the decisive appearance of 'Neville and Helena Landless' underlined in the left hand number plan. The inference would appear to be that the underlining at least was not done until the number was well on its way.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Many critics see in the name Helena Landless an unconscious recollection of Ellen Lawless Ternan. Whether or not this is so, the name was obviously chosen only after considerable deliberation. Dickens's consideration of the name Olympia for Helena seems to indicate his conception of his second heroine's nature: Olympia carries suggestions not only of exotic origin, but of imperiousness and dignity - a less human name perhaps than Helena.
  2. Cf. the note on the first Number Plan on Peptune/Tope and Dickens at Work, pp. 26, 136-7 for evidence of similar activity in David Copperfield.

Mr. Crisparkle, who had appeared professionally early in Number I, had not there been assigned a Christian name and Dickens had obviously not yet thought of one for him. His appearance in a domestic setting in Number II made an invention of this nature necessary and here again Dickens canvassed other possibilities - 'Arthur' once in manuscript, 'Joe' several times. On this occasion a satisfactory name was soon found; before the end of p. 34 'Septimus' was firmly established and an explanation of the choice duly inserted above the line in manuscript - the material in brackets, pp. 33, ll. 1-3. As with the consideration of 'Olympia' for Helena, Dickens's choice of name for Crisparkle is perhaps significant of his initial conception of this character:<sup>1</sup> one wonders if the possible pairing with Helena was not initially present in Dickens's mind. 'Septimus Crisparkle' and 'Olympia Heydridge' sit rather uneasily together; still more so 'Joe' Crisparkle, the alternative which Dickens obviously preferred to 'Arthur', a possible hero's name - witness Clennam. 'Joe', which the readers would probably associate with Gargery, is later in chapter vi bestowed on the omnibus driver who has such an uncomfortable passage with Mr. Honeythunder and who later watches over Rosa on her flight to London, surely a more appropriate assignment of the name. On the other hand, it must be recognized that Dickens's fondness for odd names was not confined to his comic characters: Chuzzlewit is early in his career, but Philip Pirrip is a late hero.

A final comment on names in chapter vi - 'Tope' is now firmly established in preference to 'Peptune'.

Of the other alterations, one noticeable cluster seems designed to

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1. See pp. 130-2 for discussion of Crisparkle's qualities.

give even greater sonority and emphasis to Mr. Honeythunder's declamatory manner of conducting conversation. Some of these additions occur in phrases which were insertions above the line in manuscript, which suggests that considerable care was taken to achieve a satisfactory rendering of this character's pomposity. 'This body' becomes in Monthly Part 'this assembled body' (p. 39, ll. 22-3); 'scorn and contempt' becomes 'indignant scorn and contempt' (ll. 23-4); 'utter detestation and abhorrence' becomes 'utter detestation and loathing abhorrence' (ll. 24-5). The phrase 'without being at all particular as to facts' (l. 27) was originally written in manuscript but subsequently crossed out. On further consideration Dickens obviously decided to let it stand. The court-martialled officers (p. 39, ll. 1-2) were originally to be hanged or shot; the removal of the 'hanging' alternative may have been in the cause of accuracy or it may have been intended to give greater forcefulness to Mr. Honeythunder's sentence. The designation 'sub-Treasurer' (l. 19) was perhaps a printers' error, influenced by 'sub-Committee' on the following line. 'Vice Treasurer', as in manuscript, would be more usual and would be paralleled by 'Vice Secretary' (both MS and MP) two lines lower.

The paragraph describing Mr. Honeythunder's departure shows one or two minor alterations. The words 'with whom they sympathised' (p. 40, l.13), not in manuscript, were perhaps inserted for greater clarity in the simile of the 'fugitive traitor'; compression of a phrase in manuscript occurs on l.15, where 'so ardent and fervent' becomes 'so fervent'; and there seems to have been some indecision in Dickens's mind over 'must have been' on l.2 and 'in believing that' on l.7.

Manuscript has 'should have been' and 'in holding that', but only after crossing out, and in each case the words originally written seem to have been those finally chosen.

Of other changes, the most interesting is that of 'beautiful state-captives' to the more vividly descriptive 'beautiful barbaric captives', referring to Neville's and Helena's progress through Cloisterham (p.38, l.35). The 'remote fragment of Main Line' railway (p. 37, l.3) was originally going to ruin 'the shareholders', not 'the Money Market'. Other little changes, such as that of Mrs. Crisparkle's folding her 'arms' (MS: 'hands', p. 34, l.43) and of the manuscript wording 'went out, one by one, like six weak little rushlights, almost as soon as they were lighted' to 'went out, one by one, as they were born, like six weak little rushlights, as they were lighted' (p.33, ll.2-3) were probably in the cause of accuracy and stylistic neatness; and there are in the opening lines of the chapter two instances of pruning on Dickens's part: the removal in Monthly Part of the word 'very' from the phrase 'from his ~~(very)~~ boxing-gloves' (p. 33, ll.11-12) and of the words 'the gentlest' from the phrase 'with ~~(the gentlest)~~ tenderness' describing Canon Crisparkle's salutation of his mother (p. 33, ll.17-18). Likewise the phrase 'Plain instructions' in manuscript becomes 'Instructions' in Monthly Part (p. 36, l.44); in manuscript 'Plain' had been written above the line, another instance of Dickens's finally reverting to first thoughts, unless the omission was a printers' error, which seems unlikely in view of the clarity of the hand-writing. Another instance where printers might have been at fault occurs at p. 38, l.6 in Mr. Honeythunder's reference to returning 'at night'. The word, again written above the line, is difficult to read in manuscript, but looks more like 'tonight';



whether or not this is so, Dickens obviously accepted 'at night' for the final version. Again in this chapter (p. 34, l.8) 'crows' in manuscript is replaced by 'rooks' in Monthly Part. On one point which the reader might be inclined to query, manuscript confirms Monthly Part reading: namely that it was Mr. Tope, and not Mrs. Tope as in chapter ii, who waited at table at the Crisparkles' dinner-party.

### Chapter vii

This chapter contains even fewer noteworthy changes than the previous ones. The only one which really affects substance is the dropping of a phrase from Rosa's description of Jasper's occasional lapses into 'a frightful sort of dream'. Few readers would, I think, regret the loss of the graphic detail 'with a dropped jaw', following 'he is sitting close at my side' (p. 46, l.39). Another point at which Dickens had second thoughts in his recording of Jasper's attitudes is in the piano sequence where the word 'unwinking' was dropped, presumably in proof, from the sentence: 'As Jasper (← unwinking →) watched the pretty lips ...' (p. 44, ll.11-12). The word is, strictly speaking, unnecessary as we have already been told that 'he followed her lips most attentively, with his eyes as well as hands' (p. 43, ll. 49-50) and the revised sentence gives a smoother reading, but the change may just possibly result from a printer's difficulty in deciphering this bit of the manuscript where words inserted above the line make the writing obscure. Another alteration in the same paragraph (pp. 44, ll.10-16) seems designed to give a smoother and more effective sequence: the initial

sentence 'The song went on' in manuscript was part of the previous paragraph, joined to the last phrase by the word 'and'. Though at a superficial glance this seems a slight change, the brief sentence in its new position has a distinct power in initiating the mood sustained by the following key-words 'sorrowful', 'plaintive', 'tender', the last of these also added in the Monthly Part. A little earlier in this scene Jasper is referred to as 'carefully and softly hinting the key-note' (p. 43, l.50). At this point in manuscript there was a great deal of crossing-out, making the words difficult to decipher, but there seems to be no warrant for the word 'carefully'. The manuscript word is much more like 'skilfully', and, unless Dickens was still unsatisfied with the phrase and removed the alliteration in proof, this may be an instance of printers' being unable to make anything of the words and Dickens's having to restore sense in proof without recourse to the original. However, there are minor stylistic changes in this chapter and this could be one of them. A few further examples of such alterations will be sufficient: Mr. Crisparkle's reassurance to Neville: 'Quite the contrary' (p. 41, l.35) is in manuscript given twice; towards the end of the same page (l.48) Neville's 'an unmitakeable difference' appears in manuscript to be 'an immeasurable difference', though the word is not easy to read; on p. 42, l.2 'these things inclined me' was at first the more cumbersome 'these things made me inclined' and on p. 43, l.45 'as they came into' replaced 'as they entered', probably because 're-entered' was used on the previous line. Sometimes an unnecessary word is dropped - 'most bitter hatred' becoming 'bitter hatred' (p. 42, l.11), 'And be you a friend' becoming 'And be a friend' (p. 46, l.2); or the

order is inverted - 'the latter felt instinctively' becoming 'the latter instinctively felt' (p. 43, l.41). The effect of some of these changes would be almost unnoticed by a reader; the one alteration which does make a perceptible difference in style is the removal of the interjection 'Hem!' twice from Miss Twinkleton's reported speech at the foot of p. 44, which originally ran:

... outside the walls of the Nuns' House - Hem! - and that we<sup>we</sup> undertook the formation of the future wives and mothers of England - Hem! - (The last words ...

#### Chapter viii

The only change in this chapter affecting more than a brief phrase occurs at the end where Jasper is warning Crisparkle of the dangerous charge he has undertaken (p. 53, ll.47-8). In manuscript, Jasper enlarged on the form in which trouble would be likely to come between the Minor Canon and his ward: after 'a dangerous charge' follows:

You must sometimes - no doubt, often - have to put yourself in opposition to this fierce nature and suppress it. After what I have seen tonight, I am fearful even for you.

Dickens does not seem to be removing here anything material, i.e. anything which would undesirably tie him down to a particular later development. The deleted remarks express supposition, not fact, and likely supposition in the circumstances. The implication of suspected danger to Mr. Crisparkle in person remains as the text stands and this suggests that the deletion comes into the category of those made when the material written was too long for the required thirty-two pages. If this were the case then presumably the lines were removed, not when the proofs were first returned by the printers, for at this stage

Dickens found himself short of material, but when proofs of the new chapter 'Birds in the Bush' were received. In that chapter substantial cuts were made. It is obvious that in his anxiety not to under-calculate again Dickens produced more than enough new material. Number II ends right at the bottom of p. 64 and, if Dickens had already compressed the last chapter as much as he could, it is feasible that he would look for the last few needed lines to the material immediately preceding, to make as little disturbance as possible in the printing. It will be remembered that, according to Forster, Dickens spoke of having had to 'remodel number two altogether!'<sup>1</sup> This is a rather misleading exaggeration: the alteration just mentioned is the only material change affecting chapters vi to viii.

The one alteration of fact in chapter viii is rather an odd one as there seems to be no obvious reason for it. Twice reference is made to Edwin's impending departure and on each occasion (p. 47, l.9 and p. 49, l.19) Dickens carefully removed the original specification of 'morning' or 'morning early' to leave merely the more indefinite time, 'to-morrow'. Yet Edwin has no rôle to play in Cloisterham in the morning and in chapter ix (p. 62) Rosa refers to his having 'gone away only this morning'. Chapter ix was presumably written at about the same time that the corrections in chapter viii were made.

The most noticeable re-writing of material to gain a more desirable effect in chapter viii occurs in the description of the scene in the moonlight on which Neville emerges from the gate house after his quarrel with Edwin (p. 52, ll.10-19). Here Dickens merely transposed a reference

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1. See p. 21.

to the Cathedral and the graves from its original position two sentences earlier. The change is a minute one but justifiable, as comparison of the two passages will show:

MS: But, nothing happening, and the moon looking down upon him as if he were dead after a fit of wrath, and the old Cathedral and the old graves regarding him so solemnly, he holds his steam-hammer-beating head and heart, and staggers away ...

Some wildly passionate ideas of the river, dissolve under the spell of the moonlight, and the remembrance of his sister ...

MP: But, nothing happening, and the moon looking down upon him as if he were dead after a fit of wrath, he holds his steam-hammer beating head and heart, and staggers away ...

Some wildly passionate ideas of the river, dissolve under the spell of the moonlight on the Cathedral and the graves, and the remembrance of his sister ...

Other changes in this chapter are in the nature of a word or phrase dropped or added here and there for reasons of style, or of a preferred synonym introduced to replace the word originally chosen. Examples of the latter are 'completely/entirely' (P. 48, 1.10), 'feign/pretend' (p. 48, 1.21), 'really you should bear in mind the obligations'/'you should respect the obligations' (p. 48, 1.46), 'makes him blaze'/'makes him red hot' (p. 49, 1.25) and 'mixing and blending'/'mixing and compounding' (p. 50, 1.2) (in each case the manuscript version is given first). Occasionally in such alterations a slight difference of meaning or an increase of emphasis is introduced, as in 'kettle' changed to the more indeterminate 'heater' (p. 49, 1.17), 'sadly' changed to 'thoughtfully' (p. 54, 1.5) to describe Mr. Crisparkle's reaction to Jasper's remarks on Neville's nature and behaviour, and the italicizing of 'I' in Neville's retort to Edwin (p. 48, 1.26). Examples of the former are the dropping of 'So' (p. 47, 1.27) at the beginning of the sentence: '*So* they stop and interchange...' and the dropping of qualifying words such as 'great' ('*great* disdain');

48.36), 'here' ('of host ~~(here)~~ to-night'; 48.43-4), 'very' ('have ~~(very)~~ sharp edges'; 49.7) and 'but' ('is ~~(but)~~ a few yards'; 49.16). Occasionally an unnecessary repetitive phrase goes, as in 'my dear fellow, my boy!' where Monthly Part (51.48) omits the last two words; 'Please again to unclench it', which in manuscript followed the word 'commentary' (53.7) and 'I repeat, murderous' which preceded 'He might have laid my dear boy dead ...' (53.35). Increased accuracy or clarity sometimes accompanies the alteration, as in the substitution of the adverbial form, although clumsy, for the adjectival, in the phrases 'though rallying too' (50.30) to correspond with 'admiringly and tenderly'; and the replacement twice of the pronoun 'he' by a proper name: 'He sets the example' becomes 'Jasper sets the example' (50.26) and 'When he speaks' becomes 'When Neville speaks' (51.2).

It may seem surprising that Dickens, when so pressed for time, should want to give consideration to what may appear very minor improvements. Of course, alterations do sometimes denote over-anxiety, but another factor to be borne in mind is that at the time of writing Edwin Drood Dickens, whose work had always made a strong aural impact, would, with his experience of public readings, be more than ever conscious of the minutest verbal effect. Several of the examples cited above are more impressive aurally in their revised form: the emphasized 'I' of Neville's retort; the balance gained by the substitution of 'red hot' for 'blaze' following 'coolness' and by the omission of 'very' so that 'sharp edges' follows more closely and exactly 'sharp-edged words'; the more dramatic effect of the quiet, 'He might have laid my dear boy dead at my feet' when the preceding repetition of 'murderous' is removed,

and similarly the heightened effect of the isolated final sentence of the paragraph on p. 47 when the connecting word 'So' disappears from the sentence, 'They stop and interchange a rather heated look'. Though minute, these changes undoubtedly do tighten and give point to the reading.

One final remark on this chapter: a mis-spelling has been allowed to go through in Monthly Part: p. 53, l.13, 'skillfully'.

The next chapter in manuscript is 'Chapter viii. Mr. Durdles and Friend'. After this, on the next page of manuscript, the heading Number III is crossed out and underneath is written:

'Chapter ix. Birds in the Bush'

This would suggest that Dickens was in the habit of heading his pages in advance and that he had not started to write Number III when proofs of I and II were received from the printers. This would fit with the general tone of his references to Edwin Drood at this stage: his feeling of relief at having Numbers I and II out of the way and anticipation of time to spare for other commitments before the novel needed his attention again.<sup>1</sup> But this hypothesis is complicated by a further alteration at the beginning of the next chapter 'Smoothing the Way', also numbered III, where the correct heading<sup>x</sup> was written only after ix had been tried and crossed out. Why was ix originally written? Was this a mere slip on Dickens's part, encouraged by the ix of the Number Plan<sup>2</sup> or had he

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1. See p. 21.

2. Cf. the Plan for Number VI where chapter headings, without detail, were written in advance.

in fact begun this chapter before Numbers I and II were finalized? But, if the latter were the case, why the heading 'III' on the other sheet of paper? Dickens, as a rule, wrote the number once only. It seems most likely that the ix was a mere slip. The ink of the crossing out is identical with that in which the Number was written, not as in Number Plans where two stages can clearly be traced.

As for the material of the new chapter ix, some of it had been intended for the following Number<sup>1</sup>: Rosa's guardian and the circumstances of her betrothal would have to be introduced sooner or later and there was presumably to have been a scene at Miss Twinkleton's in Number III. For the rest, chapter ix for the most part contains non-essential material, what can be recognized after the event as padding - the elaborate account of reactions in the Nuns' House to the quarrel between Neville and Edwin. As already stated Dickens wrote too much material for this chapter and had to cut it down; the cuts come, however, not in the Nuns' House material, which opens the chapter, but in the concluding pages, the interview between Mr. Grewgious and Jasper. This would obviously be more convenient for the printers. Other considerations which may have weighed with Dickens are that the latter part of the novel must inevitably concentrate to a fair extent on Jasper and the more sparing of effects he could be earlier, the better perhaps: also the novel is notable for its concentration; there is less scope for light comedy in a story of this nature and Dickens perhaps welcomed the opportunity here to give free rein to his comic powers.<sup>2</sup> In fact, what goes from the

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1. See left hand Plan for Number III, p. 252.

2. Usually, as the authors of Dickens at Work observe, p. 22, Dickens made his cuts at the expense of the comedy.



Jasper passages is not, obviously, of any plot significance: cut passages comprise mainly superfluties in the conversation and some more detailed examination of Jasper's reactions to the discussion of the betrothal and of Mr. Grewgious's observation of these reactions.

The longest deletion is from the last page of the Number, p. 64, where the passage:

'So, you settled with her that you would come back at Christmas?' observed Jasper. 'I see! Mr. Grewgious, as you quite fairly said just now, there is such an exceptional attachment between my nephew and me ...' (11.34-7)

is in manuscript:

'So you settled with her that you would come back at that time,' observed Jasper.

'Eh?' said the other, expressionlessly innocent. But not without adding internally: 'This is a very quick watch-dog!'

'So you settled with her that you would come back at Christmas,' repeated Jasper.

'At Christmas? Certainly. O dear yes, I settled with her that I would come back at Christmas,' replied Mr. Grewgious, as if the question had previously lain between Lady Day, Midsummer Day, and Michaelmas.

By this time, sometimes walking very slowly and sometimes standing still, they had reached the Gate House.

'Will you not walk up,' said Jasper, 'and refresh?'

'Thank you, no. I have a horse and chaise here, and have not too much time to get across and catch the new railroad.'

Jasper pressed his hand.

'Mr. Grewgious, as you quite fairly said just now, my affection for my dear boy makes me quick to feel in his behalf, and I cannot allow any approach to a slight to be put upon him. There is such an exceptional attachment between him and me ...'

A few lines earlier occurred a deletion of a similar type: the following passage was removed between Mr. Grewgious's reply, 'I mean us' and his following words, beginning, 'Therefore, let them ...' (p. 64, 11.29-30):

Jasper looked at him steadily, smiled, and said nothing. Mr. Grewgious had an impression that he was shaking his head; but stopping to look at him steadily in return, found that he was not shaking his head.

'Therefore,' said Mr. Grewgious in a cosily arranging manner, 'let them ...'

Again, the one important thing removed is the presentation to the reader of an attitude of watchful awareness in Mr. Grewgious towards Jasper, an attitude which is later crystallized in chapters xv, xvi and xvii, i.e. just prior to the appearance of Datchery in Cloisterham in chapter xviii.

Scraps of Mr. Grewgious's conversation are removed here and there in the last two pages, for example the characteristically staccato explanation:

'... Duty in the abstract must be done, even if it did; but it did not, and it does not. I like your nephew very much. I hope you are satisfied.'

from the end of his first speech on p. 64, ending 'your nephew' and an interchange on the previous page (ll.38-41) is compressed from the following:

'Not at all, not at all. I came down of my own accord. I have had it in my mind to come down, off and on, this long time. But more off than on, I am ashamed to say.'

'Are you going to -?'

'I have been to my pretty ward's, and am now homeward-bound again. I felt that I ought in politeness to report myself to you before I went.'

'Thank you. You found her thriving?'

(The passages deleted from Monthly Part are underlined.)

There is no particular loss to be regretted in this passage, but some readers might feel more the deprivation of two brief passages of description, one relating to Mr. Grewgious's embarrassed reaction to Miss Twinkleton's curtsy:

Plunged into a stage of hopeless angularity by the spectacle, Mr. Grewgious got out of the presence how he could.  
(following 'starting-point', p. 63, l.3)

the other bringing to momentary - and prosaic - life the 'living waters' coming out from the Cathedral:

Among the dirty linen that was already being unbuttoned behind with all the expedition compatible with a feint of following Mr. Tope and his mace in procession round the corner was the robe of Mr. Jasper. He threw it to a boy (who sadly wanted "getting up" by some laundress) and he and Mr. Grewgious walked out of the Cathedral, talking as they went.

(following 'coming out', p. 63, l.35)

These are the substantial deletions of the chapter, presumably dictated by the need to economize on space. Two minor deletions occur in the same part of the chapter: the words 'Can I be less than satisfied!' originally concluded Jasper's speech on p. 64, l.7, following the word 'handsomely', and his friendly pressure on Mr. Grewgious's arm - a gesture presumably intended by Dickens as an intimation to the reader of Jasper's desperate attempt to cover his real disquiet and suffering - was originally repeated during Mr. Grewgious's speech, as follows:

'And you will win your wager, if you do,' retorted  
Mr. Grewgious.  
Jasper laid that friendly pressure on his arm again.  
(p. 64, ll.15-16)

Apart from these cuts, there was a certain amount of re-writing in the chapter. One of the passages most affected was the piece on p. 63 beginning 'Old Time heaved a mouldy sigh', in which the darkening Cathedral is contrasted with the evening brightness outside and the rich outpouring of music at the close of the service is paralleled at the close of the paragraph in rhythm and imagery. One can understand Dickens's devoting considerable care to the writing of this passage and the number of minor changes within a space of twenty lines bear witness to his efforts:

<u>MS</u>		<u>MP</u>
reflected on	(1.17)	cast upon
Outside	(1.23)	In the free outer air
Inside	(11.26-7)	In the Cathedral
the hills and dales	(1.24)	the teeming hills and dales
dusky	(1.27)	murky
feeble effort for it	(1.30)	feeble effort
and then, lo the sea was dry	(1.33)	and then the sea was dry, and
and all was still and silent		all was still

Passages of very different effect from this which were revised include the introduction of Mr. Grewgious on p. 57 in which he was originally described as 'weazen' as well as 'arid' and 'sandy' and his hair was like not only a 'comm~~on~~ (MP: mangy) yellow fur tippet' but, alternatively, like 'the mane of the cheapest description of toy-horse' (p. 57, 11.11-15); and two descriptions of Rosa, one (p. 55, 11.40-1) in which she originally 'retired into a corner rocking herself to and fro, and beseeching not to be told things that made people either ridiculous or dreadful' (MP: 'retired into a corner, beseeching not to be told any more') and one (p. 59, 1.24) in which 'laughing until she cried', written only after much crossing out of some phrase ending 'in spite of herself', was eventually replaced by 'laughing heartily'. Hesitation over whether to take up again the notion of 'incompleteness' in reference to Mr. Grewgious's countenance, first introduced on p. 57, is reflected (p. 61, 1.39) in the word 'uncompleted' written over the line in manuscript to describe the lawyer's 'face and manner' and dropped again in the Monthly Part. On p. 58, 1.18 Dickens ultimately decided against the facetious expression 'his waistcoat ditto' following the previous line's 'coat-pocket': 'waistcoat pocket' is the reading of the Monthly Part. One minor alteration recalls an opposite change in an earlier chapter. Whereas in chapter vii Dickens had removed the

interjection 'Hem!' from Miss Twinkleton's speech, he here inserts it in the Monthly Part to suggest a little self-conscious cough introducing her poetic reference to Shakespeare as the bard:

"who drew  
The celebrated Jew" (p. 56, ll.21-2)

Grammatical consideration underlies the change from manuscript 'was' to Monthly Part 'were' in the hypothetical consideration 'if either of your fathers were living now' (p. 61, l.32). Finally, Mr. Grewgious's characteristic address 'My dear' to Rosa did not in manuscript introduce his query, '... is there any wish of yours that I can further?' (p. 61, l.43). The word written here is very difficult to read but looks like 'Exactly' or some other adverbial form. This may be one of those occasions where the printers could not make sense of manuscript and Dickens revised without recourse to it. In addition to these, there are several other minor alterations in the chapter.

The most notable divergence between Monthly Part and Every Saturday in Number II is in the captions to the two illustrations. The fact that in none of the three Numbers where the captions differ is there a case of one correct and one incorrect one suggests the likelihood that on some occasions copy was inadvertently forwarded without captions; pressure of time would then dictate the course to be taken. In the actual text there is scarcely any variation - far less than in Number I - except in punctuation, where Every Saturday frequently 'improves' on Monthly Parts.

In some nine or ten places where CD edition varies from Monthly Part - again, not considering punctuation - manuscript and Every Saturday

support the Monthly Parts reading, as was the case in the first Number. Samples of these variations follow:

<u>MS, MP and ES</u>	<u>CD edition</u>
p. 40, 1.19 of ch. vii: It was well	p. 33, 1.44: It is well
p. 46, 1.2: for I don't understand ( 'for' obviously required by sense)	p. 38, 1.16: I don't understand
p. 46, 1.40: more terrible to me then than ever	p. 38, 1.45: more terrible to me than ever
p. 48, 1.19: they have (chapter written in present tense)	p. 40, 1.9: they had
p. 50, 1.35: by the wine	p. 42, 1.5: with the wine
p. 52, 1.40: very little indeed (phrase without 'a' more usual)	p. 43, 1.42: a very little indeed
p. 55, 1.24: governing prece <del>dent</del> of ( 'precedent' required by sense)	p. 46, 1.7: governing precedence of
p. 60, 1.15: hands ( 'hands' parallels 'hands' three lines above)	p. 50, 1.3: hand
p. 61, 1.29: it may or may not	p. 51, 1.7: it may or it may not

As these examples show, where one reading is to be preferred to the other on grounds of sense, CD edition never has the superior reading.

P.T.O.

Number III Plan - left hand

Pursue Edwin Drood and Rosa?

Lead on to final scene between them in No. V? IV?

Yes

How many more scenes between them?

Way to be paved for their marriage -

\_\_\_\_\_ and parting instead. Yes.

Miss Twinkleton's? No. Next No.

Rosa's Guardian? Done in No. II.

Mr. Sapsea? Yes. Last chapter

Neville Landless at Mr. Crisparkle's ;

And Helena? Yes

Neville admires Rosa. That comes out  
from himself



Number III Plan - right hand

( Mystery of Edwin Drood. - No III. )

Chapter <I> X

Smoothing the Way

That is, for Jasper's plan, through Mr. Crisparkle;  
who takes new ground on Neville's new  
confidence

— Minor Canon Corner. The closet I  
remember there as a child<sup>1</sup>

— Edwin's appointment for Xmas Eve.

Chapter X I<sup>2</sup>

A Picture and a Ring

J    P    T

1747

Dinner in chambers

Bazzard the clerk

The two waiters

Mr. Grewgious's past story

"A ring of diamonds and rubies delicately set in gold.

Edwin takes it

3

Chapter XI I<sup>2</sup>

A Night with Durdles

Lay the ground for the manner of the murder, to come  
out at last.

— Keep the boy suspended

Night picture of the Cathedral

1. This reading, too, has caused some difficulty. A possible alternative is 'The closet? remember these as a child'. Nicoll mistakenly read the last part as 'remember there is a child' which led to speculations as to Deputy's connexions.
2. Dickens had already written the numbers as IX, X and XI and had to alter them to allow for the new chapter ix in No.II.
3. This last note is squashed in: Dickens had presumably not left himself sufficient space.

Number III    (chs. x - xii)

As already noted, Dickens had originally intended to keep Mr. Grewgious for this number. In fact we do have a 'Grewgious' chapter, in which the presumably important character of Bazzard is introduced. If, as seems possible, Mr. Grewgious was originally intended to make his first appearance in this number in Cloisterham, not London (the proximity of the reference in Number Plan to 'Miss Twinkleton's?' and the postponement of this to the next Number when rendered superfluous here supports this) Bazzard could presumably have been introduced only at second hand if at all. It is conceivable that it was the need to find extra material for this Number that gave Bazzard his birth and that Dickens then perceived a possible functional rôle for this comic 'padding'.<sup>1</sup> Comparison of left hand Number Plan and actual content of Part III reveals nothing that was obviously invented to fill the space caused by the needs of Number II: there is no reference to Durdles but the Sapsea reference may be understood to include this. Incidentally, there was no reference to Durdles in the left hand plan for Number II where he was intended to feature in an important chapter. Does this suggest that Dickens knew so well the use he intended to make of Durdles that he had no need to record this part of his plan?

Chapter x

Chapter x shows only few and minor alterations, usually in the nature of vocabulary changes, removal of surplus words or, more occasionally, an addition. The most interesting and unusual case of difference between

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1. Bazzard is the candidate of several critics for the rôle of Datchery.

manuscript and Monthly Part is one where, I think, manuscript has decidedly the better reading, inducing the inference that here printers misread what Dickens had written and the proofs were rather hastily read; the Monthly Part reading makes sense gramatically, but is not really warranted in context. On p.74, l.11, Jasper speaks to Canon Crisparkle of his 'vague and unfounded fears', i.e. for Edwin's safety in proximity to Neville. Why should Jasper acknowledge his fears to be 'unfounded'? He apparently has good cause to fear Neville: his second Diary entry, lower down the same page, after referring to his 'dark intangible presentiments of evil', adds 'if feelings founded upon staring facts are to be so called'. What Jasper actually said in the manuscript was 'my vague and unformed fears', almost synonymous with his later 'dark intangible presentiments', and there is surely some justification here for suspecting that Dickens would really have preferred the original reading.

Another unusual, though in this case quite insignificant, divergence in this chapter reveals a rare slip on Dickens's part - the naming 'Edwin Landless' instead of 'Neville Landless' twice within a few lines on p.74. This would not be worth noting but for the fact that the manuscript as a whole reveals a remarkably high degree of accuracy.

Examples of pruning of words deemed on second thoughts unnecessary are as follows (in each case the words removed, presumably in proof, are enclosed in angular brackets):

'against <experience and> accumulated observation' (65.6)

"according to my lights," <observed the Minor Canon>. (66.17)

'met ...<with> full corroboration' (70.50)

'undeserving <of> serious consideration' (71.28)

'if in my childhood I had <but> known' (72.21-2)  
 'as one <ashamed,> repentant, and wretched' (71.19-20)

Examples of vocabulary changes include:

'You are unusually responsible and trustworthy' - 'unusually' replaced by 'always' in Monthly Part, p.74, l.1, where the tribute 'unusually responsible' addressed to the Minor Canon might conceivably have been misinterpreted;

the word 'completely' replaced by the more expressive 'outrageously' in Crisparkle's rebuke to Neville:

'your admiration ... is outrageously misplaced' (71.3);

'surprize' replaced by the vaguer 'gown' (66.4), and

'quite enraptured' replaced by the less effusive 'delighted' to denote Mr. Crisparkle's feelings (74.8).

Many of the minor changes just noted occur in phrases which had been written in manuscript only after deliberation.

Effective additions are the word 'quietly' in the description of the Minor Canon's cheerful submission to his mother's rule: 'he would quietly swallow' (68.27) - perhaps to balance this the word 'pleasantly' was removed three lines lower after 'would go out' - and the emphatic 'Heaven knows' to stress Jasper's feeling of his life's uneventfulness (74.15).

Twice, for no obvious reason, emphasis in the form of underlining/italics is removed: from the prefix 'un' in the phrase 'unlike that lamb' (68.25) and from the pronoun 'you' in Jasper's words to Crisparkle: 'you are always welcome' (73.20).

One slight change which might have been a printers' error is the alteration of 'man' to 'men' in Crisparkle's explanation to his mother that he kept quiet about the disturbance between Edwin and Neville 'for the good of the young men' (66.16). The two have been discussing

specifically Neville but Crisparkle did include Edwin's name at one point, and either singular or plural would be acceptable here. Whether or not printers were initially responsible for this change, over another variation credit may be due to them for regularizing Dickens's vagaries: his spelling of Rosa's surname with an additional 'd' from time to time has not been allowed to intrude in the printed text. On the other hand, to anticipate a later Number, a phrase for which Dickens had a characteristic spelling has not been so successfully regularized: the phrase 'by and by' which Dickens writes 'bye and bye', in addition to being hyphenated in Monthly Parts, is printed sometimes with both 'e's deleted (as at p.72, l.15) sometimes with the final 'e' retained (as at p.104, l.7).

#### Chapter xi

The beginning of chapter xi is missing from the manuscript, which starts at p.76, paragraph 4: 'Many accounts and account-books ...' There is, however, in the first section one obvious correction in punctuation which should be made in Monthly Part in order to render the sense grammatical, namely the change to some lighter form of punctuation than a full stop between 'the property of us Britons' and 'The odd fortune of which sacred institutions' (p.75, l.18 of ch. xi) the latter of which introduces a passage in parenthesis which cannot be separated from the preceding sentence. CD edition and Every Saturday rectify the mistake. In the previous paragraph, too, modern practice would modify the punctuation in the removal of the comma which separates subject from

verb between 'street' and 'imparts' on l.6 of the chapter, but Dickens may have written the comma in manuscript.

The changes from manuscript to Monthly Part are not many. Some of them consist of removal of words or phrases which had been inserted above the line in manuscript, an indication that on these occasions first thoughts finally proved the more acceptable. Such are:

p.77, l.4, where the phrase 'some not empty cellarage at the bottom of the common stair' at one time read 'some not empty cellarage in the black basement at the bottom of the common stair';

p.83, l.15, where 'in short sentences' was at one time written 'in short dry sentences';

p.79, l.30, where the word 'sharply' was removed from Mr. Grewgious's manner of replying to Edwin's question about the Landlesses.

Perhaps this was because it was originally intended merely to indicate his habitual manner and might be wrongly interpreted as hinting at a particular interest in the Landlesses; perhaps because it did indeed serve the latter purpose and was thought to be too premature a give-away. It is just conceivable that Dickens was planning an eventual tying-up of relationships in which the Landlesses would be seen to have no merely fortuitous connexion with the inhabitants of Cloisterham, and Mr. Grewgious, as a lawyer, might be in possession of more facts than the layman.

Alternatively, the sharpness might have reflected Mr. Grewgious's having picked up some knowledge of the quarrel while in Cloisterham, his air of ignorance being more of a literal answer to Edwin's question than the real truth. So much speculation may be roused - and never settled - by the mere removal of a simple word. Little wonder that speculation on the ending of Edwin Drood has been so prolific.

Two other deletions denote an actual, though minute, change in the way Dickens visualized an action: the immoveable waiter in manuscript found fault with the flying waiter 'in secret nudges' (p.79, l.44) and Mr. Grewgious when left alone (p.85, l.9) originally 'took off his shoes, and walked softly and slowly to and fro'. The immoveable waiter's supercilious designation of his assistant as 'this slave' (p.80, l.10) replaced the more innocuous words 'this young man' and in Monthly Part Mr. Grewgious's face was no longer described (p.80, l.42) as a 'stolid face', perhaps because the idea this conveyed was sufficiently given by words such as 'high-dried' and 'wooden' in near proximity.

Changes of less effect include the correction of 'you were expected' to the rather clearer 'you are expected' (p.79, l.11), the insertion of the word 'all' at the end of p.79 in the words 'the immoveable waiter had forgotten them all' and the improvement on the original phrase 'her own bright face' to read 'her own bright self' (p.81, l.51). Twice a qualifying phrase is inserted: the words 'of any sort' after 'Commander in Chief' (p.80, ll.13-14) which give a better rhythm to the sentence, and the words 'something of' in the phrase 'with something of an angling air about it' (p.80, ll.24-5) partly, perhaps, for the same reason. The word 'tonight' was changed from its position after 'wandering mood' (p.85, l.21) to modify Mr. Grewgious's uneasiness about the ring three lines earlier, and his castigation of himself as 'a weak fool' (p.85, l.24) replaces the manuscript's less strong 'and more fool I'.

In this chapter the phrase 'by the bye' (manuscript spelling) occurs: Monthly Part spells it 'by-the-by' (p.77, l.51).

Chapter xii

There are no deletions of length in this, the final chapter of Number III, an indication that Dickens was now gauging his material better than in the first two Numbers. At one point (p.88, l.36) Durdles' sarcastic indifference to Sapsea's patronage is curbed. Where Monthly Part merely has: 'Don't you get into a bad habit of boasting ... It'll grow upon you', in the manuscript Durdles elaborates on his retort: '... upon you. You'll be boasting, before long, that His Reverence the Dean is your friend. And if you don't check yourself we shall have you, next, claiming the Bishop'. Another, briefer, deletion occurs on the following page (p.89, ll.13-14) of words which are clearly redundant. Where Monthly Part has 'No outward reason is apparent for it. Can there be any sympathetic reason crouching darkly within him?' the latter sentence in manuscript read: 'Can there be some sympathetic reason crouching darkly within him, though there is none visible without?' Deletions such as these were clearly made for aesthetic reasons rather than from considerations of length: the chapter ends half way down p.96, the shortest Number so far.

The one change of fact in this chapter suggests that Dickens may have been giving more careful thought to chronological accuracy. By this stage of the story as we read it Mr. Sapsea has taken office as Mayor (p.86, ll.14-15; p.87, ll.12, 13, 42): presumably he has been officiating since November and it is now near enough to the end of the year for Christmas plans to be made. The fact that in manuscript Sapsea's office is still referred to the future -'for it is settled that he will be the next Mayor of Cloisterham' and he is still accordingly



designated 'Mr. Sapsea' instead of 'Mr. Mayor' - does not imply a change of plan, for this Christmas Eve is the obvious time for Jasper's activities against Edwin and Neville, and Mr. Sapsea has been envisaged as his official tool from the outset; witness the reference in the plan for chapter iv: 'He will want a solemn donkey bye and bye'.

One of the most useful functions of the manuscript for this chapter is to correct an obviously bad reading of Monthly Part, which Every Saturday perpetuates and which CD edition makes even worse. The reader has to look twice to make sense of the last part of the following passage (p.86, ll.25-8):

Mr. Sapsea has been received at the Gate House with kindred hospitality; and on that occasion Mr. Jasper seated himself at the piano, and sang to him, tickling his ears - figuratively, long enough to present a considerable area for tickling.

Unless 'figuratively' modifies what follows, a fact which punctuation here does not make clear, and thereby links 'long' to 'ears' as a qualifying epithet reflecting on Mr. Sapsea's asinine characteristics, we are left with a nonsensical reading in which 'long' becomes adverbial, modifying 'sang'. What is needed is a form of punctuation which pushes 'figuratively' towards the latter part of the sentence, clearly separating it from 'ears', and this is what manuscript provides and what the printers, partly perhaps out of conformity to their own house practice, partly owing to the ambiguous form of Dickens's 'y', corrupt. Manuscript reads:

... tick<sup>l</sup>ing his ears:- figuratively [ , ] long enough to present a considerable surface for tickling.

The printers may have objected to the form ':-' and removed the wrong part. As regards the problematical comma, there is undoubtedly a mark

here in manuscript but taking into consideration the characteristic form of Dickens's 'y' [y] one could set it down to an accidental break in the flow of ink, rather than as a separate sign. I incline to think that a comma was not intended here, but even if it were, still Dickens's punctuation is heavier before 'figuratively' than after, and this is what the sense requires.

Two brief deletions in this chapter show Dickens reverting to first thoughts. The description of Deputy's tactics against Jasper's stranglehold (p.96, l.8) reads in manuscript, 'to grovel in the dust with one defensive leg up, and cry' but the phrase 'with one defensive leg up' had been inserted above the line and was subsequently removed from Monthly Part. A word has also been removed at the beginning of Durdles' retort to Mr. Sapsea's 'And you are my friend' (p.88, l.34). The speech in manuscript began with the word 'I': 'I? Don't you get into a bad habit of boasting' but the 'I' looks like an insertion after the words as eventually printed had been written. Another deletion was perhaps made out of considerations of unsuitability to the speaker and the context. Jasper's brusque reply to Durdles' query as to whether he believes in ghosts 'of ... things' is odd enough as it stands: 'What things? Flower-beds and watering-pots? Horses and harness?' (p.92, ll.22-3) but with the addition of the manuscript's final phrase 'Pigs and sties?' it hovers inappropriately near to comedy more typical of Durdles than of his questioner. At one point a descriptive phrase pleasantly adding to the comedy of Sapsea's adulation of the Dean was not thought of until after the manuscript stage: the manuscript lacks the words 'looking about him to see what has become of his copyist' (p.87,

11.41-2) denoting the Dean's reaction to Sapsea's retreat to inspect his model's coat-buttons (coat-skirts in MS).

Of the minor alterations of words and phrases the one which seems without point is the dropping of the word 'unsteadily' from the description of Durdles' scrambling to his feet after sleeping in the crypt (p.94, 1.40): in manuscript the whole phrase 'scrambling up unsteadily' is written above the line, but perfectly clearly, and there is no obvious reason for a printers' error here. One other point where a printers' error does seem likely is in the alteration in Monthly Part to 'everywhere' of Durdles' manuscript 'everywheres' (p.92, 1.42). I have not found another occasion by which to check his use of this word, but that lack in itself suggests that there was no reason to remove the final 's'. Another possible misreading occurs at p.91, 1.44 (MP: 'broken frames ... cast patterns') where manuscript has, in small but legible writing, 'broken framing ... casts patterns'.

Two occasions in the chapter show Dickens's later preference for a different word or phrase: 'doomed to die' becomes the slightly less sinister sounding 'destined to die' (p.89, 1.23) and 'lashing and heaving with the knowledge', a phrase descriptive of the river's approach to the sea which had apparently already given some trouble in manuscript, becomes 'heaving with a restless knowledge' (p.93, 1.40).

At other points alterations have been made for the sake of clarity or euphony or some other stylistic improvement. Examples of these are: p.90, 1.29, 'was' becomes 'were' in an 'as though' clause; p.91, 1.6, 'until he' becomes 'until Mr. Jasper', although the pronoun's reference was clear enough;

p.92, l.32, 'right' becomes 'correct' in the phrase 'doing what was correct by the season', probably because the word 'right' occurs on the following line, 'the welcome it had a right to expect';

p.92, l.36, 'one most terrific shriek' becomes 'one terrific shriek', for no obvious reason unless the sound was deemed undesirable with the word 'ghost' in close and repeated proximity;

p.94, l.52, 'closely watched' becomes 'watched by his companion', again for no obvious reason unless it was preferred as a less repetitive parallel to the phrase a few lines further on, 'narrowly observed' (95.6);

p.95, ll.11 & 12, 'my suspicions' becomes 'suspicions', possibly because the word 'my' occurs twice elsewhere in the speech: 'my good Mr. Durdles' and 'my bottle'.

On second thoughts Dickens obviously preferred to have Durdles refer to himself, in his two-line outbreak of verse on p.95, as 'Durdles' instead of as 'he' which is found in manuscript, and one other interesting variation is concerned with Durdles' characteristic speech - his pronunciation of Jasper's name. Over this neither manuscript nor Monthly Parts nor CD edition is consistent throughout the novel. In chapters iv and v Durdles refers to 'Mr. Jasper', i.e. 'Mr.' abbreviated, 'Jasper' without an 'r'. The first time the name appears in chapter xii it looks as if Dickens first wrote 'Mr.' and then crossed it out in favour of 'Mister' (he slipped up again once later and wrote 'Mr.', corrected by MP: p.95, l.3). As yet there is no sign of 'Jarsper' in manuscript but it occurs throughout chapter xii in Monthly Part. If Dickens made the alteration immediately on the proofs, he would

presumably have had time to correct Number I for consistency, assuming Part III was in proof by February 25th.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the change to 'Jarsper' was not made until April when Dickens was writing his fifth Number.<sup>1</sup> Here in the manuscript of chapter xviii this is the spelling for Deputy's pronunciation of the name. In this case one would have to assume that Dickens preferred the new pronunciation wherever it could be inserted, regardless of consistency. On the other hand, he did not go back to Number I to change 'Mr.' to 'Mister' and this he could have done as it appears in manuscript as early as the last chapter of Number III.

Another pronunciation which gave trouble at the end of chapter xii was Deputy's for 'Cathedral', which, after three or four attempts, was written 'Kinfreedle'. Monthly Part has 'Kinfreederel' as elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> One final note on this chapter: Dickens here uses the word 'rook' in manuscript (p.93, l.32) in conformity with the change presumably made in proof earlier.

As in Number II, Every Saturday's captions to the two illustrations are independent of those in Monthly Part. On this occasion, Fields, Osgood and Company's one-volume 1870 edition had the correct caption for the first of these, 'Mr. Crisparkle is Overpaid', which was used as a frontispiece, but the Every Saturday caption for the second. As far as the rest of the text is concerned, Every Saturday has one or two obvious mistakes, one or two cases of what appear to have been modifications on the American editor's initiative and one interesting

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1. See pp.24-5.

2. E.g. in ch. xxiii. But see note to ch. xviii on p.315.

case of agreement with manuscript against Monthly Part; as well as the perpetuation of that nonsensical phrasing already noted, on p.86, ll.27-30, which obviously got by in proof. The obvious mistakes are the substitution of the word 'Pear' for 'Peach' in the listing of the contents of Mrs. Crisparkle's dining-room closet (p.67, l.45) and the occasional use of a wrong tense - 'turned' for 'turn' and 'passed' for 'passes' (90.46 & 91.38). The change of 'he, who' to 'he that' (p.69, l.21) may be accidental or a sign of an editorial preference. The editor presumably used his judgement in punctuating the passage on p.75, l.18 of chapter xi, already noted as being ungrammatical in Monthly Part.<sup>1</sup> Every Saturday replaces the full stop by a semi-colon, thus preserving the necessary link between the two parts of the sentence. The editor also seems to have decided for himself the preferred reading of the passage (p.69, l.36) where Mr. Crisparkle says of Neville:

'I have no fear of his outliving such a prejudice' (MP)

'I have no fear of his not outliving such a prejudice' (ES)

To modern ears the latter makes better sense, though the former is presumably justified as using 'fear' in the sense of 'doubt'. The manuscript gives no authority for Every Saturday's reading, though it is interesting to see that in the manuscript something was inserted between 'his' and 'outliving', suggesting the possibility that Dickens inserted 'not' and crossed it out again.

The most interesting fact which is revealed by examination of this part of Every Saturday is that on one occasion manuscript and Every Saturday have the same reading where Monthly Part has a different one; presumably the American publishers received a sheet without the final

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1. See pp. 264-8 for the MP and CD versions of the passage.

correction. Such an omission may have been due merely to a proof-reader's slip. The alternative implications would be either that Dickens was making alterations at a late stage after the advance sheets had been sent to America<sup>1</sup> or that manuscript and Every Saturday have the intended reading and the printers of Monthly Part made a mistake in their final printing which was allowed to stand. The fact that the alteration is of little importance seems to support the first or third of these alternatives. The reading in question is:

MS and ES: 'What! Is that baby-devil on the watch!'

MP: 'What! Is that baby-devil on the watch there!' (p.95,1.40)

The fact that in manuscript the phrase was written over a deletion of a phrase, one word of which seems to have been either 'here' or 'there' instead of 'on the watch' adds weight to the possibility that Dickens would not notice such an addition if made by accident in Monthly Parts. On the other hand, this could be a characteristic instance of his reverting in proof to first thoughts.

Where CD edition differs from Monthly Part there is only one occasion on which the former gives the superior reading - of that mangled passage in Monthly Part already referred to (p.75, 1.18 of ch.xi) of which the manuscript page is missing. Here CD edition amends both punctuation and a plural form of a noun to the more intelligible singular. The two passages are as follows:

MP: In the days when Cloisterham took offence at the existence of a railroad afar off, as menacing that sensitive constitution, the property of us Britons. The odd fortune of which sacred institutions it is to be in exactly equal

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1. This would be a very late stage indeed as Number III was at the printers by February 13th and advance sheets were not sent to America until May 3rd. See pp.24, 34.

degrees croaked about, trembled for, and boasted of, whatever happens to anything, anywhere in the world: in those days no neighbouring architecture of lofty proportions had arisen to overshadow Staple Inn.

CD: In the days when Cloisterham took offence at the existence of a railroad afar off, as menacing that sensitive constitution, the property of us Britons: the odd fortune of which sacred institution it is to be in exactly equal degrees croaked about, trembled for, and boasted of, whatever happens to anything, anywhere in the world: in those days no neighbouring architecture of lofty proportions had arisen to overshadow Staple Inn.

On other occasions manuscript authority exists to corroborate Monthly Part reading, as in the following sample cases:

	<u>MP</u>		<u>CD</u>	
p.74,1.23	have I gone	I have gone		p.61,1.36
p.80,1.13	Circumlocutional Department	Circumlocution Department		p.66,1.28
p.80,1.45	luxuriously sank	sank luxuriously		p.66,1.53
p.89,1.35	My spirits is	My spirit is		p.73,1.52
p.93,1.28	waving his lantern, shows the dim angels' heads	waving his lantern, waves the dim angels' heads		p.77,1.2
p.94,1.50	gathers himself again	gathers himself up again (probably by attraction of 'upright' three words on)		p.78,1.11

At one place the reading has been changed between manuscript and Monthly Part stage, but the bit where CD departs from Monthly Part is constant in the other two. We thus have three slightly differing readings, of which Monthly Part must be the authoritative one:

- MP: (p.89, 11.25-6)  
Curious, to make a guess at the two; - or say at one of the two!
- MS: Curious now, to make a guess at the two or [Or?] even at one of the two!
- CD: Curious, to make a guess at the two; - or say one of the two!



P.T.O.

[Number IV Plan - left hand]

Once more carry through Edwin and Rosa?

or, Last time?

< Last scene but one between them > Last time.

Then

Last Meeting of Rosa and Edwin <in> outside  
the Cathedral. Yes

Kiss at parting

"Jack.

Edwin goes to the dinner.

The Windy night

The Surprise and Alarm

Jasper's failure in the one great  
object made known by Mr. Grewgious

Jasper's Diary? Yes

[Number IV Plan - right hand]

(Mystery of Edwin Drood. - No IV)

Chapter XIII

Both at their Best

The Last Interview

And Parting

Chapter XIV

When shall these three meet again ?

How each passes the day

Watch and shirt pin	Neville	
all Edwin's jewellery	Edwin	Watch to the
	Jasper	Jeweller

"And so he goes up the Postern stair"

Storm[s?] of wind

Chapter XV

Impeached

Neville away early      Pursued and brought back

Mr. Grewgious's communication : And his scene with Jasper

Chapter XVI

Devoted

Jasper's artful use of the communication on his recovery.

Cloisterham Weir, Mr. Crisparkle, and the Watch and pin.

Jasper's artful turn

The Dean      Neville cast out <sup>1</sup>

Jasper's Diary. "I devote myself to his  
destruction"

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1. This seems the most sensible reading here (see MP p.127, ll.23-4):  
a less likely alternative is 'Neville constant'.

Number IV      (chs. xiii - xvi)

The most interesting entries in the Number Plan here are those relating to Jasper. What can 'Jasper's failure in the one great object made known by Mr. Grewgious' imply other than his failure to keep Rosa unmarried, through murder? This, along with the references in chapter xvi notes to his artfulness, links up clearly with previous Number Plan notes such as 'Murder very far off' (ch.ii), 'You won't take warning then?' (No.I), 'Jasper lays his ground' (ch.vii) and 'Smoothing the Way That is, for Jasper's plan ...' (ch.x).

Chapter xiii

The most interesting revelation from the manuscript here is not one denoting a changed reading in proof, but one suggesting Dickens's anxiety as to the exact wording of the last sentence of the chapter, recording the parting of Edwin and Rosa, a parting which may or may not be final. The hesitations in the writing of the sentence suggest that Dickens had death in mind for Edwin but that he was deliberately aiming for an ambiguous effect. The sentence as finally written and printed in Monthly Part is:

And out of that look he vanished from her view  
- completely non-committal. Certainly Dickens had no need to be heavily portentous here: we have already sufficient cause to fear for Edwin's safety and, since his disappearance is to be announced anyway in the very next chapter, any build-up of doom here over an unsuspecting

victim would be too short-lived in effect to be worth presenting, particularly at the sacrifice of other effects. The other point which could be gained here from a more definite announcement would be an increase of pathos, particularly for Rosa's situation, and this, rather than the note of doom, may have been in Dickens's mind as he tried to compose the sentence. The manuscript shows considerable crossing out but, among the illegible scribbles which result, the words 'and never looked upon him' are plainly to be read. The fact that at this stage he was prepared to write such a sentence suggests a hesitation as to detail in wording and effect, rather than a hesitation as to plan: the evidence is inconclusive but, taken with the references to 'murder' and to Jasper's 'artfulness' in Number Plans, seems to weight the scales rather more heavily on the side of Edwin's death.

At one point in the chapter, manuscript gives what may be considered a slightly better reading, though there are arguments in favour of each and Dickens obviously accepted, if not positively chose, the reading as printed. This is the point in Miss Twinkleton's Christmas speech where she refers, in Monthly Part, to the upsurge at this time of year of the 'first feelings of our nature' (p.97, l.43). In manuscript the phrase was 'finest feelings'. At another place a variant reading may be the result of initial error in setting up of type. In Rosa's 'I don't like it to be all my doing, though it is so much better for us' (p.101, ll.34-5) the blotted mark beneath the word 'is' seems to be a deletion, not an underlining. However, emphasis of this kind is so much a characteristic of Rosa's speech (cf. 'It is so ridiculous!' 'It is so absurd ...' in chapter iii) as to be preferable to what may have

been Dickens's first thought. A third discrepancy of this kind (i.e. where the discrepancy may be accidental) between manuscript and Monthly Part seems to have resulted from hesitancy at the manuscript stage leading to crossing out, by accident left incomplete, and the mistake rectified in proof. In the clause 'since they were first affianced' (p.103, l.39) the manuscript reads 'since they were first affianced children', a reading which has evolved in the following stages. First 'since they were children' was written; inserted over the line between 'were' and 'children' was 'first', then something deleted, then 'affianced'. Although there is what looks like a full stop after 'affianced', the word 'children' is not deleted, thus leaving an unnecessarily clumsy reading. Where, in Monthly Part, Edwin refers to the likelihood that Mr. Grewgious will talk Jack's thoughts 'into shape' (p.102, l.49), it seems that in manuscript he said 'into method', though the reading of this phrase is difficult. Likewise, on p.97, l.5, the phrase 'strictly collegiate' seems, in manuscript, to be 'chastely collegiate'.

On several occasions there is evidence of Dickens's preference for a slightly different wording on re-reading his chapter. Such are:

<u>MS</u>		<u>MP</u>
the bespoke flies ( 'coaches' in both lower down the page)	(98.21)	the bespoke coaches
this charming last lot	(99.4 )	this charming little last lot
clasping her hands on his arm	(99.50)	clasping her hand on his arm
far from right in those relations	(100.24)	far from right together in those relations
of our choosing	(100.24-5)	of our own choosing
dear fond old fellow	(102.42-3)	dear fond fellow
or records of old	(103.19)	or other records of old. <sup>1</sup>
that they were	(103.37)	that she and Edwin were
She pulled very hurriedly	(104.31)	She pulled hurriedly

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1. See p. 284 For Every Saturday's reading.

There are also two or three instances of insertion of the verb 'had' to repeat a pluperfect tense in full:

MS: ... had turned out ... and got among ...

MP: ... had turned out ... and had got among ... (p.99, ll.36-7)

MS: ... had grown used to me, and grown used to the idea ...

MP: ... had grown used to me, and had grown used to the idea ...  
(p.100, ll.51-2)

Occasionally spellings differ between the two, the most noticeable being that of the word 'molly-coddles' (MS) which is given in Monthly Part (p.102, l.19) in the form 'moddley-coddleys',<sup>1</sup> presumably to be consistent with the version in chapter ii (p.6, ll.38-9) on which occasion manuscript also had this spelling. At one point, too, Monthly Part changes what had been an exclamation into a question (p.102, l.35): 'You are not afraid of him?' (MS:!), and, finally, for no apparent reason, Monthly Part drops a word from a descriptive phrase in the last paragraph of the chapter, so that 'the pendent handle of the hoarse old bell' (MS) becomes merely 'the handle of the hoarse old bell' (p.104, l.31).<sup>1</sup> In fact, together with the dropping of the word 'very' earlier in the sentence, this then gives a final reading which with its rhythmic alliteration is less attractive in sound than the original:

MS: She pulled very hurriedly at the pendent handle of the hoarse old bell

MP: She pulled hurriedly at the handle of the hoarse old bell<sup>2</sup>.

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1. See p. 284 for Every Saturday's reading.

2. There is reason to suppose that these two alterations might not have been made at the same stage. See p. 284.

Chapter xiv

As in the last chapter, the most interesting observation here relates to an alteration which was already made at manuscript stage, again with reference to Edwin's disappearance. The account of Edwin's wistful stroll round Cloisterham concludes, both in Monthly Part and in the final manuscript version:

and may never see them again, he thinks. Poor youth!  
 Poor youth! (p.109, ll.37-8)

but manuscript originally had a much more revealing sentence:

and may never see them again, he thinks. He little, little  
 knows how near a cause he has for thinking so.

Dickens obviously hesitated at least momentarily before removing this. His first alteration was to insert the words 'Poor youth!' at the beginning; then the sentence was crossed out and 'Poor youth!' was repeated. The same argument as was used with regard to the previous chapter applies here: the deleted words are strongly suggestive of impending successful murder.

The fanciful description of seasonal festivities in Cloisterham gave Dickens scope for a brief light touch of comic invention which he refined on in successive stages. The Wax-Work referred to on p.105, l.19 at first made its impression merely on the 'Crowned Heads of Europe'. This was altered while still in manuscript to the more exotic fancy 'the Emperor of China', but it was not until the printed stage that the notion of his 'reflective mind' came in, giving an additional touch of absurdity to the completed phrase. There is no such obvious reason for the expansion of the phrase in the following lines where 'on



the premises of the bankrupt livery-stable keeper up the lane' was in manuscript just 'at the bankrupt livery stable-keeper's up the lane'. The change of mind as to where the hyphen should come is rather amusing.

Many of the alterations in this chapter are of minor words and phrases; one of these is worth comment as being possibly unintentional and as depriving us of what was rather a pleasing reading, though what replaced it is, admittedly, equally effective when read aloud. In the Monthly Part the opium woman's sinister words to Edwin are 'in the rising wind, in the angry sky, in the troubled water, in the flickering lights' (p.111, ll.27-8). At first in manuscript Dickens introduced the three phrases by 'and', but then the 'and' before 'in the troubled water' was scribbled over. The third 'and' remains plainly but the first is so blotted that this could be mistaken for a deletion, though I think it is not intended as such. This would give the reading:

in the rising wind, and in the angry sky, in the troubled water, and in the flickering lights.

It is just possible that the printers omitted the first blotted 'and' in error and that Dickens thereupon removed the last. On the other hand, omission of the first would not necessitate removal of the last, and so perhaps the more likely supposition is that Dickens removed both, it may be influenced by the presence of 'and' in the previous phrase, 'over the bridge and by the river', or under the feeling that the alternation of 'and' and comma was too obviously rhetorical.

Further examples of relatively minor alterations are:

<u>MS</u>		<u>MP</u>
scrap of writing	(105.45)	scrap of paper
(Perhaps 'scrap of writing' bears rather more suggestion of deliberate intention than was desirable if this were the account of an innocent action.)		
his fortune	(108.39) <sup>1</sup>	his lot in life
by a wicket gate	(109.42)	near a wicket gate
(Possibly changed to avoid repetition of 'by' in the following 'a cross bye-path'.)		
while I'm	(111.9-10)	while I am
('I'm' more characteristic of the opium woman unless 'am' used intentionally for emphasis, as on p.181, 1.22 - contrast 1.21; therefore possibly a printers' error allowed to go through?)		
thus begins, and is cut short	(112.45)	thus begins
(Last words redundant; Jasper's interpolation, 'You anticipate me ...' sufficiently expresses his interruption.)		
yourself; because you are	(113.10)	yourself. You are always
always		
(Second reading gives a clearer-cut sentence.)		
a gay entertainer	(113.29)	a gay entertainer this evening
(No real need for the change; revised reading possibly sounds better in rounding off the sentence.)		
<p>Finally, Monthly Part has the opium woman say (p.110, 1.18): 'My lungs is weakly'. In manuscript the last of these words is the first of the line and very faint, as initial words in the manuscript often are. It certainly looks more like 'weak' than 'weakly': there is a mark after the word, but not enough to justify reading it as 'ly'; it could be merely a comma. In chapter i the opium woman's words were: 'my lungs is weak' (p.2, 1.17).</p>		

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1. See p.284 for Every Saturday's reading.

Chapter xv

There are no alterations of importance in chapter xv. Once or twice there is change of a phrase to which Dickens had already given consideration in manuscript. For instance, 'his fixed face', indicative of Jasper's refusal to join the discussion between Neville and Mr. Crisparkle (p.118, l.2) is in manuscript 'his lowering face', but this only after some hesitation over a word which looks like 'brooding'; and lower down the same page (ll.20-1) 'he being distracted with doubts' is in manuscript 'he distracted with doubts'. The phrase itself (i.e. the words 'distracted with doubts and') had been inserted above the line in manuscript as an afterthought, and on mature reflection Dickens presumably preferred to insert the word 'being', perhaps with an eye to balancing the following 'labouring'.

The word 'intensely' in the phrase 'intensely watching Neville' (p.117, l.22) seems in manuscript to be 'intently', which would give equally good sense. The written word is not easy to read, and may have caused a printers' error, but there is a stroke in it which must surely be the stroke of the second 't'. Likewise, on p.121, l.1, it is impossible to tell whether Dickens or the printer initially gave the present word order, 'parted, firmly'; in manuscript 'firmly' is inserted above the line, but before, not after, 'parted'. On p.116, l.13 the phrase 'the side by which' (MS) was changed to 'the side on which' (MP); and two prunings in speech were made: 'Better be quiet' (p.115, ll.51 & 52) was in manuscript 'Better be quite quiet' and Neville's 'I'll do it' (p.116, l.9) was 'I'll do that little'.

Chapter xvi

The changes in this chapter are much more extensive, four of them being in the nature of inserted passages, presumably necessary if the Number were not to fall short of the required length. Up to a point these passages are elaborations of what has already been implied, but it is notable that three out of the four are to be found in the relation of Mr. Crisparkle's visits to the Weir, and they undoubtedly strengthen the suggestion of some kind of hypnotic influence, i.e. that of Jasper, drawing him there. Indeed, it is questionable whether, without the passages under discussion, the idea of hypnosis would occur to the reader. This perhaps implies that Dickens was not intending to make any significant use of it. Mr. Jasper is able to insinuate his desires without any spectacular display of power.

The three passages are the following:

'How did I come here!' was his first thought, as he stopped.

'Why did I come here!!' was his second.

Then, he stood intently listening to the water. A familiar passage in his reading, about airy tongues that syllable men's names, rose so unbidden to his ear, that he put it from him with his hand, as if it were tangible.

(p.124, ll.44-9)

He reasoned with himself: What was it? Where was it? Put it to the proof. Which sense did it address?

No sense reported anything unusual there. He listened again, and his sense of hearing again checked the water coming over the Weir, with its usual sound on a cold starlight night.

(p.125, ll.9-13)

He turned his back upon the Weir, and looked far away at the sky, and at the earth, and then looked again at that one spot. It caught his sight again immediately, and he concentrated his vision upon it. He could not lose it now, though it was but such a speck in the landscape. It fascinated his sight. His hands began plucking off his coat.

(p.125, ll.26-31)

The fourth interpolated passage is used to strengthen the impression of the Dean's adamant and dictatorial stand with regard to Mr. Crisparkle's position relative to Neville:

'It is very lamentable, sir,' Mr. Crisparkle represented.

'Very much so,' the Dean assented.

'And if it be a necessity - ' Mr. Crisparkle faltered.

'As you unfortunately find it to be,' returned the Dean.

(p.127, ll.37-40)

These four passages constitute the most noticeable alterations. Of the other lesser changes, one interesting one is a mere change of arrangement, not of wording, but nevertheless more effective than any of the other minor changes. It, too, serves to throw additional emphasis on the Weir and consists merely of a splitting of one paragraph of manuscript into two of Monthly Part, so that in Monthly Part the sentence, 'He walked to Cloisterham Weir' (p.124, l.38), stands impressively alone as a complete paragraph, instead of being immediately followed by 'He often did so ...' as in manuscript. Related to this change may be that of l.36 where the manuscript words 'let him gloss it as he would', following 'as a kind of prisoner in his own house', have been dropped, possibly so as to make the necessary alterations in spacing as economical as possible.

One passage which was greatly rewritten and eventually had to be partly transcribed on the back of the page in manuscript was still undergoing alterations at a later stage. This is the passage conveying Cloisterham's understanding of 'Natives' (p.126, ll.1-7) in which the following variations are noticeable between manuscript and Monthly Part:

<u>MS</u>		<u>MP</u>
now encamping	(1.1)	encamping now
(MP has the more usual order, bringing the 'now's' closer together)		
of great virtue, always undressed in coarse muslin, always calling	(1.3)	of great virtue, always calling
reading tracts in broken English	(1.5)	reading tracts of the obscurest meaning, in broken English
(Something was written above the line in manuscript in the middle of this phrase and subsequently deleted.)		
always understanding them	(1.6)	always accurately understanding them

Two lines further on the reference to Sapsea's cliché as 'those original expressions' might have been intended as 'these original expressions', perhaps more expected, but the word is not easy to read.

Occasional changes in vocabulary have been made after the manuscript stage, as in the replacement of 'undeniably irritated' by the more forcible 'directly incensed' in the description of Neville's attitude to Edwin (p.124, l.23); the dropping of the word 'airy', perhaps as being too fanciful in implication, from the phrase 'all the <airy> castles' (p.122, l.11) referring to Jasper's plans for Edwin; the change, for no obvious reason, from 'a strong prepossession' to 'a great prepossession' (p.123, l.39) and the replacement of the word 'fancy' by the word 'sight' (p.125, l.16) in the phrase 'for the correction of his sight'. The new word here seems less accurate than

the original, for surely it is Mr. Crisparkle's 'fancy' and not his 'sight' that suggests something unusual at the Weir; but for some reason Dickens valued the alteration and, along with it, the removal two lines further down of a phrase which, if left, would have entailed the repetition of the word 'sight', the phrase 'to the sense of sight' which in manuscript followed 'shadowed forth', admittedly only as an afterthought inserted above the line. The change from 'the Minor Canon so deferred on all occasions' to 'the Minor Canon deferred officially' (p.127, l.28) is not presumably intended to suggest Crisparkle's private reservations as to the Dean's attitude, as might out of context appear, but to point the reference back to the unofficial authority to whom Mr. Crisparkle deferred, namely Mrs. Crisparkle. The Dean's last remark to his Minor Canon, 'we clergy need do nothing emphatically' (p.128, l.14) gained point in Monthly Part by the addition of the word 'clergy', to a phrase which appears to have given some trouble, if one judges by the amount of crossing out in manuscript. At the end of the chapter Jasper originally handed his Diary to Crisparkle with an 'expressive' not an 'impressive' look (p.128, l.22), a change which in fact makes very little difference; the 'minute details' of the scene at the Weir became in Monthly Part, more absolutely, 'minutest details' (p.125, l.23) and twice the word 'here' was deleted in Jasper's words to Crisparkle drawing attention to Grewgious, 'Mr. Grewgious <here>' (p.123, ll.38 & 44).

In addition to minor vocabulary alterations of this nature there are various examples of Dickens's tightening up of his sentence structures, as in the following:

- MS: It was a bright frosty morning, and the whole composition ...  
 MP: It was a bright frosty morning. The whole composition ...  
 (125.21)
- MS: ... find the body; but he only found ...  
 MP: ... find the body; he only found ...  
 (125.42)
- MS: ... made away with him and Neville was ...  
 MP: made away with him. Neville was ...  
 (127.21)
- MS: ... it was urged on ...  
 MP: ... it had been urged on ...  
 (127.5)
- MS: ... pupil might have gone to it?  
 MP: ... pupil had gone to it?  
 (127.7)

Some interesting points emerge from a study of Every Saturday's version of the fourth Number. In the first place, one of the illustrations, 'Good-bye, Rosebud, Darling!', is missing, though it appears in the one-volume Fields and Osgood edition with the caption, 'The Young Ladies say Good By for the Holidays'. The other illustration, 'Mr. Grewgious Has His Suspicions', appears in both American editions with the caption, 'Mr. Gregious Breaks the News to Jasper'. There seems to be no reason for the missing illustration, which was apparently sent off as usual,<sup>1</sup> several days before Dickens's death.

More surprising, however, than this is the evidence of the Every Saturday text that the editors were working from sheets which had received some, but not all, corrections. Two stages of proof is not unexpected (indeed, the surviving Edwin Drood proofs to printers are a combination of galley and page)<sup>2</sup> but one would expect Dickens to be particular in ensuring that the authorized American publishers received accurate copy. More surprising still is the possible implication as

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1. See p.34. 2. See note on end leaf.



to the date at which Dickens was making his final revisions for the Number. According to Forster, Number IV was read to him on March 21st;<sup>1</sup> according to Chapman and Hall's Accounts, it was sent to Fields on June 3rd, allowing ample time, one would think, for all corrections to be made. It would be very surprising if Dickens was, in fact, still making alterations after copy was sent to Fields. This would be in the first week of June when he was hard at work trying to finish Number VI, and surely there had been ample time earlier for several stages of proof to go through. The conclusion, then, is either that the Monthly Parts printers made an unusual number of mistakes at a later stage of printing, an unlikely supposition, or that, for the first, or possibly the second,<sup>2</sup> time, insufficient care was given to the supervision of the sheets sent to America.

Whatever the reason, the following instances are noted of readings where Every Saturday agrees with manuscript against Monthly Part, suggesting that these particular alterations were made at a later stage than the Every Saturday copy, which has, however, at other points alterations to give Monthly Part reading as opposed to manuscript:

<u>Every Saturday &amp; MS</u>		<u>MP</u>
molly-coddles	(102.19)	moddley-coddleys
or records	(103.19)	or other records
at the pendent handle	(104.31)	at the handle
(But the other alteration, the dropping of the word 'very' in this line, was made.)		
his fortune in life	(108.39)	his lot in life
(MS: 'his fortune', another indication of an intermediate proof stage <small>of or corrections at two stages</small> )		
the body; but he	(125.42)	the body; he
always understanding	(126.6)	always accurately understanding
was urged on	(127.5)	had been urged on
we need	(128.14)	we clergy need

1. See p.24.

2. There was one possible similar example in Number III; see pp.266-7.

I cannot think of any significance in the observation that these second-stage alterations cluster together, other than the possibility that, after reading the first proofs, Dickens looked at only selected passages later. He would be likely to look at the last pages listed above, as this is where his insertions to meet the required length occurred. The Every Saturday editors, of course, had these insertions, obviously themselves, therefore, receiving a second stage of proof, but it looks as if Chapman and Hall put by the sheets for Every Saturday at this stage, without making allowance for further author's corrections. As to the earlier instances, 'molly-coddles' could have been changed by the printers themselves for consistency, and Dickens might understandably have looked anxiously again at pp.103-4 recounting the last meeting of Edwin and Rosa, but there seems to be no particular reason for his double revision on p.108.

Apart from these interesting variations, Every Saturday has an occasional mistake or editor's emendation, such as 'meet' for 'met' (p.98, 1.13) and 'importunate' for 'impertinent' (p.122, 1.24), in each case giving a plausible but unauthorized reading.

As expected, where CD edition significantly differs from Monthly Part, the authority of manuscript and Every Saturday is on the side of Monthly Part, as in the following examples:

	<u>MS, MP, ES</u>	<u>CD</u>	
(100.11)	It has sprung up	That sprung up	(82.13-14)
(113.20)	... wait, 'says Jasper	... wait,' said Jasper	(93.6)
(113.28)	if I ever	if ever I	(93.12)
(117.8)	Mr. Jasper's last night	Mr. Jasper last night	(96.14)
(120.47)	and he <u>is</u> gone	and he is gone	(99.15)
(121.16 of ch.xvi)	answered Mr. Grewgious again	answered Grewgious again	(99.40)
(125.48)	arose	rose	(103.19)

P.T.O.

[Number V Plan - left hand]

Edwin and Rosa for the last time? Done already

Kinfrederel

Edwin Disappears

The Mystery

Done already

Number V Plan - right hand

(Mystery of Edwin Drood. - No V)

Chapter XVIII

Philanthropy < in several phases > professional and unprofessional

Chapter XVIII

< Shadow on the Sun-Dial >

A Settler in Cloisterham

Chapter XIX

< A Settler in Cloisterham >

Shadow on the Sun-Dial

Chapter XX

< Let's talk >

< Various Flights > Divers Flights

Original Number V      (chs.xvii - xxi)

(For these chapters we have the intermediate stage of proof between manuscript and Monthly Part)

After glancing at the left hand pages of this and the preceding two Number Plans we can understand Dickens's fears about getting on too fast with his story. When writing the page for Number III he was undecided whether to have the final scene between the lovers in Number V or in Number IV; in the Number IV Plan he was still undecided at first as to which was to be their final scene; and the Number V Plan clearly indicates that he at one time thought of keeping Edwin's disappearance for this Number. Dickens obviously wrote his left hand plans in stages, sometimes tentatively inserting material for one Number before he had fully planned the previous one. For he would hardly have written 'Edwin and Rosa for the last time?' and 'Edwin Disappears' after the planning of the dinner, the windy night, the alarm and Jasper's failure; for these latter can refer to nothing but the disappearance of Edwin. Dickens was evidently getting through his material more quickly than he had anticipated and everything that had been originally thought of for Number V, with the exception of 'Kinfrederel', was 'Done already'. As, unfortunately, no left hand plan for Number VI survives, we can not know what Dickens was planning for that Number. The striking omission from the Number V Plan is any reference to Jasper's love-making and its consequences. This can hardly have been material invented on the spur of the moment to fill out the Number; the likelihood is that it was planned for Number VI. If this were so, and if

'Kinfrederel' implies, as it presumably does, the introduction of Datchery and his alliance with Deputy, then this would dispose of any supposition that Dickens ever intended Datchery to come to Cloisterham as a consequence of Jasper's threats to Rosa. This is borne out, of course, by the evidence of the right hand plans for Number V as to Dickens's deliberate placing of these chapters. If he had intended Datchery's arrival to follow chronologically from Rosa's flight, he would have had to put it not merely after the 'Jasper' chapter but after chapter xx as well. What he in fact did, as the Number Plan and the numbering of the relevant pages of manuscript indicate, was to write the Jasper chapter and the first two pages of the Datchery chapter<sup>1</sup> before deciding to transpose the order. This makes no appreciable difference to the chronology, as Rosa's flight obviously follows Jasper's proposal: what it does is to avoid an undramatic interpolation breaking the tension of the reader's feeling for Rosa.

The other point to be noticed in the Number Plan is that chapter xx is not chapter xx as we have it, but xx and xxi together. The change of title was presumably made by whoever split the chapter, 'Divers Flights' becoming 'A Flight' and 'A Recognition'. This splitting of the chapter was owing to the exigencies of the unfinished Number VI which fell several pages short of a complete Number. Approximately four pages from the end of V were transposed to VI which, even so, is roughly two pages short of the usual length. Number V conforms to the

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1. The pages of 'Shadow on the Sun-Dial', intended for ch.xviii, were numbered originally 10-13, subsequently changed to 15-18; the first two pages of 'A Settler in Cloisterham' were originally numbered 14 and 15, and 14 was headed 'Chapter xix'. 'Shadow on the Sun-Dial' is about half a page shorter than the other one.

required thirty-two pages and this was accomplished by means of keeping in the printed text deletions, presumably of over-matter, which Dickens had made on proof.<sup>1</sup> One can assume that the deletions were initially made for the most part with a view to the necessary cutting down of text as, if these passages were included, what Dickens thought of as Part V was overwritten by a matter of four pages, though it occupied twenty-seven pages of manuscript, as did Numbers III and IV.

It will be convenient to begin by listing the restored excisions for the whole Number, before discussing other changes chapter by chapter. In all the following cases but one,<sup>2</sup> Dickens (presumably Dickens, since his hand is recognizable on the proof) deleted the passage on the proof copy and the deletion has been ignored. There is, therefore, an argument for removing these passages from the text on the grounds that similar passages have gone out elsewhere. But in Edwin Drood this seems to be substantially the case only in chapter ix which was itself a make-weight chapter, so that consistency is not too greatly strained by the retention of these passages.

#### Chapter xvii

p.129, ll.23-4:

an eminent public character, once known to fame as Frosty-faced Fogo,

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1. An interesting fact about this Monthly Part suggests a further, less ingenuous method by which the publishers persuaded the public they were getting full value. The last two chapters of the Number consistently print a 51 line page instead of the customary 52, and a 45 and 44 line opening page instead of the customary 47, thus apparently gaining a matter of about 15 lines and ensuring that the Number ended well down on the last page. This, in fact, was not really necessary as some of the earlier Numbers had ended with little more than a half page. 2. p.139, l.52 - p.140, l.11. See p.296.



So printed in proof and Monthly Part, but manuscript has 'Frosty Faced Fogo'.

p.129, ll.41-3:

... by, always, as it seemed, on errands of antagonistically snatching something from somebody, and never giving anything to anybody:

Note that the word 'by' from the preceding phrase 'came and went by' was deleted in proof and a comma inserted after 'went'. Manuscript has 'came and went' with a stroke after the word 'went' which seems to be a deletion, not the word 'by' for which there is scarcely room. The word 'by', therefore, ought to be deleted, even if the rest of the passage is kept.

p.130, ll.3-12:

'Sir,' said Mr. Honeythunder, in his tremendous voice, like a schoolmaster issuing orders to a boy of whom he had a bad opinion, 'sit down.'

Mr. Crisparkle seated himself.

Mr. Honeythunder, having signed the remaining few score of a few thousand circulars, calling upon a corresponding number of families without means to come forward, stump up instantly, and be Philanthropists, or go to the Devil, another shabby stipendiary Philanthropist (highly disinterested, if in earnest) gathered these into a basket and walked off with them.

and, a related excision:

l.14: when they were alone

p.131, ll.26-39:

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Crisparkle rose; a little heated in the face, but with perfect command of himself.

'Mr. Honeythunder,' he said, taking up the papers referred to: 'my being better or worse employed than I am at present is a matter of taste and opinion. You might think me better employed in enrolling myself a member of your Society.'

'Ay, indeed, sir!' retorted Mr. Honeythunder, shaking his head in a threatening manner. 'It would have been better for you if you had done that long ago!'

'I think otherwise.'

'Or,' said Mr. Honeythunder, shaking his head again, 'I might think one of your profession better employed in devoting himself to the discovery and punishment of guilt than in leaving that duty to be undertaken by a layman.'

p.132, 11.24-30:

'Perhaps I expect to retain it still?' Mr. Crisparkle returned, enlightened; 'do you mean that too?'

'Well, sir,' returned the professional Philanthropist, getting up, and thrusting his hands down into his trousers pockets; 'I don't go about measuring people for caps. If people find I have any about me that fit 'em, they can put 'em on and wear 'em, if they like. That's their look out: not mine.'

p.134, 1.50 - p.135, 1.3:

'... It seems a little hard to be so tied to a stake, and innocent; but I don't complain.'

'And you must expect no miracle to help you, Neville,' said Mr. Crisparkle, compassionately.

'No, sir, I know that.'

The word 'Well!' was inserted to replace this passage and join Neville's two speeches together.

p.135, 11.15-20:

'... and that of course I am guiding myself by the advice of such a friend and helper. Such a good friend and helper!'

He took the fortifying hand from his shoulder, and kissed it. Mr. Crisparkle beamed at the books, but not so brightly as when he had entered.

Again, Neville's speech was run on, a full stop replacing the comma preceding 'and that of course'.

p.135, 11.35-6:

But they were as serviceable as they were precious to Neville Landless.

It would be a pity to lose this sentence expressive of Neville's sense of Mr. Crisparkle's helpfulness, but presumably the saving of even two lines was considered worth while.

p.135, l.43 - p.136, l.13:

'I don't think so,' said the Minor Canon. 'There is duty to be done here; and there are womanly feeling, sense, and courage wanted here.'

'I meant,' explained Neville, 'that the surroundings are so dull and unwomanly, and that Helena can have no suitable friend or society here.'

'You have only to remember,' said Mr. Crisparkle, 'that you are here yourself, and that she has to draw you into the sunlight.'

They were silent for a little while, and then Mr. Crisparkle began anew.

'When we first spoke together, Neville, you told me that your sister had risen out of the disadvantages of your past lives as superior to you as the tower of Cloisterham Cathedral is higher than the chimneys of Minor Canon Corner. Do you remember that?'

'Right well!'

'I was inclined to think it at the time an enthusiastic flight. No matter what I think it now. What I would emphasize is, that under the head of Pride your sister is a great and opportune example to you.'

'Under all heads that are included in the composition of a fine character, she is.'

'Say so; but take this one.'

A lengthy deletion, here, of twenty-two lines, and necessitating for smooth reading the insertion of a phrase into the following speech, to give the reading:

'... an uncongenial place to bring my sister to!' (135.41-2)

'Your sister,' returned the Minor Canon, 'has learnt ...' (136.13)

Towards the end of this excised passage occurs the phrase 'Under all heads', with 'all' italicized as in proof. In manuscript there is a

line under 'all' but it looks more like the stroke of the 't' of 'character' in the following line than an intentional underlining.

p.136, ll.14-15:

She can dominate it even when it is wounded through her sympathy with you.

p.136, ll.22-5:

Every day and hour of her life since Edwin Drood's disappearance, she has faced malignity and folly - for you - as only a brave nature well directed can. So it will be with her to the end.

and ll.26-7:

which knows no shrinking, and can get no mastery over her

Manuscript has here 'no mastery of her' and so has the proof sheet. Since the phrase was intended for deletion, there seems to be no authority for the reading 'over' which must have slipped in at a later stage.

p.136, ll.31-2:

as she is a truly brave woman

A very minor space-saving, but it would just save a line, as this paragraph ends with a half line of type. Manuscript has mistakes in these words owing to insertions and imperfect deletions; proof transcribes the common sense reading.

p.137, ll.1-3:

As Mr. Grewgious had to turn his eye up considerably, before he could see the chambers, the phrase was to be taken figuratively and not literally.

A pity to have to excise this mild joke relative to Mr. Grewgious, but clearly expendable material. The running together of Mr. Grewgious's two speeches here also saved a few words at ll.4-5 where the unnecessary

'said Mr. Grewgious' was removed. In line with this last deletion, 'said Mr. Grewgious' was also deleted at ll.7 & 9, a deletion which was allowed to stand, although strictly speaking it should probably be dependent on the previous alteration.

p.137, l.34:

'A watch', repeated Mr. Grewgious, musingly. 'Ay!'

and, tying in with this deletion,

l.39: musingly still

which might just save another line.

p.137, ll.45-6:

'I entertain a sort of fancy for having him under my eye to-night, do you know?'

Again a cut in Mr. Grewgious's part; the reader would presumably deduce his intention even without these words.

p.139, l.52 - p.140, l.11:

Mr. Grewgious, his bedroom window-blind held aside with his hand, happened at that moment to have Neville's chambers under his eye for the last time that night. Fortunately his eye was on the front of the house and not the back, or this remarkable appearance and disappearance might have broken his rest as a phenomenon. But, Mr. Grewgious seeing nothing there, not even a light in the windows, his gaze wandered from the windows to the stars, as if he would have read in them something that was hidden from him. Many of us would if we could; but none of us so much as know our letters in the stars yet - or seem likely to do it, in this state of existence - and few languages can be read until their alphabets are mastered.

These lines, the final paragraph of chapter xvii, constitute a different case from all other deletions of length as they were both deleted and reinstated by a 'STET' in the margin of proof, in what is almost certainly Dickens's own hand. It would be logical to assume this

decision as Dickens's even without the evidence of the hand-writing, as Forster would have no cause to treat this passage differently from the others. He did not write in the word 'STET' beside the other deleted passages and it would have been pointless for him to do it here. Moreover, there is a proof correction on the passage, the deletion of the word 'alas!' on l.8 in the phrase 'but, alas! none' and there would have been no point in Dickens's making this alteration in a passage he intended to delete. None of the other deleted passages has such a correction.

The deletions in this chapter, not counting the last-mentioned passage, account for approximately half the total number of lines deleted in Number V. In all the cases listed here, the deletion seems to have been made for the saving of space, not for any significant change in Dickens's intentions.

#### Chapter xviii

The intended deletions here have undergone careful scrutiny by those critics hoping to glean some extra clue as to Datchery's identity.

p.140, ll.32-3:

indeed, I have no doubt that we could suit you that far,  
however particular you might be.

In manuscript the reading is almost certainly 'doubts' but proof and Monthly Part both print 'doubt'.

p.141, ll.19-23:

with a general impression on his mind that Mrs. Tope's was  
somewhere very near it, and that, like the children in the  
game of hot boiled beans and very good butter, he was warm  
in his search when he saw the Tower, and cold when he didn't  
see it.

He was getting very cold indeed when  
 The words 'until at length' inserted before 'he came' (1.23). Nothing essential to the meaning of the whole passage is dropped by the omission of this extract, but the deleted words have been seized on as significant in emphasizing Datchery's unfamiliarity with Cloisterham. The argument is sometimes put forward that Dickens would not deliberately mislead his readers by insinuating that Datchery actually thought - 'with a general impression on his mind' - as opposed to acted, something which was not really true of him.<sup>1</sup> But then the question of deletion complicates the issue; for either one can argue that Dickens, on second thoughts, intended to take the passage out as unfair to the reader, or one can deduce from the fact that he wrote it in the first place that it guarantees Datchery's unfamiliarity.

p.141, 11.50-2:

'Indeed?' said Mr. Datchery, with a second look of some interest.

'Yes,

Proof runs on Deputy's speech, beginning a new sentence with 'And I ain't ...' (1.52). The 'look' in question here is directed at Jasper's house. Again the argument used above can be applied on the lines that 'a second look' suggests previous unfamiliarity with the house. This line of argument presupposes that the reader at this stage knows that Datchery is no casual visitor to Cloisterham, but at a first reading of this Monthly Part this would not necessarily be the case. The lines, therefore, might have been deleted as indicating too soon the stranger's previous

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1. Cf. Edgar Allan Poe's article on Barnaby Rudge (Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post, May 1st 1841, reprinted in The Dickensian, July 1913) in which he distinguishes between what an author tells us and what a character in his novel tells us.

interest in Jasper.

p.142, ll.23-5:

Mr. Datchery, taking off his hat to give that shock of white hair of his another shake, seemed quite resigned, and betook himself whiter he had been directed.

Not essential to the narrative and could have been deleted for sheer space saving. Or Dickens might have felt, on second thoughts, that too much attention had been drawn to Mr. Datchery's hair.

In manuscript there is no indication that this is intended as a new paragraph.

p.143, ll.2-13:

Perhaps Mr. Datchery had heard something of what had occurred there last winter?

Mr. Datchery had as confused a knowledge of the event in question, on trying to recall it, as he well could have. He begged Mrs. Tope's pardon when she found it incumbent on her to correct him in every detail of his summary of the facts, but pleaded that he was merely a single buffer getting through life upon his means as idly as he could, and that so many people were so constantly making away with so many other people, as to render it difficult for a buffer of an easy temper to preserve the circumstances of the several cases unmixed in his mind.

Removal of the passage weakens the connexion in the reader's mind between Datchery and Jasper, as at p.141, ll.50-2.

p.144, l.29 - p.145, l.11:

'Might I ask His Honor,' said Mr. Datchery, 'whether that gentleman we have just left is the gentleman of whom I have heard in the neighbourhood as being much afflicted by the loss of a nephew, and concentrating his life on avenging the loss?'

'That is the gentleman. John Jasper, sir.'

'Would His Honor allow me to inquire whether there are strong suspicions of any one?'

'More than suspicions, sir,' returned Mr. Sapsea, 'all but certainties.'

'Only think now!' cried Mr. Datchery.



'But proof, sir, proof, must be built up stone by stone,' said the Mayor. 'As I say, the end crowns the work. It is not enough that Justice should be morally certain; she must be immorally certain - legally, that is.'

'His Honor,' said Mr. Datchery, 'reminds me of the nature of the law. Immoral. How true!'

'As I say, sir,' pompously went on the Mayor, 'the arm of the law is a strong arm, and a long arm. That is the way I put it. A strong arm and a long arm.'

'How forcible! - And yet, again, how true!' murmured Mr. Datchery.

'And without betraying what I call the secrets of the prison-house,' said Mr. Sapsea; 'the secrets of the prison-house is the term I used on the bench.'

'And what other term than His Honor's would express it?' said Mr. Datchery.

'Without, I say, betraying them, I predict to you, knowing the iron will of the gentleman we have just left (I take the bold step of calling it iron, on account of its strength), that in this case the long arm will reach, and the strong arm will strike. - This is our cathedral, sir. The best judges are pleased to admire it, and the best among our townsmen own to being a little vain of it.'

All this time Mr. Datchery had walked with his hat under his arm, and his white hair streaming.

and, tied in with this deletion, the word 'now' removed on p.145, l.13. Again, a passage indicating Datchery's interest in Jasper, but probably deleted not primarily for this reason but rather as containing several expendable lines of exposure of Sapsea's pompous stupidity.

Within the passage, at p.144, l.42, manuscript had indicated the emphasis of Sapsea's words by underlining the 'im' of 'immorally' to contrast with 'morally' on the previous line. Proof and Monthly Part omit the emphasis. As with other cases of this kind where there is divergence between manuscript and proof, one cannot deduce absolutely that manuscript has the superior authority on the grounds that Dickens would not bother to correct a misreading he was intending to delete, as

there is always the possibility of a previous set of proofs. But in fact if these page proofs for Number V were preceded by galleys surprisingly few important alterations were made on the first set: even blatant misreadings have got as far as page proof.<sup>1</sup> At 1.45 of this page the words 'pompously went on' were written above the line in manuscript with no clear mark to indicate the point of insertion, but their position rather favours the reading 'the Mayor pompously went on' than 'pompously went on the Mayor'.

p.146, 11.20-3:

'I shall come. Master Deputy, what do you owe me?'

'A job.'

'Mind you pay me honestly with the job of showing me Mr. Durdles's house when I want to go there.'

Dickens deleted these lines in proof and inserted two lines lower a phrase which is related in sense, the phrase 'as a receipt in full for all arrears'. He therefore intended these words to be included in the Monthly Part text, but not the first passage, whereas Monthly Part prints both. However, the inserted phrase following aptly from the reinstated passage and, strict consistency with Dickens's intention apart, there is a case for keeping both.

### Chapter xix

There were no lengthy deletions made in this chapter in which Jasper proposes to Rosa.

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1. See also p.316 below, the note to p.145, 1.52.

Chapter xx

There is no further chapter division in proof, but for convenience the notes will indicate where MP chapter xxi starts.

p.160, ll.28-32:

Proof deletes from the exclamation mark after 'safe' to 'safe' four lines further down, thus running on Rosa's speech and omitting:

'Yes, you may be sure that the stairs are fire-proof,' said Mr. Grewgious, 'and that any outbreak of the devouring element would be perceived and suppressed by the watchmen.'

'I did not mean that,' Rosa replied. 'I mean, I feel so safe

On this occasion Dickens followed the deletion by an insertion on l.35 of the words 'fire proof and', which was presumably meant to make up for the earlier omission of the 'fire-proof' reference. There is a case here for removing the inserted phrase if the deleted passage is allowed to stand.

Chapter xxi

p.161, ll.8-13:

'... I wished at the time that you had come to me; but now I think it best that you did as you did, and came to your guardian.'

'I did think of you,' Rosa told him; 'but Minor Canon Corner was so near him - '

'I understand. It was quite natural.'

p.161, ll.19-24:

'Have you settled,' asked Rosa, appealing to them both, 'what is to be done for Helena and her brother?'

'Why really,' said Mr. Crisparkle, 'I am in great perplexity. If even Mr. Grewgious, whose head is much longer than mine and who is a whole night's cogitation in advance of me, is undecided, what must I be!'

Proofs change from page to galley at p.162, 1.10. This seems to make no difference to the type of alteration: one or two space-saving deletions are made on the galley, as follows:

p.163, 11.37-44:

'... Am I agreed with generally in the views I take?'

'I entirely coincide with them,' said Mr. Crisparkle, who had been very attentive.

'As I have no doubt I should,' added Mr. Tartar, smiling, 'if I understood them.'

'Fair and softly, sir,' said Mr. Grewgious; 'we shall fully confide in you directly, if you will favor us with your permission.'

At 1.43 manuscript has 'Fair and softly, dear Sir,' with the word 'dear' inserted above the line and almost certainly not intended to be deleted.

This word is omitted in proof and Monthly Part.

p.164, 11.1-6:

'I begin to understand to what you tend,' said Mr. Crisparkle, 'and highly approve of your caution.'

'I needn't repeat that I know nothing yet of the why and wherefore,' said Mr. Tartar; 'but I also understood to what you tend, so let me say at once that my chambers are freely at your disposal.'

Proof runs on Mr. Grewgious's speech from 'unless, indeed, mine' (end of p.163) to 'There!' (p.164, 1.7). Manuscript has at p.164, 1.2 'and I highly approve ...', but the word 'I' was omitted in proof and consequently in Monthly Part. Either reading is acceptable for sense. Consequent on the deletion of this passage Dickens changed Mr. Grewgious's 'Now we have all got the idea.' on 1.8 to 'Have we all got the idea?' On this occasion, quite correctly, Monthly Part ignores the second alteration, so that we come back to manuscript reading for the whole passage.

This is the last of the reinstated deletions in Number V. Other changes will now be dealt with chapter by chapter as recorded in the progress from manuscript through proof to Monthly Part. It may be said at the outset that some of the changes which occur initially through sheer misreading on the part of the printers, necessitating alterations on proof for restoration of sense, suggest that Dickens corrected without going back to his own manuscript. Examples of this will be noted in the following pages. On the other hand, examples will also be noted which seem to suggest that on some occasions he did consult the manuscript before making his corrections.

#### Chapter xvii

The title in manuscript is as in Monthly Part, but only after another description of 'Philanthropy' had been tried (cf. right hand notes for this chapter). The title eventually selected more neatly points the contrast between Crisparkle and Honeythunder.

There are no alterations of great significance in subject matter here: one can see occasions where Dickens, after a change of mind, finally reverted to what had been his first thoughts and one can also pick out instances where the printers made an error in reading. As has already been said, no absolute pronouncement can be made <sup>that</sup> where a change occurs between manuscript and printing of proof it is due to printers' error, but where two or three such cases cluster together one may suspect a temporary lapse of concentration, and possibly also

where Dickens picks up and restores the original reading. Changes in spelling are presumably printers' changes; changes in capitals probably so, at least on some occasions; changes in punctuation not necessarily so.

Examples of Dickens's finding a better expression on seeing his words in proof are:

p.129, l.46:

MS: who would have done better, perhaps, if he had taken service with an enemy

MP: who could hardly have done worse if he had taken service with a declared enemy

There seems to be no significance in the fact that two different colours of ink have been used for this correction: the two alterations are mutually dependent.

p.130, l.32:

MS: have you

MP: have you

p.133, l.16:

MS: and supporters

MP: and your supporters

In manuscript the previous 'your' before 'seconders' was inserted above the line, thus indicating three stages in the evolution of Crisparkle's expression.

p.133, l.26:

MS: it becomes a gross offense [ 'offence' in proof ] and an unendurable nuisance

MP: it becomes an unendurable nuisance

p.133, ll.46-7:

MS: cracked smoke-blackened parapet

MP: cracked and smoke-blackened parapet

Again, the phrase evolved by stages: manuscript first had 'cracked and blackened'; then 'and' was changed to 'smoke-'; 'and' was then reinserted in proof.

p.134, l.26:

MS: for that, sir

MP: for that, yet

Dickens had hesitated here in manuscript: 'sir' was written only after some other expression had been attempted, which may have been 'for that, now'.

p.134, ll.11-12:

MS: 'They brighten at the sight of you,' returned Neville. 'Well they may' ...

MP: 'They brighten at the sight of you,' returned Neville.

p.134, l.34:

MS: caught his hand and pressed it

MP: caught his hand

p.134, l.38:

MS: I cannot yet. I cannot bear it. I cannot persuade ...

MP: I cannot yet. I cannot persuade ...

These last three minor deletions are perhaps intended to tone down the emotional element in Neville's nature.

p.135, l.25:

MS: adverse

MP: adverse so that the phrase reads: 'adverse or perverse, or the reverse.'

p.137, l.18:

MS: he don't look handsome

MP: he don't look agreeable (Mr. Grewgious of Jasper)

p.137, l.23:

MS: in the second house from the left corner

MP: in yonder house

Original phrase chosen perhaps for its echoing of the sound of 'second-floor landing' on the previous line.

p.137, l.47:

Proof here prints 'with a significant nod of obeysance' and 'of obeysance' is deleted. The last phrase in manuscript is difficult to read and might possibly be intended as deleted there, but on the whole this is unlikely. The words, however, look rather more like 'of intelligence'.

p.138, l.14:

MS: and a most agreeable address

MP: and a prepossessing address (introducing Tartar)

p.138, l.31:

MS: and beaming teeth

MP: and laughing teeth

p.139, l.10:

MS: in a Corvette

MP: in a little Corvette (to make clearer Tartar's reason for preferring cramped quarters)

In the following alterations Dickens is reverting to an earlier preference:

p.130, l.19:

MS: Returned the Minor Canon calmly

MP: returned the Minor Canon

The word 'calmly' had been written in the manuscript, as an afterthought, in brown ink, which was used for a few corrections on this page and for writing about half a page a little later in the chapter.

p.132, l.13:

MS: God forbid (originally 'Heaven')

MP: Heaven forbid

p.133, l.44:

MS: the yellow haggard face

MP: the haggard face

The word 'yellow' was written above the line in manuscript.



p.136, ll.19-20:

MS: confidence in you and the truth

MP: confidence in you and in the truth

Manuscript did originally have 'in' but it was deleted.

p.139, ll.7-8:

MS: knocking about on salt water first

MP: knocking about first

The phrase 'on salt water' was inserted above the line in manuscript.

In previous Numbers we have had no means of knowing exactly how a change was made between manuscript and Monthly Part. On the proofs for Number V we can see Dickens's hand at work on some of the alterations. There are, however, some instances where a change has already taken place in the printing of the proof and here we are faced with two possible explanations: either the change was made by Dickens on a previous proof or the printers made the change in error and Dickens either failed to notice it or allowed it to stand. Instances of this kind are as follows:

p.129, ll.43-4:

MS: his name was twice called before he heard it

Proof omits 'twice' and the omission is carried through to Monthly Part though obviously the inclusion of 'twice' gives the proper sense.

p.131, l.1:

MS: after each short [sentence?] of a word

Proof and MP have 'sentiment' but although the writing is very small in manuscript, it is far more like 'sentence'. It looks as if the phrase 'of a word' was written in even later in manuscript.

p.133, l.5:

MS: War is a vast <sup>a</sup>clarity

Proof and MP omit 'vast'. MS had originally 'great' deleted and replaced by 'vast', written very small and close to the line above, but clear.

p.134, l.23:

MS: and if you had seen

Proof

and MP: if you had seen

There is crossing out at this point in manuscript, but the word 'and' is clearly there. Either reading makes sense.

p.136, l.50:

MS: I am glad you approved of them

Proof

and MP: I am glad you approve of them

Either reading makes sense.

p.138, ll.29-30:

MS: his neckerchief

Proof

and MP: the neckerchief

'his' neckerchief would parallel 'his hat' on l.29.

p.138, l.44:

MS: without asking permission

Proof

and MP: without asking your permission

p.138, l.47:

MS: Not at all. I beg you will not think so. I ought to apologize

Proof

and MP: Not at all. I ought to apologise

'I beg you will not think so' was written above the line in manuscript. The cluster of these three examples together does support the possibility of negligence at this moment in setting up of type.

p.139, l.8:

MS: [I?] had had (underlining not absolutely clear)

Proof

and MP: I had had

p.139, l.46:

MS: May I take the short cut home ...

Proof

and MP: May I take this short cut home ...

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In the examples just given, the proof reading, whether intentional or not, was allowed to stand. There are several instances where proof differs from manuscript and Dickens corrects to the manuscript reading:

p.129, l.16:

MS and MP: on the rural circuit

Proof: in the rural circuit

In manuscript there is a mark, like the dot of an 'i' close to the word, but 'on' is clear enough.

p.129, l.45:

MS and MP: a miserably shabby and

Proof: a miserable and shabby and

In manuscript 'miserably' might easily be read as 'miserable': the word is inserted above the line and the 'y', if 'y' it is, coincides with the 'b' of shabby'. But proof's 'and' is pure invention.

p.131, l.46:

MS and MP: I owe it ... to myself

Proof: I owe it ... to yourself

p.132, l.4:

MS and MP: Good fellow! Manly fellow!

Proof printed 'm' of 'manly' lower case.

p.133, l.44:

MS and MP: a prisonous look

Proof: a poisonous look

p.134, l.29:

MS and MP: too much room

Proof: very much room

p.134, l.35:

MS and MP: never thought so

Proof: never said so

p.135, l.13:

MS and MP: of study in all ways

Proof: of study all ways

'in' was an insertion above the line in manuscript, after deletions, but is quite clear.

p.136, l.34:

MS and MP: wait for darkness

Proof: wait for the darkness

p.137, ll.17-18:

MS and MP: out at window

Proof: out of the window

Manuscript has 'at' corrected from 'of'.

p.137, l.44:

MS and MP: and to take no notice

Proof: and take no notice

In manuscript the word 'to' was written minutely above the line. Either reading makes sense but the inclusion of 'to' conforms to the previous phrases.

On one occasion, what must be proof's misprinting of manuscript gives rise to a further slight change in Monthly Part:

p.134, ll.40-1:

MS: go out - as I only do - at night

Proof: go out - as I do - only at night

MP: go out - as I do only - at night

In manuscript the word 'only' was inserted in blue ink in a passage written in brown. There are crossings out but the blue insertion mark shows clearly where the word was finally intended to go.

One other possible case of this nature occurs at p.131, l.22, but it is impossible to be certain as the manuscript is so difficult to read.

Manuscript has here 'let me tell you sir that I wish'. Proof so prints

it but the word 'that' is then deleted. One can see that with the present reading the deletion is desirable, for the speech goes on: '... that as a man and a Minor Canon ...' and two 'that's would be unbearably clumsy. However, the second 'that' [?] is almost illegible in manuscript and there is just a possibility that the word was intended as 'both' which would give quite a respectable reading.

Still on the subject of possible printing errors - and it certainly looks as if there were more of them than one might suspect without the existence of proof<sup>1</sup> - proof inadvertently prints 'variety' for 'vanity' at one point (p.133, l.34) but the mistake was rectified in Monthly Part, though it had not been noticed on proof. Monthly Part in turn makes a mistake in setting up a phrase which was an insertion on the proof: at p.133, ll.3-4, manuscript has the phrase 'to a false God' which was changed on proof to 'to a false God of your making' and this was then printed in Monthly Part as 'to a false God of our making', a manifestly nonsensical reading. There are two occasions near the end of the chapter where Monthly Part, with no obvious authority, changes to a reading which was found in neither manuscript nor proof:

p.139, l.2:

MS and P

Proof: 'But an uncle ...'

MP: 'But, an uncle ...'

There is no need for the insertion of the comma.

The second of these occasions is much stranger as it involves the addition of words:

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1. This possibility with respect to Edwin Drood, though not necessarily to earlier manuscripts, gains a little support from the testimony of the printer who, in an interview for the Weekly Dispatch, February 2nd 1919, is reported to have commented on the difficulty of this manuscript. See Dickensian, April 1919, 'When Found'.

p.140, ll.9-10:

MS and

Proof: or seem likely to

MP: or seem likely to do it

Manuscript and proof have the more attractive reading here. This is the passage that Dickens at one time thought of deleting: there are corrections on it, but not this one. One can hardly assume on this brief evidence a further stage of proof, especially as such a mistake as 'false God of our making' would then have got by more than once, and the printers obviously set up Monthly Part from this proof, not from a further one in which Dickens's deletions would have been observed. Forster or the printers presumably made this change.

After all these comments on likely printers' errors, it is only fair to add that there are one or two occasions where the manuscript has obvious mistakes which are corrected in the printing of proof.

Finally, a note on spelling and punctuation: certain spellings seem to be printers' preferences, for example 'recognise' for manuscript 'recognize'; manuscript capitals are occasionally ignored, for example p.130, l.17, 'sir', p.131, l.23, 'man'; conversely, manuscript has no capital for 'philanthropist' on p.129, l.45, though it did elsewhere and Monthly Part is the more consistent reading. Some punctuation changes between manuscript and Monthly Part were made as proof corrections, for example:

p.130, l.33:

MS: - and a young man -' said Mr. Honeythunder

MP: - and a young man,' said Mr. Honeythunder

p.130, l.35:

MS: of an old one -

MP: of an old one:

p.132, l.51:

MS: credulity -

MP: credulity:

p.133, l.43:

MS: beams -

MP: beams,

In all of these cases a dash which was acceptable in manuscript is removed from the printed page.

The first chapter for which proofs are available has been treated thoroughly as a sample: the following chapters will not necessarily be dealt with in such detail.

#### Chapter xviii

Again, there are no alterations of great significance in subject matter. -1

There are a few instances of Dickens's preferences for a different expression in proof:

p.141, l.34: 'caution' in Deputy's speech is changed to his characteristic 'Widdy-warning'.

p.141, l.35: ' 'urtin' ' in Deputy's speech is changed to 'bruisin' '. The final apostrophe was accidentally omitted both in proof and correction. MP rectifies this.

p.141, l.48: 'That's Tope's, is it?' is changed to 'That's Tope's?'

p.143, l.14: 'being willing' is changed to 'proving willing'.

p.145, ll.23-4: 'in his temporary absence' is changed to 'in his absence'.

p.146, l.6: 'c' is changed to 'k' in the spelling 'Aukshneer'.

p.146, l.14: 'at some odd time' is changed to 'at any odd time'.

There is an example of Dickens's reverting to a reading he had originally preferred:

p.142, 1.22: 'irrevocable loss' is changed to 'irrevocability', the expression which had been written first in manuscript.

As in the previous chapter there are occasions where manuscript reading differs from proof and the proof reading has been allowed to stand:

p.140, 1.8:

MS: with the view of settling down

Proof

and MP: with a view of settling down

Either reading acceptable; manuscript perhaps the more usual. Not a change Dickens would be likely to make deliberately.

p.144, 1.19:

MS: I too am returning home

Proof

and MP: I am returning home

In manuscript 'too' is inserted above the line but is perfectly clear.

p.146, 1.5:

MS: Cloist'rham's

Proof

and MP: Cloisterham's (In Durdles's rhyme)

p.146, 1.19:

MS: double welcome

Proof

and MP: doubly welcome

Durdles' was not the only colloquial speech that caused trouble. The following are instances of variants in Deputy's speech. Not all show divergence between manuscript and proof; in some of them neither manuscript nor Monthly Part has managed to achieve consistency:

p.141, 1.30;

MS: made a dint in 'is wool!



Proof  
and MP:           made a dint in his wool!

This was changed even though manuscript had 'his' crossed out and changed to ' 'is', written very small but clear enough and consistent with Deputy's usual speech.

p.141, 1.39:

MS:                wen

Proof  
and MP:           when

Manuscript is not consistent here: all three have 'when' two lines earlier. See final paragraph of notes on manuscript for chapter v, p. 130.

p.141, 1.47:

MS:                Look'ee

Proof  
and MP:           Lookie

On p.110, 1.25, the word is spelt 'Look'ee' in Monthly Part in the opium woman's speech.

A word which gave great difficulty in Deputy's speech was his pronunciation of 'Cathedral', over which nobody is consistent, though Monthly Part is more so than manuscript. Dickens writes 'Kinfrederel' in the plan for Number V; 'Kinfreedle' at the end of chapter xii; and in the present chapter, after a crossing out of what looks like 'Kinfreedial', a variation he tried before, he has 'Kinfrederel' [al?]. Monthly Parts, which had 'Kinfrederel' in chapter xii, here prints 'Kinfrederal'. CD edition follows Monthly Parts. Perhaps the best policy for consistency would be to adopt everywhere Dickens's Number Plan choice, 'Kinfrederel'.

Both Monthly Part and manuscript are inconsistent too over Deputy's 'agoin' (p.141, 1.52), 'a going' (142, 1.2). It is not clear in manuscript whether Dickens intended it as one word or two. CD edition is consistent in printing 'a-goin'.

Proof and Monthly Part rectify manuscript inconsistency on p.142, l.12, printing 'yer' for 'you' each time, where manuscript has 'yer', 'you', 'yer'.

As before, there are occasions where proof differs from manuscript and proof corrections restore the manuscript reading:

p.141, l.29:

MS and MP:        agin  
Proof:            again (Deputy's speech)

p.144, l.9:

MS? and MP:     Now, this was very soothing  
Proof:            No. This was very soothing

'Now' is not at all clear in manuscript, and only the context is a helpful guide here.

p.145, l.40:

MS? and MP:     perpetuator  
Proof:            perpetrator

Another doubtful manuscript reading.

p.145, l.52:

MS and MP:       and it'll be time  
Proof:            and time

The manuscript is very closely written here and 'it'll be' could appear to be Dickens's characteristic deletions. Again the question arises: if this were clear error and galleys had preceded page proofs, why was the correction not made there?

Once or twice Monthly Part has a different reading from proof, though no alteration was made in the latter. These differences are all matters of punctuation and one cannot always be certain of manuscript punctuation, but in at least one case manuscript has the proof punctuation and it is superior to that eventually adopted in Monthly Part:

p.144, ll.9-10:

MS and

Proof: Here was a gentleman of a great - not to say a grand - address

MP: Here was a gentleman of a great not to say a grand - address

A much more puzzling case, however, is one where Monthly Part restores the manuscript reading, without any directive on proof. As either reading makes sense one wonders who made the eventual alteration and why. Every Saturday obviously had the uncorrected version.<sup>1</sup> The readings are as follows:

p.142, ll.34-5:

MS and MP: The main door opened at once on a chamber of no describable shape, with a groined roof, which in its turn opened on another chamber of no describable shape, with another groined roof: their windows small, and in the thickness of the walls. These two chambers ...

Proof: The main door opened at once on a chamber of no describable shape, with a groined roof, which in its turn opened on another chamber of no describable shape with another groined roof. Their windows small, and in the thickness of the walls, these two chambers ...

The other instances are less notable, usually a case of Monthly Part inserting a comma, as, for example, on p.140, l.8 of the chapter, 'for, a month or two, with a view of ...', where proof had no comma and in manuscript it looks as if a comma was intended, but is not absolutely clear.

There are also minor changes of spelling and capitals similar to those noted in the previous chapter, and one occasion here too where dashes in punctuation in manuscript and proof were altered in proof correction.

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1. See below, p.333 .

Chapter xix

There is one clear indication in this chapter that Dickens did not always look back at manuscript when correcting proofs. On p.148, ll.24-6, the Monthly Part reading is:

After several times forming her lips, which she knows he is closely watching, into the shape of some other hesitating reply, and then into none, she answers ...

For the last words here proof had the meaningless reading: 'and then into none, it was, she answers ...', and 'it was' is deleted. What manuscript actually has is: 'and then into none, by turns, she answers ...' The phrase 'by turns' is written above the line, small but clear enough, though it could obviously be mistaken if the context was disregarded. It would surely have caused less disturbance to the type if Dickens had restored the original phrase.

An instance of a similar kind of alteration, though not in this case concerning a nonsensical printing, occurs at l.39 on the same page where Monthly Part has the reading: 'I'll draw no parallel ...'. Proof printed 'I will draw no parallel' but what manuscript has is 'but I draw no parallel'. The word 'but' was inserted above the line, actually written between 'I' and 'draw' but the insertion mark is before 'I'. It is possible, therefore, that the printers made an error in reading here.

On two occasions a printers' error has gone uncorrected and there is a strong case for restoring the manuscript reading. The first is the printing of the past tense 'suggested' on p.148, l.47, where the reading clearly demanded is 'suggests' as in manuscript. Every Saturday also prints 'suggested' and the CD edition, far from picking up this

obvious error, extends it by printing 'cried' for 'cries' eleven lines earlier. The second is a more interesting case as introducing a different meaning into the text. On p.149, l.43, Jasper says, of Rosa's picture: 'which I feigned to hang always in my sight for his sake, but worshipped in torment for years'. 'For years', literally, seems unlikely in view of Rosa's youthfulness and in any case carries little force, as Jasper's whole speech is insisting on the length of time he has loved Rosa. What manuscript actually has is a forceful contrast between his relationship with Edwin and his feelings for Rosa: 'which I feigned to hang always in my sight for his sake, but worshipped in torment for yours'.

Other cases where proof and Monthly Part differ from manuscript and there is no record of the change are less interesting and important. Presumably these, too, are printers' errors unless we assume an intermediate stage of proof. One of them renders ungrammatical what had been correctly written in manuscript: p.150, l.47, where manuscript's 'be he who he might' becomes 'be he whom he might'. On p.149, l.19, manuscript gives Jasper a more formal mode of speech, not out of keeping with his surface correctness of manner: 'that is not fair', as opposed to proof and Monthly Part: 'that's not fair'. In manuscript the reading is not absolutely clear, the word 'is' being written in within the phrase 'that's not', without consequent deletion of the redundant letter. On p.150, l.1, manuscript's 'I endured all in silence' has become 'I endured it all in silence' and at l.46 on the same page 'I devoted' has become 'I have devoted', in a case where either reading is acceptable. The dropping in proof of a question mark on p.148, l.30

after 'Not left off, I think', which is not technically a question, may have been in accordance with printers' house rule. Then, there is one doubtful case of discrepancy between manuscript and proof where, owing to alterations in manuscript, there is difficulty in positing the intended reading. This is at p.148, l.18: 'the lost has long been given up, and mourned for, as dead', Dickens's original expression, into which he then inserted, and possibly again deleted, the word 'the' to balance the phrases 'the lost' and 'the dead'. Since the deletion marks here are fainter than the word they are supposed to erase, it is difficult to be sure of Dickens's intention; printers assumed the deletion was to stand.

These last variations considered are cases where no mark occurs on proof and the changed reading, whether deliberate or not, has been allowed to remain. Then there are the cases where Dickens has made a change on the printed proof: as in the previous chapters none of these is of substantial importance and a few examples will suffice:

- p.147, l.13: 'its welcome shades' becomes 'the city's welcome shades'  
(a formal improvement)
- p.147, l.24: 'a manifest impatience' becomes 'manifest impatience'.
- p.147, l.42: 'desired' becomes 'asked'.
- p.149, l.14: 'Jasper' becomes 'he'.
- p.149, ll.24-5: 'setting his black mark upon the very face of day'  
becomes 'setting, as it were, his black mark upon the  
very face of day'.

The dashes enclosing this whole phrase were also a proof change from previous commas.

- p.150, ll.1-2: 'or I supposed' becomes 'or so long as I supposed'  
(i.e. repeating 'so long' from the previous clause).

p.150, l.2: 'I hid my secret loyally and held my breath' becomes  
'I hid my secret loyally', a more restrained picture.

p.151, l.27: 'there), whence his eyes cannot be seen'.

The words after 'there)' were deleted. This was an unnecessary remark and made the sentence rather cumbersome.

p.151, l.38: 'for your sweet sake' becomes 'for your sake'.

Possibly sound was the decisive factor here: 'sweet' following 'forsworn' and preceding 'sake' is a little excessive.

p.152, l.26: 'and goes away as he had gone out at this gate, a thousand times, with no greater show ...' From 'as' to 'times' deleted in proof.

A more interesting stylistic change than any of these was the decision to rewrite the final paragraph of the chapter in the present tense, in conformity with the rest of the chapter, instead of keeping the distancing touch of the past tense which is used in manuscript.

There is one instance in this chapter of final reversion to an expression rejected earlier. At p.149, l.31, the phrase 'speaking with you after all that has happened' was changed in proof to the Monthly Part reading: 'speaking with you, remembering all that has happened'. In manuscript Dickens had hesitated between 'remembering' and 'after', finally settling there for the latter.

Several instances occur of a correction being made on proof to restore manuscript reading. In some cases the manuscript reading is rather difficult to decipher and these are presumably instances of printers' errors. For example:

p.149, l.6: 'rose' altered to 'rises' as in MS and MP.

p.149, l.11: 'cried' altered to 'cries' as in MS and MP.

p.149, l.43: 'worshipped it in torment': the redundant 'it' removed as in MS and MP.

p.149, 1.44: 'In distasteful work' becomes 'in the distasteful work' as in MS and MP.

p.150, 11.33-4: 'been silken thread less strong' becomes 'been one silken thread less strong'. Manuscript has deletions here and the reading could be 'a silken ...' or 'one silken ...'. The possibility is that 'a' was first written, then deleted in favour of 'one', but as Dickens's habitual manner of deletion easily resembles the writing of the word 'one', it is not surprising, consideration of context apart, that the printers mistook his intentions.

p.151, 1.31: 'from her dear one' altered to 'from her, dear one' as in Monthly Part and, I think, in manuscript, though the comma is very minute. This is a small change in appearance but involves consideration of two quite different meanings, each acceptable in the context, and were it not for the evidence of alteration on proof, one might be tempted, in view of the rather doubtful comma in manuscript, to prefer the former. The whole sentence reads: 'Then remove the shadow of the gallows from her, dear one!' - 'dear one' in this case being Jasper's address to Rosa and 'the shadow of the gallows' being spoken of as falling on Helena, i.e. at one remove. In the other reading, which the printer assumed, 'her dear one' would refer to Helena's brother Neville, of whom Jasper had previously spoken and over whom the shadow of the gallows looms much more directly.

Finally, there are certain variations in punctuation, presumably on the whole reflecting printers' house rule. This kind of change was not actually recorded on proof but made in Monthly Part, though one case seems to be a deliberate decision that Dickens himself had made a mistake in his proof correction, which has therefore been ignored. This is at p.148, 1.4, where printed proof and Monthly Part have the reading 'she can be seen as well as heard there, ...'. Presumably with the intention of emphasizing the contrast between 'house' and 'garden' Dickens inserted a further comma before 'there' to separate off the word; quite an allowable device but lost again in Monthly Part reading. The other variations are in the nature of exclamation marks changed to question marks in what are technically question<sup>s</sup>, a semi-colon replaced by a dash to mark a break in a speech, or a comma inserted to complete the punctuation of an expression in parenthesis.



Chapter xx

There are in this chapter one or two places where it seems likely that we do not have in Monthly Part the reading Dickens intended. The most striking instance is on p.153, l.19 where both manuscript and proof have the words 'His self-absorption'. There is no correction on proof but Monthly Part has the reading 'Jasper's self-absorption', presumably altered on the stylistic grounds that it was time the name appeared. On the other hand, there are still stronger grounds for retaining the word 'his'; namely that nowhere in the chapter does Rosa speak or think of him as 'Jasper', except in the rather indirect reference on p.158; 'her mind reverting to Jasper'. In her thoughts he is always 'he' or 'this terrible man' and one suspects that Dickens, consciously or not, was in this way strengthening the reader's feeling of Rosa's repulsion and horror, so extreme as to shy away even from mention of 'her odious suitor's' name. This is particularly noticeable at the end of the chapter where she says: 'I feel so safe from him' (p.160, ll.32-3). Another instance, less important in substance, but in a way more flagrant in that in this case Dickens's own proof correction has apparently been ignored, is on p.154, l.21, where Monthly Part has the wording, 'if she could have restrained herself from so giving it'. This was presumably the printers' reading of the manuscript, but, in fact, the mark on manuscript between 'from' and 'giving' looks far more like a deletion mark than the word 'so', an observation which is borne out by the fact that Dickens deleted the word 'so' from the proof. Admittedly the crossing out is not very clear, but there is a delete sign in the margin and there seems to be no

support for the printers' retention of the word in Monthly Part.<sup>1</sup> On another occasion in the chapter where a proof/correction is ignored the alteration is merely a matter of a comma (p.155, l.34, after 'byways') and the printers frequently seem to have their own rules about punctuation.

Also in this chapter is an example of Dickens's habit of correcting proof without recourse to the manuscript. On p.154, l.4, proof's 'a fancy that had dared to hint itself' was corrected to Monthly Part's 'a fancy that scarcely dared to hint itself'. What in fact manuscript has is 'a fancy that hardly dared to hint itself'. Where such a change of meaning is involved, as in this case, Dickens could not help but correct his proof. There are, however, as in previous chapters, several instances where a proof printing differs from manuscript without substantial effect on the meaning, and the later reading, whether intentionally authorized by Dickens or not, has been allowed to stand.

Such are:

p.153, l.38:

MS:	He had unnecessarily declared
Proof and	
MP:	He had even declared

Manuscript not clearly legible here, but this seems the most likely reading. The main argument against 'even' as being Dickens's preference is that it occurs again later in the sentence.

p.155, l.15:

MS:	soiled her, and that
Proof and	
MP:	soiled her; that

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1. I have no record of a discrepancy between ES and MP at this point. This seems to suggest that whoever prepared advance copy for ES left the deletion unrecorded on the assumption that it was not intended to stand.

Manuscript again difficult to read as the words come at the end of the line and the ink is very faded, but the fact that Dickens then had to change in proof the comma on the following line to a semi-colon supports the idea that his initial intention was to use commas. On the very next line (1.16) where the ink is still faded there is another doubtful reading. Monthly Part and proof have 'by appealing to the honest', but manuscript appears to have 'by appealing against it to the honest'. There are deletions in this passage but the words in question are as legible as the surrounding ones.

p.155, ll.21-2:

MS:                   whether she would find him

Proof and

MP:                   whether she should find him

The form in the following clause is 'would'.

p.156, l.29:

MS:                   protect [me and] all of us from him.   You will? 'me and'  
is a proof insertion.

Proof and

MP:                   protect me and all of us from him, if you will?

p.159, ll.25-6:

MS:                   This blockhead my master!

Proof and

MP:                   This blockhead is my master!

To counterbalance these, there are several occasions where Dickens does restore the manuscript reading, in some of which the correction could perhaps have been made without recourse to manuscript; in others, checking of the original seems to have been likely. Examples of both kinds follow:

p.153, l.17:

MS and MP:           A half-formed ... suspicion

Proof:               A brief formed ... suspicion

p.154, l.23:

MS and MP:           Her spirit swelled

Proof:               Her spirit swells

p.154, 11.30-1:

MS and MP: to keep out his ghostly following of her

Proof: to keep his ghost from following her

Manuscript not easy to read here. This is one of the occasions where Dickens might have had to go back to the manuscript for the reading.

p.154, 1.44:

MS and MP: softly closing the gate after her

Proof: softly closing the door after her

p.155, 1.11:

MS and MP: only thought it

Proof: but thought it

Possibly picked up from 'But' at the beginning of the sentence.

p.155, 1.41:

MS and MP: no big drum beat dull care away

Proof: no big drum sent that dull care away

p.156, 1.13:

MS and MP: Good Heaven!

Proof: Good Heavens!

The more usual expression, which proof assumed to be the right one, is too casual for Mr. Grewgious's reverential tone here.

p.156, 11.33 & 34:

In Mr. Grewgious's outburst, beginning 'Confound his politics', proof printed commas at the end of 11.2 & 3. Correction restores the manuscript exclamation mark and question mark. Manuscript has exclamation mark at the end of the first line also, but this is left as a comma.

p.156, 1.44:

MS and MP: And what will you take next?

Proof: And what will you take to-night?

Manuscript reading is not easy here.

p.158, l.28:

MS and MP: I couldn't write a play

Proof: I cannot write a play

p.159, l.35:

MS and MP: It is called

Proof: It's called

p.160, l.3:

MS and MP: dark windows

Proof: dark window

Manuscript reading not very easy.

p.160, l.16:

MS and MP: almost gay

Proof: and almost gay

The word 'and' had already been deleted in manuscript.

After recording these various occasions where printers made an error, one should add that there are one or two minor instances of their making punctuation consistent in Monthly Part where Dickens had let the inconsistency go through.

As regards Dickens's substitutions of a new reading or reverting to an original manuscript reading in proof, there are no instances of great importance. Samples follow:

p.153, l.15: 'his blackest malevolence' becomes 'his malevolence'.  
The word 'blackest' in manuscript was a second thought, inserted above the line.

p.153, l.27: 'of its injustice' becomes 'of its baselessness'.

p.153, l.33: 'all that he had said of that mystery' becomes 'all that he had said', and in line with this

p.153, l.34: 'treating it' becomes 'treating the disappearance'.

p.155, ll.42-4: 'they seemed to evoke only' becomes 'they only seemed to evoke'. Possibly the change was intended to put greater emphasis on the word 'only' in keeping with the mournful cadences of the paragraph. Other stylistic changes here are the transposition of the epithet 'flat' from 'echoes' to 'wind instruments' and the insertion of 'and souls' in the phrase 'their hearts and souls in pining'.

p.156, ll.28-9: 'to protect all of us' becomes 'to protect me and all of us'.

p.156, l.37: 'plunged about the room brandishing his arms, and to all appearance ...' becomes 'plunged about the room, to all appearance ...' The word 'and' was, in fact, a mistake: it had already been deleted in manuscript. Its removal from proof left a reading with no comma between 'room' and 'to all ...', a mistake which Monthly Part subsequently rectified.

p.156, ll.38-9: 'loyal enthusiasm, or combative denunciation, or both', becomes 'loyal enthusiasm, or combative denunciation'.

p.157, l.23: 'fish' becomes 'salted fish'.

p.157, l.36: 'ventured to touch him with her small hand too. He put it to his lips.'

Last sentence deleted in proof, giving a more restrained, less outwardly gallant picture.

p.157, l.46: 'off duty here, altogether, at present' becomes 'off duty here, altogether, just at present'.

A slight alteration, but is this suggestive of the fact that Bazzard is to return soon, that we are not to think of him as Datchery?

p.158, ll.15-16: 'but the sweet presence I have mentioned at my table' becomes 'but the sweet presence at my table'.

p.158, l.43: 'when I am his master, the case is greatly aggravated' becomes 'when I am his master, you know, the case is greatly aggravated'. Interjections are characteristic of Mr. Grewgious's speech, cf. p.159, l.19: 'Now, you know, I never had a play dedicated to me!'

p.159, l.6: 'said Mr. Grewgious, correctively' becomes 'said Mr. Grewgious'.

p.159, l.10: 'his formation until he achieved renown' becomes 'his formation'.

p.159, l.13: Exclamation 'Hem!' deleted at the beginning of Mr. Grewgious's speech.

p.160, l.24: 'neat and graceful little sitting-room'

The word 'little' was deleted on proof, but then 'STET' was inserted in what is almost certainly Dickens's own hand. The word 'compact' was inserted to give the MP reading: 'neat, compact, and graceful little sitting-room'. On the next line (l.25) the phrase 'close to your own chamber' following 'figure)' was deleted, perhaps as being too cumbersome in conjunction with the previous phrase in parenthesis.

p.160, l.35: The word 'smiling' was inserted, adding to the reassurance of Mr. Grewgiuous's manner.

### Chapter xxi

Once again in this chapter we have an example of Dickens's correction of proof without going back to manuscript. On p.162, l.35, manuscript has the reading, 'either to pick him up or go down with him'. Proof misreads 'either' as 'rather', which makes nonsense of the passage, and Dickens consequently deleted the word to give Monthly Part reading. It would presumably have been a simpler alteration to revert to the original word.

Another noticeable point in this chapter is the frequency with which Monthly Part supplies its own punctuation, sometimes merely on the printers' initiative when proof gives no directive, but occasionally even ignoring a suggestion from proof, as, for example, at p.162, l.28 where proof printed 'Mr. Grewgiuous - '; correction was made to 'Mr. Grewgiuous:', but Monthly Part prints 'Mr. Grewgiuous,'. Occasionally, too, proof has already made an alteration from manuscript in the form of changing capitals to lower case, as in the phrase 'reverend sir' on p.161, l.39.

Once, in a question of spelling, Monthly Part ignores or mistakes both manuscript and proof correction, namely in its irregular spelling of 'waived' on p.164, l.36, later corrected in CD edition. Another misspelling, 'sunburt' (p.162, l.8), slipped through in proof and Monthly Part, but the proof nonsense reading 'more the less readily' (p.163, l.21) was silently emended to 'none the less readily' in Monthly Part and Dickens's writing of 'Staples Inn' instead of 'Staple Inn' was corrected, sometimes by himself on proof, once by the printers' initiative.

At one point we can see Dickens hesitating still at the proof stage: the word 'very' (p.162, l.43) in the clause 'though it was very apparent' has been deleted and reinstated. The hesitation may have been connected with the fact that Dickens was in process of inserting a further adverb of similar effect, the word 'highly', in the following line. Another instance of possible reversion to first thoughts occurs at p.164, l.40, though in this case a printers' misreading may have caused the variation. Proof here prints 'and determined then' and the word 'even' is inserted to give Monthly Part 'and determined even then'. In manuscript the word 'even' was written, but looks as if it was intended to be deleted, as printers obviously thought.

There are one or two instances of proof's misreading caught at the correcting stage, so that Monthly Part eventually does tally with manuscript. For example:

- p.163, l.14: Proof omitted the question mark after 'Tartar'.
- p.163, l.17: Proof printed 'flower-gardens', plural instead of singular.
- p.163, l.20: Proof omitted the exclamation mark after 'idea'.
- p.163, l.23: Proof printed 'ideas', plural instead of singular.



Together with the mistake of 'more' for 'none' on l.21, this does indicate a temporary slackening of attention here.

As in previous chapters there is also a scattering of cases where manuscript reading differs from proof and the proof reading has been allowed to stand. Such are:

p.161, l.2:

MS: the clocks struck ten

Proof

and MP: the clock struck ten

p.161, l.32:

MS: O, is it ...

Proof

and MP: Is it ...

p.162, l.30:

MS: the hair of my head

Proof

and MP: the hair of the head

p.162, l.50:

MS: so very unexpected

Proof

and MP: so unexpected

The word 'very' is written above the line in manuscript, but clearly there.

p.163, l.32:

MS: of any watchman

Proof

and MP: of a watchman

p.164, l.46:

MS: And she feared

Proof

and MP: And she fancied

The word in manuscript is written above the line, very small, but it certainly looks more like 'feared' than 'fancied'.

Finally we come to instances where Dickens has introduced a new reading at the proof stage. These have been left to the last because some of them offer an interesting comparison with the readings in Every Saturday and on Gimbel's fragment of proof to Fildes, comments on which follow. None of them marks a change of great significance:

p.161, 1.6: 'he explained to Rosa' becomes 'he explained to her', This avoids clumsy repetition of the name.

p.161, 1.26: 'invited' becomes 'authorized'.

p.161, 1.41: 'a way out of it may' becomes 'a way out may'.

p.163, 11.1-2: 'the top set next the top set in the corner' becomes 'the top set in the house next the top set in the corner', an unusually cumbersome expression in either case.

p.163, 1.16: 'only just now' becomes 'only within a day or so'.

p.164, 1.31: 'and his sister. The ...' becomes 'and his sister; the ...'

There are also other slight punctuation changes unrecorded here.

p.164, 1.31: 'quite long enough for the purpose' becomes 'quite long enough'

p.164, 1.32: 'extra fitting' becomes 'extra fitting on'

p.164, 1.35: 'as they walked along' becomes 'as they went along'.

p.164, 1.37: 'in his animated way' becomes 'in an animated way'.

p.164, 1.45: 'girls would think' becomes 'girls would say'.

p.164, 1.49: 'out of any danger without resting, miles and miles' becomes 'out of any danger, miles and miles without resting'.

Proof correction also inserted a comma after 'miles' which MP ignores.

p.164, 1.52 'coming nearer and nearer, when happening' becomes 'drawing nearer and nearer: when, happening'.

p.165, 1.5: 'and got' becomes 'and seemed to get'

p.165, 1.6: 'that bloomed' becomes 'that came into sudden bloom'.

Every Saturday has the two illustrations with correct captions for this Number. It also prints the passages which Dickens intended for deletion and, as in Number IV, it has some but not all of the corrections Dickens made on proof. In this case we have the evidence of proof that these alterations were all made at the same stage of printing, though not necessarily at the same time<sup>1</sup> and the evidence of Chapman and Hall records<sup>2</sup> and of Every Saturday's ignorance on July 16th of how far Dickens had progressed with the story,<sup>3</sup> that Numbers V and VI were not sent to the editors until after Dickens's death. The implication is, therefore, that insufficient care was taken in transferring corrections to the American copy. The following notes show the cases where Every Saturday differs substantially from Monthly Parts:

p.133, l.3:

MP: of our making  
ES: of your making

These words were inserted on proof. ES transcribed the correction accurately. Common sense would dictate this, in any case.

p.133, l.34:

MP: vanity  
 Proof and  
ES: variety

The word 'variety' was an obvious misprint uncorrected on proof. Common sense restored the correct reading in MP. The implication is that ES had the same printed copy as the extant proof, unless the mistake had been repeated from galley, which is unlikely.

p.142, ll.34-5:

MP and MS: ... roof: their windows small ... the walls. These ...  
ES and  
 Proof: ... roof. Their windows small ... the walls, these ...

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1. See note on proof to Fildes, p.336.

2. See p.34.

3. ES Memoranda for July 16th: '... the question will probably be answered before these lines are printed'.

This puzzling case has already been referred to.<sup>1</sup> The inference is either that someone else later not only changed the punctuation but went back to manuscript for authority - and this to correct a reading which was quite acceptable as it stood - or that the proof from which Monthly Part was actually printed was not this copy; in other words that Dickens personally corrected at least two copies and that in this case, and possibly in others where Monthly Part appears to have an unauthorized reading, he failed to record the correction on all copies for which he was responsible.

p.153, l.19:

MP: Jasper's self-absorption

MS, ES &  
Proof: His self-absorption

No authority for 'Jasper's' unless this also is an instance of Dickens's incomplete correction of all proof copies.

p.157, l.32:

MP: '... and makes it Glorious!' said Mr. Grewgious.

ES & Proof: '... and makes it Glorious,' said Mr. Grewgious!

No exclamation mark at this point in manuscript; no alteration on proof; but the MP reading is superior to that of proof and ES.

This takes us to the end of Number V as actually printed in Monthly Part. So far the general conclusion is that Every Saturday had the proof corrections. From this point onwards, however, the picture changes and Every Saturday appears to have received an uncorrected copy. The division of chapters xx and xxi is followed (this division is unrecorded on extant proof) and Dickens's deletions of length are kept in: to this extent only does Every Saturday tally with Monthly Part. Presumably advance copy for chapter xxi would be sent to America as part of Number VI, not Number V, and whoever was responsible for sending it omitted to copy the alterations. The following uncorrected readings are to be found in Every Saturday:

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1. See p. 317.

- p.161, 11.5-6: he explained to Rosa ('Rosa' becomes 'her' on proof)
- p.161, 1.26: invited (becomes 'authorized')
- p.161, 1.41: a way out of it may (a way out may)
- p.162, 1.35: rather to pick him up or (to pick him up, or)
- p.162, 1.44: something friendly (something highly friendly)
- p.163, 11.1-2: top set next (top set in the house next)
- p.163, 1.16: only just now (only within a day or so)
- p.163, 1.17: flower-gardens (flower-garden)
- p.163, 1.23: ideas (idea)
- p.163, 11.33, 50  
& 164, 1.11: Staples (Staple)
- p.164, 1.31: and his sister. The (and his sister; the)
- p.164, 1.31: long enough for the (long enough)  
purpose
- p.164, 1.32: extra fitting (extra fitting on)
- p.164, 1.35: walked along (went along)
- p.164, 1.36: waived (waived)
- In this instance MP ignored the proof correction.
- p164, 1.37: his (an)
- p.164, 1.40: then (even then)
- p.164, 1.45: would think (would say)
- p.164, 1.49: out of any danger (out of any danger, miles and  
without resting, miles miles without resting)  
and miles
- p.164, 1.52: coming nearer and nearer, (drawing nearer and nearer:  
when happening when, happening)
- p.165, 1.5: got (seemed to get)
- p.165, 1.6: that bloomed (that came into sudden bloom)

Every Saturday also has the meaningless reading 'more the less readily' for 'none the less readily' (p.163, 1.21) but in this respect it agrees

with proof where the mistake was unnoticed.

The proof which was sent to Fildes, of which a fragment has been published, gives evidence of two stages in Dickens's corrections. A few of the alterations made on the V and A proof are recorded on this one, but not all. Basically the corrections on Fildes' proof are:

p.163, ll.37-44: This deletion is marked, but not p.164, ll.1-6, with the consequent change on l.8.

p.164, l.32: the word 'on' is inserted.

p.165, l.5: 'got' is changed to 'seemed to get'.

p.165, l.6: 'bloomed' is changed to 'came into sudden bloom'.

Then follows an interesting alteration:

p.165, l.7: The words 'bloom and' are inserted before 'flourish'.

The V and A proof has what could well be the words 'bloom and' twice written for insertion here and twice crossed out. In printed matter the two copies are identical: the obvious conclusion seems to be that V and A proofs represent the stage of second thoughts and that initially a hurried proof reading of the copy was made for Fildes.

Three times in these chapters CD edition has a reading superior to that of Monthly Part, in each case a reading dictated by common sense observation. The three corrections are:

ch.xvii: a false God of your making (MP: 133.3-4; CD: 109.1)

ch.xviii: a-goin' (MP: 142.2; CD: 116.14)

ch.xxi: waved (MP: 164.36; CD: 133.47)

Apart from these instances there is no authority for CD variations, of which the following are examples:

	<u>MP</u>		<u>CD</u>	
p.135.11.3-4	time and circumstance		time and circumstances	p.110,1.32
p.143,1.24	beg to ask		I beg to ask	p.117,1.22
p.144,1.7	ingenuous		ingenious	p.117,1.51
p.148,1.36	cries Rosa		cried Rosa	p.121,1.18
p.155,1.36	of shuffling feet		of shuffling of feet	p.126,1.31
p.157,1.35	his tea-cup		her tea-cup	p.128,11.7-8
p.162,1.51	they had all stared		they all stared	p.132,1.22

P.T.O.



Number VI Plan - no left hand

Number VI Plan - right hand

(Mystery of Edwin Drood. - No. VI)

Chapter XXI

A Gritty state of things comes on

Chapter XXII

The Dawn again

Chapter XXIII

Original Number VI (Chs. xxii and xxiii)

For these chapters no proofs survive and in any case they could not have been read by Dickens, as he was working on this Number up to the time of his death. The manuscript, therefore, holds a different interest from that of preceding chapters as it must here be regarded as the authority for the text Dickens intended. Comparison of Monthly Part and manuscript indicates that the printers made some mistakes in setting up type, mistakes which the proof readers allowed to go through. In some instances, there seems to have been a deliberate 'improvement' on manuscript reading.

Chapter xxii

A number of mistakes occur in the words of Mrs. Billickin where restoration of the original would greatly strengthen the characteristic flavour of that lady's mode of speech. For instance, she should refer to her 'parlior', not 'parlor' (p. 170, l.31 onwards; cf. 'faviour',<sup>1</sup> 172.10 and 'informiation', 175.14 and 16); a disappointment is for her a 'disapintmink' (p. 171, l.23; cf. 'jistes', 170.36 and 38; 'pint', 171.8 and 'biled', 174.41); 'respecting' should appear as 'respectin'' (p. 172, l.5; cf. 'hidin'', 172.25), 'Christian' as 'Chris'en' and 'forward' as 'forard' (p. 172, l.18 and p. 175, l.1; cf. the dropping of a second consonant in 'kep'', 172.5). 'I defy you, sir, be you what you may', the speech to Mr. Grewgious at the end of p. 170 (ll.50-1),

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1. Neither Dickens nor MP is consistent in keeping to one spelling for words ending in 'our'.

should read, 'I defy you, Sir, be you who you may'; Rosa's plate should be described as coming down 'so miserable skin-and-bony' (not 'miserably ...' p. 176, l.50) and that part of Mrs. Billickin's establishment which leads to a Mews is not an 'Arching' (p. 172, l.4) but an 'Archway'.

One other correction which closely concerns Mrs. Billickin is at the point where she is mistakenly described as being 'enrolled' in her shawl by her attendant (p. 171, l.35). The word should, of course, be 'enrobed', and yet the nonsensical 'enrolled' persists even in modern editions such as that by Collins in 1956 for which the manuscript was consulted.<sup>1</sup> At another point where the printed text presents difficulty, manuscript is no help. Mrs. Billickin's cryptic reference to 'sharing suspicions' creeping in (p. 172, l.11) appears to tally with manuscript reading. Every Saturday tries 'snaring'; CD edition follows Monthly Part. Perhaps 'shaming' was the word Dickens intended, though presumably on further thought he would have removed the final 'g'. The passages concerning Miss Twinkleton and Mrs. Billickin also contain errors: Miss Twinkleton was in manuscript described by Mr. Grewgious as 'an elder lady', that is, as compared with Rosa, not an 'elderly'<sup>2</sup> one (p. 170, l.20); a hyphen should be inserted, giving the reading 're-counting' (p. 174, l.12) to make clearer her action with regard to her luggage; the word 'grumblingly' belongs after, not before, the clause 'as if it might become eighteenpence if he kept his eyes on it' (p. 174, ll.15-16) so that it modifies 'descended the doorsteps', not,

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1. The Mystery of Edwin Drood, with an Introduction by C. Day Lewis ... Collins, 1956.
  2. Cf. a similar mistake in Oliver Twist; see Clarendon Press edition, ed. K. Tillotson, 1966, p. 214.

as in present Monthly Part reading, 'looking very hard at the last shilling';<sup>1</sup> and instead of merely 'leaving Miss Twinkleton on a bonnet-box in tears' (p.174, 11.17-18), the two cabmen left her 'bewildered on a bonnet box in tears'.

Six times in these passages Monthly Part omits a minor word and twice changes one:

- p.170, 11.5-8: This lady's name, stated in uncompromising capitals of considerable size on a brass door-plate, and yet not lucidly [MS: stated] as to sex or condition, was BILLICKIN.
- p.174, 11.24-6: The leap from that knowledge to the inference that Miss Twinkleton [MS: would] set herself to teach her something, was easy.
- p.174, 11.50-1: 'which I 'ope you will agree with [MS: me], Miss Twinkleton, was a right precaution'
- p.175, 11.14-15: ~~Th~~rowing in an extra syllable for the sake of [MS: an] emphasis at once polite and powerful
- p.175, 11.39-40: 'If you refer to the poverty of your circulation,' began Miss Twinkleton [MS: again], when again the Billickin neatly stopped her.
- p.177, 11.29-31: where every arrangement shall invest economy, and [MS: the] constant interchange of scholastic acquirements, with the attributes of the ministering angel to domestic bliss.

In all of these cases with the possible exception of the first and the last, immaterial, change, the manuscript reading is preferable. It is possible, too, that on p.173, 11.32-3, the phrase 'on it' should have been inserted after 'appearance' in the words, 'everything had a strange and an uncomfortable appearance of seeming to wait for something that wouldn't come', but the ink is smeared at this place and the reading cannot be decisively ascertained.

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1. Admittedly, the manuscript is very involved here, but the order can be sorted out.

The two cases of change of words are not of great importance:

- p. 170, l.11:           came languishing out of [MS: from] her own  
exclusive back parlor
- p. 176, l.27:           whether she can [MS: could] procure us a lamb's  
fry

Perhaps, however, manuscript's capitals for 'Lamb's Fry' should be restored.

In the passage introducing Miss Twinkleton to this part of the story, the involved syntax of Mr. Grewgious's musings appears to have given the proof readers a problem and Dickens's original construction has been modified, without, however, achieving a markedly more grammatical form. The passage in Monthly Part reads:

'It has come into my thoughts,' said Mr. Grewgious, 'that as the respected lady, Miss Twinkleton, occasionally repairs to London in the recess, with the view of extending her connexion, and being available for interviews with metropolitan parents, if any - whether, until we have time in which to turn ourselves round, we might invite Miss Twinkleton to come and stay with you for a month?' (p. 169, ll. 23-9).

In the manuscript the word 'as' does not appear, nor is there a dash after 'if any'. Dickens's capital 'W' is not always easy to distinguish from the lower case, but compared with other initial 'w's a capital is likely here, and the preceding full stop might well have been obliterated by the inserted omission mark indicating 'if any' above the line. The reading would therefore be:

'It has come into my thoughts,' said Mr. Grewgious, 'that the respected lady, Miss Twinkleton, occasionally repairs to London in the recess, with the view of extending her connexion, and being available for interviews with metropolitan parents, if any. Whether, until we have time in which to turn ourselves round, we might invite Miss Twinkleton to come and stay with you for a month?'

That this is the reading in Every Saturday suggests the likelihood that the text was thus originally set up and subsequently changed in proof.

There are other changes of varying importance in the first part of chapter xxii, before the Billickin's appearance. Of these, apart from the obvious misprinting of 'reflection' for 'refection' (p. 169, l.6), which was corrected in CD edition, the most significant occurs in the discussion between Rosa and Helena of Jasper's threat towards Neville, in the course of which Helena says:

If Neville's movements are really watched, and if the purpose really is to isolate him from all friends and acquaintance and wear his daily life out grain by grain (which would seem to be the threat to you) ... (p. 168, ll. 3-6).

Was this the main trend of Jasper's words? Surely a very imaginative interpretation is needed to supply this: the gist of his threat was that, unless something occurred to stop him in his course, he would soon complete the net which was slowly winding round Neville to his condemnation (pp. 150-1). Examination of the manuscript suggests that Dickens himself was dissatisfied with this form of words and tried out different ways of modifying it, first by inserting 'part of' so that the phrase read 'seem to be part of the threat to you' and then, perhaps finding this too cumbersome, deleting the added words and substituting 'in' to give the reading 'seem to be in the threat to you'. This modified version of the original wording stands in the manuscript and, I think, should be restored to the text.

The other main variations in the chapter are as follows:

p. 166, l.7:

MP: it is only agreeable  
MS: it is always agreeable

p. 166, l.12:

MP: even if she hadn't been conducted  
MS: even if she hadn't been conducted

Deletions at this point in the manuscript, but underlining clearly visible.

p. 166, ll.19-20:

MP: beseeching her to consider herself its Queen,  
and waving her free of his flower-garden

MS: beseeching her to consider herself its Queen,  
and waving her free of its flower-garden

p. 167, ll.31-5:

MP: Mr. Grewgi<sup>o</sup>us held decidedly to the general  
principle, that if you could steal a march upon  
a brigand or a wild beast, you had better do it;  
and he also held decidedly to the special case,  
that John Jasper was a brigand and a wild beast  
in combination.

MS: Mr. Grewgi<sup>o</sup>us held decidedly to the general  
principle<sup>1</sup> that if you could steal a march upon  
a brigand or a wild beast, you had better do it;  
he also held decidedly to the special case that  
John Jasper was a brigand and a wild beast in  
combination.

p. 168, ll.13-14:

MP: with a greatly heightened colour

MS: with a heightened color

The word 'greatly' is clearly deleted in manuscript.

p. 168, ll.17-18:

MP: between the inside of the state-cabin and out

MS: between the Inside of the State Cabin and the Out

Manuscript also gave capitals to 'State-Cabin' on ll.11-12 and to  
'Admiral's Cabin' on p. 166, l.18.

There are other instances where it appears likely that Monthly Part  
made a mistake, but it is hazardous to make an absolute assertion owing  
to difficulties of various kinds in reading the manuscript. Such are:

p. 167, l.1:

MP: to me - to us, I mean

MS: to me - us, I mean

p. 167, l.23:

MP: any more maligning

MS: any new maligning (This is a fairly certain reading.)

p. 167, l.42:

MP: could almost answer for it

MS: could almost answer for that

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1. It is often difficult to decide whether or not commas are intended  
in manuscript.



Lastly, p. 166, l.40 appears to afford an instance similar to that noted on p. 169, ll. 23-9, of the printers' setting up of Dickens's manuscript construction and subsequent modification of it at proof stage. Monthly Part reading is:

'And Mr. Crisparkle is here,' said Rosa, in rapid conclusion;  
'and could you believe it? Long ago, he saved his life!'

Manuscript clearly intends the start of a new sentence after the break in Rosa's speech, as the word 'And' in 'And could you believe it?' is given a capital letter. Whatever punctuation was intended to precede the word is obscured by deletions. Every Saturday prints the capital, following a semi-colon after 'confusion', suggesting that this was the form in proof. Probably on grammatical grounds Monthly Part printers, keeping the semi-colon, decided to change to lower case for 'and'. CD edition also prints lower case.

### Chapter xxiii

The most striking discrepancy in the final chapter between manuscript and Monthly Part is the omission from the latter of four words from the Princess Puffer's exchange with Datchery. She was supposed to say to him:

There was a gentleman passed in here this minute, Sir.  
A gentleman in mourning. (p. 185, l.21).

Presumably the last four words were dropped in sheer error: they are written very close to the previous line and could be missed. On the other hand, it is just possible that the proof reader was bothered by the circumstance of Jasper's having 'changed his dress' (p. 184, l.33)

after his visit to the opium den where he must be wearing mourning in order to elicit Princess Puffer's enquiries about the dead friend. It may be that we are to think of Jasper as always changing his dress on his visits to the opium den, as a safeguard against recognition, but nowhere in the text is this suggested. However, even were this the case, we should still expect him to wear mourning, if anywhere, in Cloisterham, where its absence, in one so devoted to his missing nephew, would surely have roused comment.

There are a few divergences slighter in appearance than this, but in fact having a distinct effect in just perceptibly altering the meaning. In Monthly Part, the description of Jasper, p. 178, l.18 onwards, makes the clause 'that he would share it with no fellow-creature' consequent on his being 'so concentrated on one idea', and the 'attendant fixed purpose' something additional to this, whereas in manuscript the purpose was the determination not to share his thought with anyone. The difference becomes clear in a comparison of the two passages:

MP: Impassive, moody, solitary, resolute, so concentrated on one idea, and on its attendant fixed purpose, that he would share it with no fellow-creature, he lived apart from human life.

MS: Impassive, moody, solitary, resolute, concentrated on one idea, and on its attendant fixed purpose that he would share it with no fellow-creature, he lived apart from human life.

The change in meaning is a minor one, but the manuscript is more exact in tallying with Jasper's earlier resolve:

I now swear, and record the oath on this page, That I nevermore will discuss this mystery with any human creature, until I hold the clue to it in my hand. (p. 128, ll. 29-31).

On P. 179, ll.3-4, Monthly Part, by misplacing the word 'treacherously', blurs the alternative speculations as to how Edwin's possibly violent end had come about:

MF: whether John Jasper's beloved nephew had been killed by his treacherously passionate rival, or in an open struggle: or ...

MS: whether John Jasper's beloved nephew had been killed by his passionate rival, treacherously, or in an open struggle: or ...

A third example of these slight alterations comes in the record of the Princess Puffer's movements as she tracks down Jasper. According to Monthly Part (p. 184, l.36) she 'follows him a little way, hesitates, instantaneously turns confidently', the collocation of the two words 'instantaneously' and 'confidently' helping to place the emphasis on confidence rather than on hesitation. In manuscript, there may be a comma after 'instantaneously'; there is certainly not one before it; which indicates rather a phrasing suggestive of hesitation: 'follows him a little way, hesitates instantaneously, turns confidently', a change of reading admittedly immaterial so far as any significant purpose is concerned, but borne out by the existence of an alternative phrase 'for a moment' legible under manuscript deletions.

Another variation superficially of the same nature as these, but in fact clearly owing to no careless reading but to a deliberate improvement, perhaps by Forster, occurs in the sentence describing Jasper's London hotel (p. 179, ll.18-20):

MP: It announces itself, in the new Railway Advertisers, as a novel enterprise, timidly beginning to spring up.

MS: It announces itself as a novel enterprize, in the new Railway Advertisers timidly beginning to spring up.

Either meaning is, of course, possible here, but the suggestion that it is the hotel which is timid, rather than the Advertisers, is borne out by the ascription to it of the words 'bashfully' and 'apologetically' in the following sentence. In this case, therefore, an editor might

be justified in not restoring Dickens's wording, on the grounds that he himself would probably have approved of the emendation.

Of the various instances where Monthly Part either misreads or omits a word, the one of which the restoration would give an obviously more satisfactory reading is on p. 188, l.34, where Deputy in manuscript asks Datchery: 'Where do [not MP: did] yer think 'Er Royal Highness is a goin to tomorrow morning?' One would also like to see replaced the word 'rolling' in Deputy's pantomime of the effects of opium smoking (p. 188, ll.19-20):

smoking an imaginary pipe, with his head very much on one side and his eyes [MS: rolling] very much out of their places ...

The word represents an improvement on Dickens's own original phrase: in manuscript it is inserted in the margin, a long way from the place of insertion, but connected to it by a line. Other, less important, examples of this type of mistake are: p. 178, ll.12-13:

MP:	to have speculated with keen interest on the steadiness and next direction of the other's designs.
MS:	to have speculated with keen interest each on the steadiness and next direction of the other's designs.

p. 180, ll.47-8:

MP:	without leaving off
MS:	without breaking off

p. 181, ll.3-4:

MP:	to take your pipe
MS:	to take your pipes

p. 181, l.40:

MP:	retouches and replenishes
MS:	retouches or replenishes

p. 183, ll.38-9:

MP:	stirs again
MS:	stirs it again (no change of meaning involved)

p. 185, l.13:

MP: close upon him entering under the gateway  
 MS: close upon him in turning under the gateway  
 Here the manuscript writing is very small.

p. 185, ll.17-18:

MP: toll-taker of the gateway  
 MS: toll-taker at the gateway (reading not absolutely  
 certain)

p. 188, ll.14-15:

MP: A shilling of mine is going your way  
 MS: A shilling of mine is coming your way

p. 189, l.52:

MP: the sculptor's representation of  
 MS: the sculptor's presentation of  
 The 're' is quite clearly deleted in manuscript.

Finally, there are a few instances of differing forms of words in conversation; one, clearly a slip in manuscript, where Deputy's usual form 'yer' is mistakenly written as 'you'; another where Princess Puffer's 'Ye' becomes in print (p. 183, l.52) 'You' - elsewhere she hovers between these two forms. Where manuscript reading is difficult it is perhaps better to settle for the usual form of speech, even if the manuscript reading rather suggests a change. For example, on p. 181, l.15, Princess Puffer's word looks rather like 'Allays' though elsewhere she speaks the correct 'Always' and <sup>as</sup> l.1 of the same page, her words look like 'you war ... warn't ye?' though normally she uses the form 'you was' as on l.3. An occasion where there is nothing elsewhere in the text as a guide occurs on p. 187, l.49 where, in Monthly Part, Deputy avers: 'Asides which ... there ain't no family of Winkses.' The first letter in manuscript here is difficult to read as a capital 'A', but it is exactly like Dickens's capital 'B'. However, there is no 'e' visible to follow it and, as Deputy nowhere else uses the word, an editor would have to make his own choice. Once, certainly, probably

twice, a mistake occurs in Datchery's speech: on p. 186, 1.17 he comments that Princess Puffer is making 'direct', not 'directly' as in Monthly Part, for the travellers' lodging, and at the end of the novel, when contemplating his score in the corner cupboard, his comment in manuscript appears to be 'Humph!' not 'Hum;ha!' (p. 189, 1.5). None of these speech variations has anything like the interest of Mrs. Billickin's earlier. - 1

Occasional reference has already been made to particular Every Saturday and CD edition readings. For the most part in these chapters Every Saturday tallies with Monthly Part, the divergences such as 'baronical' for 'baronial' and 'sweetbread snow' for 'sweetbreads now' being obvious mistakes on the part of the Every Saturday printers. Just once Every Saturday has a different word that might make a sensible alternative reading; the word 'imported' instead of 'imparted' in the words 'none such have been imparted by myself' (p. 175, 1.33). The relevant letters in manuscript are difficult to decipher; so that we cannot be certain what Dickens's intention was: nor, in the absence of proof, can we know whether Monthly Part printers initially set up 'imported' and changed the reading only after sending the sheets to America or whether the emendation was made on the initiative of the Every Saturday editor. As there are several mistakes in Every Saturday's printing in the surrounding pages, it may be that the change in letter was a sheer mistake.

Where CD edition differs from Monthly Part in wording it is, as one would expect, Monthly Part which has the manuscript reading, except once or twice where an obvious mistake is being corrected; for example,

as already noted, the replacement of 'refection' for the erroneous 'reflection' (MP: 169.6) and the removal of a superfluous 'my' where Monthly Part and Every Saturday have 'seemed to add my "my good woman"' (P. 174, 1.44).

The differences in wording one can probably put down to either sheer error, as in Mrs. Billickin's 'if you were' instead of 'if you was' (MP: p. 172, 1.29; CD: p. 140, 1.23) or an attempt to give an improved reading, as in 'to heave the anchor up' for 'to have the anchor up' (MP: p. 166, 1.3; CD: p. 135, 1.2-3). This word in manuscript clearly begins with 'ha'; 'haul' does not look likely, and nothing but 'have', against the sense of which there is no strong objection, seems possible. Another word which CD edition changes, for no apparent reason, occurs in the phrase 'bearing reference to' (MP: p. 178, 1.2-3; CD: p. 144, 1.43) which CD prints as 'having reference to'. The word 'bearing' is quite clear in manuscript even though it is written above a deletion; 'having' might be the word which was deleted, but it is difficult to say.

Although superficially they appear less important, it is certain of CD's punctuation changes which are more significant than changes in wording. The restoration of an initial capital to the word 'precincts' (MP: p. 185, 1.46; CD: p. 151, 1.19) is supported by both manuscript reading and practice elsewhere in the chapter. Removal of the apostrophe preceding the word 'ere' meaning 'before' (MP: p. 177, 1.26; CD: p. 144, 1.24) is surely an improvement too, though Monthly Part reading is supported by manuscript. The punctuation of MP: p. 166, 1.15 is unsatisfactory and both CD and ES effect a change for the better:

MP: half laughing at, and half rejoicing, in his ...  
CD: half laughing at, and half rejoicing in, his ... (P. 135, 1.12)  
ES: half laughing at, and half rejoicing in his ...

In this case manuscript agrees with CD edition.

At p. 166, l.31 (CD: p. 135,24), CD restores the manuscript question mark which Monthly Part omitted from the question 'Are blushes among the fruits of the country of the magic beanstalk?' Finally, at p. 173, ll.30-3, all versions show slight differences: here, however, the Monthly Part version is perfectly acceptable:

MP: 'Cannot people get through life without gritty stages, I wonder!' Rosa thought next day, when the town was very gritty again, and everything had a strange and an uncomfortable appearance of seeming to wait for something that wouldn't come. No. She began to think ...

The divergences here concern the form of punctuation which is adopted at the end of Rosa's expressed thought and also at the end of this whole sentence, which still has perceptibly the effect of a question. Manuscript has the exclamation mark after 'wonder' and between 'come' and 'No' both a question mark, and, almost superimposed on it, what looks like a dash but may be merely the mark of a trailing pen. Every Saturday prints a question mark after 'come', which rather suggests that this might be another of those possible instances where Monthly Part printers set up Dickens's text and subsequently revised it. CD edition (P. 141, l.15) gives the effect of a question by substituting a question mark for the exclamation mark after 'wonder'. It is quite a common practice with Dickens, however, to use exclamation marks on such occasions.

The general conclusion from an examination of the CD variant readings in these chapters is that where CD does effect an improvement, the alteration can always be put down to the workings of common sense, without necessary recourse to any authority.



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A.        TEXTUAL

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Note. There is a mistake in deduction on pp. 203-6 which is carried through in the following pages of chapter V wherever reference is made to the possible significance of the surviving mixture of page and galley proof in indicating more than one stage in proof production. In fact, as surviving proofs of other novels, e.g. David Copperfield, show, the printers had evolved the system of setting up the material in pages up to the required number for the Monthly Part, and attaching the excess material in galley form. See, for example, Preface to Oliver Twist, ed. Kathleen Tillotson, Clarendon edition 1966, p. vi. and Dickens at Work, pp. 21-2.

The proof for Number V of Edwin Drood follows this pattern, but in the absence of proof for other numbers of the novel, the obvious inference was not drawn until after the chapter had been written.

Colonel Gimbel has written to say that he possesses a complete set of proofs for Edwin Drood but nothing further as to the details of the corrections on this set has as yet been ascertained.