There was a fiction that Mr. Wopsle "examined" the scholars, once a quarter. What he did on those occasions was to turn up his cuffs, stick up his hair, and give us Mark Antony's oration over the body of Caesar. This was always followed by Collins's Ode on the Passions, wherein I particularly venerated Mr. Wopsle as Revenge, throwing his blood-stained sword in thunder down, and taking the War-denouncing trumpet with a withering look. It was not with me then, as it was in later life, when I fell into the society of the Passions, and compared them with Collins and Wopsle, rather to the disadvantage of both gentlemen.

*Great Expectations* (Chap. 7)

My subject is Dickens's treatment of passion, or strong feeling, but since the question of feeling in fiction has been neglected, I have to begin with a few rough assertions, hoping that they will create, however crudely, some kind of context for the present analysis. I assume that the importance of the passions in fiction has been passed over for two reasons: one, the thematic and structural concerns of novel criticism; two, the subordinate and sporadic place of feeling in the narrative medium.

We can—and indeed must—look at a lyric poem or an Elizabethan tragedy as a trajectory of passion, but the novel has such narrative commitments to history, moral judgment, and psychological analysis that the track of feeling may be discontinuous and even subdued. However, the nature of that track of feeling varies from novel to novel and from novelist to novelist. There are novels where we are hardly in touch with feeling at all, and others where feeling flows in a continuum very like that of lyric or drama. In *Wuthering Heights, Sons and Lovers, North and South,* and *How It Is* the narrative constructs and generates feeling in a constant and

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1 This essay will form part of my forthcoming book, *Feeling in Fiction.*
continuous flow. In *Tom Jones*, *The Antiquary*, and *Daniel Deronda* there is a combination of passionate and dispassionate presentation. To make a further distinction: in *Wuthering Heights* and *How It Is* the passions are wholly dramatized through character; in *Tom Jones* and *Daniel Deronda* there is a recession from the dramatized passions of the characters to the dramatized passions of the narrator, who stands in varying relation to the inferred or un-inferred author, whose feeling may be supposed to make up the drift, motive, or main direction of the novel. Heathcliff’s fury of passion, at one time, comes to us through the medium of Isabella’s gloating triumph, which in its turn comes through the cool, tired, tough, partly guilty, confident, and doubtful sympathy of Nelly Dean, which in its turn comes to us through Lockwood’s patronizing but not blunt interest and disinterest. Behind and in all is Emily Brontë’s reckless vitality and so on. We receive Tom Jones’s sorrow at leaving Sophia in a more distanced and more cheerful medium, that of Fielding’s experienced assurance and amusement. (I am happy to note that Collins includes Cheerfulness and Mirth among his Passions.) We see Gwendolen’s recklessness or self-regard in the medium of her author’s wise compassion. And in the cases of Fielding and of George Eliot we can say, I think, that the prevailing feeling explored and generated in the novel often breaks through into explicit dramatization. In the case of Hardy, however, I take it we have an author whose feeling about the universe doesn’t quite get expressed by Jude and Sue, who prove something to him, and for him, but whose spectrum of passion may seem larger or smaller than his; that is to say, the novel expresses a sense of barely tolerable but necessary and, alas, common waste and frustration, while Sue and Jude mostly express disappointed purpose and love, willful self-destruction or passive drifting with the destructive current.

The meaning of a novel is expressed in terms of feeling as well as idea, and we can thus distinguish the hideous laughter of a Beckett from the compassionate calm of a Hardy, though their ideas about the Universe are far less dissimilar. Each novel has its characteristic passions, and Hardy’s range will of course be more expansively and variously set out if we distinguish among the novels. Each novelist has his characteristic passions. There is a good deal of point in looking at the author’s persona in terms of prevailing feeling: there is the sanguine, cheerful author, unshocked and on good terms
with his characters, the reader, and God; there is the intense, earnest, soliciting one; the rough and rude, the violent; the teasing and leering, tickling rather than stirring passions; the hard-cool, and the soft-cool, and so on. We now begin to veer toward another tremendous aspect of the subject, that of the readers' feelings, and at this point I veer back to Dickens.

It seems useful to start with the simple and obvious question of the characters' passions. The larger issues are all of great interest for the critic of Dickens: the question of Dickens's indulgence, control, and exhibition of feeling and that of his dramatic exploration of passion as against his direct melodramatic manipulation of the readers' feelings are plainly central to his art. But in this essay I want only to look at the passions of the characters. Back to Wopsle, Collins, and Great Expectations.

"It was not with me then, as it was in later life, when I fell into the society of the Passions, and compared them with Collins and Wopsle, rather to the disadvantage of both gentlemen." It is one of those comments often thrown up by Dickens, accepted and scarcely noticed after its moment. I do not propose to take it as a neglected text in whose light the novel should now illuminatingly be read. On the contrary, I want it for my text, but it would scarcely seem to be Dickens's. In a novel by George Eliot or Meredith—it could very easily come into Harry Richmond, say—it would indeed be resonant and thematic. The characters in George Eliot and Meredith do simplify the passions in their extreme youth and come at least to recognize the subtlety and stubbornness of feelings once stereotyped and departmentalized. Moreover, George Eliot and Meredith are carefully engaged with the task of rendering this complexity as a part of characterization and argument. How Maggie simplified the process of Renunciation, how she selected from her readings and inexperience a dangerously romantic and sexless Love. How Dorothea was wrong about Love and Humility, how Lydgate was wrong about Ambition, Love, and their relation to each other. Like any Elizabethan dramatist George Eliot draws the mixture, tensions, arguments, fights, and harmony of the passions; they compose her psychological medium and her subject. And the process of showing the simplification of the Passions involves a complex passionate rendering; think of Lydgate's enslavement to his passion for Laure and his marginal sense that his habitual self waited him in the flatland below. But there is at first sight some-
thing ingenuous and casual in Dickens's criticism of Collins. Dickens himself never entirely throws off those simplicities, extremities, and physical demonstrations which are presumably what he is laughing at in Wopsle's performance of Collins's all-too-performable Passions.

But—as so often with Dickens—to say this is misleading. He never throws off the simplicities, extremities, and physical demonstrations, but along with them go subtle insights and subtle renderings. From *Pickwick* to *Edwin Drood* the Collins method is conspicuous. It is the theatrical and behavioristic rendering, and it has certain disadvantages. The characters rant, rave, groan, sigh, weep, laugh fiendishly, heave the bosom, flourish sticks and umbrellas, toss their heads, strike themselves, hit stones, cast themselves on the ground, writhe, and so on. The disadvantages of the rendering of passion by passionate conduct, for which Dickens's sources are probably theatrical, are plain. The conduct, as in acting, tends to be exaggerated and extreme, and the passions tend to appear simplified and separated. Moreover certain falsities arise: it gets to look as if passions are always acted out and formulated, never inner and introverted, private and secret. Almost any very passionate character in early or middle Dickens will illustrate all these disadvantages. Edith Dombey, for instance, is a most subtle case of moral pride, torment, and self-destruction, but the innerness of her complexity and conflict bears very little relation to her head-tossing, bosom-heaving, and bosom-striking. More oddly, there is no particular reason for all the passionate externals. These are not actors, this is not a stage. Dickens has access to all the novelist's means of rendering strong feeling.

Moreover, he uses them. Speech implies more than it says; take Louisa Gradgrind's famous failure to communicate her dangers to her father as she speaks of the smothered fires of Coketown, and he demonstrates his inability to use symbol and transcend fact. The author takes us into the character's mind and heart: Oliver's susceptibility to Fagin's treatment of neglect followed by friendliness, Dombey's repression, jealousy, shift from almost turning to Florence toward hating her, Clennam's depression—all are in part at least rendered by the narration, by telling as well as showing. So there is at times a gap between the external display and the inner description.

However, there are as many methods of rendering passion in
Dickens as there are methods of presenting character, and in this essay I can only examine a few. I should like to take my examples from a fair chronological range, if only in order to insist on the difficulty of discussing Dickens's development in rendering passion. I think we might safely say that *Pickwick Papers* separates and departmentalizes the passions more than any other novel, partly because of its formal division into melodrama and comedy, partly because of the extreme simplifications of the characters and action —often, apparently, a visual simplification. But from *Oliver Twist* onward I would say that Dickens employs a mixture of methods, external and internal. Sometimes the melodramatic acting of the passion seems to go with a crudity of concept so that the staginess or externality seems to express what limited insight about the feelings Dickens possesses. Sometimes we can say that a less behavioristic and more subtle rendering is uttering a complex insight, refusing to simplify or even to name a passion, since it may be too complex and related to other passions to come out in mere tossing and turning. But there are many very interesting cases where the chosen method and the insight are at variance, where there is the display that meets the eye, but where there is also more than meets the eye, or where we shift from what conduct and gesture can show to some attempt at a notation of the inner feelings that do not get shown at all.

To begin with the simple case, let us look at the jealous passion of Sikes. It is expressed in speech: "I'd grind his skull under the iron heel of my boot into as many grains as there are hairs upon his head." It is expressed in movement and gesture:

Without one pause, or moment's consideration; without once turning his head to the right, or left, or raising his eyes to the ground, but looking straight before him with savage resolution: his teeth so tightly compressed that the strained jaw seemed starting through his skin; the robber held on his headlong course, nor muttered a word, nor relaxed a muscle, until he reached his own door.

And in this same chapter 47 it is expressed in action, in the murder of Nancy.

This is a typical and constant instance, to be found over a wide range of characters throughout the novels, such as Oliver, Fagin, Ralph Nickleby, Quilp, Nell, Jonas Chuzzlewit, Edith Dombey, Carker, Rosa Dartle, Bradley Headstone, Rogue Riderhood. Ac-
tion is a mode of passionate expression used even for the more
naturalistic characters like Bella, Wrayburn, Clennam. It is occa-
sionally used very subtly, as when the outward display cannot be
read by the other characters: Steerforth stirs the fire, but David
cannot read the sign. It is sometimes rather partial and discrepant,
as in Edith, but sometimes perfectly matched to the character and
moral, as in Sikes. Dickens describes Sikes as an utterly hardened
character—"Whether every gentler human feeling is dead within
such bosoms, or the proper chord to strike has rusted and is hard
to find, I do not know...." ("The Author's Preface to Third Edi-
tion," 1841)—and the extreme violence and resolution in outward
action is fully expressive of the extremity of character.

But if Dickens sees Sikes as dead or rusted in gentler human feel-
ings, he most certainly does not show him only as the violently
outraged and jealous murderer played on by events and by Fagin.
In his brilliant account of the flight of Sikes Dickens manages some-
ting very fine, very striking, and very characteristic. It is a largely
but not entirely histrionic and behavioristic display of strong but
mixed and indeed unclassified passions. The author contrives ex-
pressive actions that symbolize, precipitate, and blend the passions.
The result is twofold: not only is tension sustained and renewed
after the murder, but the interest is given a human focus, and the
character of Sikes expands in a form of psychological melodrama
where the stage is both interior and exterior. The events themselves
are highly vivid and exciting: the pursuit, the flight, the fire, the
trap, the death. But the inner register is also exciting and especially
so for not being simple or predictable. Dickens is not showing us a
brute nor indeed is he evoking easy compassion for a hunted man,
but he is keeping Sikes (and us) in touch with certain common fea-
tures of human feeling: loneliness, alienation, need for human con-
tact and activity, repression, energy, and always fear. Being
Dickens, he uses a whole range of effects from the ironic grim
comedy of the cheapjack who finds the bloodstain on Sikes' hat to
the fire-fighting at the end. In the fire we have perhaps the most
successful external showing of something too subtle and complex to
be analyzed or given a single name. Sikes seizes on the fire as an
opportunity to use his energy and join it with that of other people.
His is a kind of rudimentary innocent pleasure, familiar in guilty
or alienated states, in which participation in something detached
from personal problems gives enormous relief. But there is also
here the relief in sheer physical energy, which keeps us also in touch with the man's brutality, his loss of gentle human feeling. The effect of such unnamed and natural passions is surely itself hard to name: in Coleridgean terms we are kept in the "highroad" of human passions. We are induced to feel a kind of sympathy—perhaps Mitleid rather than pity—and the violent action is given inner life, the life of nerves and feelings.

For now, a vision came before him, as constant and more terrible than that from which he had escaped. Those widely staring eyes, so lustreless and so glassy, that he had better borne to see them than think upon them, appeared in the midst of the darkness: light in themselves, but giving light to nothing. There were but two, but they were everywhere. If he shut out the sight, there came the room with every well-known object—some, indeed, that he would have forgotten, if he had gone over its contents from memory—each in its accustomed place. The body was in its place, and its eyes were as he saw them when he stole away. He got up, and rushed into the field without. The figure was behind him. He re-entered the shed, and shrunk down once more. The eyes were there, before he had laid himself along.

So far this is brilliant criminal psychology: the involuntary imagery of strong passion (here, of course, guilt) realizes and substantiates the hideously macabre presentation of the body with the carefully placed "its" and the telling selection of the eyes. This kind of inner drama is found over and over again in Dickens: it is there at the end of this novel in Fagin's analyzed perceptions in the court (also playing a variant on the image of eyes), in the analysis of Jonas Chuzzlewit's guilty terrors, in Scrooge's nightmare of death, and in many other instances. Robert Garis, one of the few critics to pay any attention to the feelings in fiction, suggests that Dickens is especially good at showing the passion of anger. To this we must add guilt and fear—or better, guilty fear. But in order to clinch the point we should observe Dickens's marvelous blending of the extraordinary and the ordinary in his rendering of such extreme states of sensation and passion. After the paragraph I have quoted comes this:

And here he remained, in such terror as none but he can know, trembling in every limb, and the cold sweat starting from every pore, when suddenly there arose upon the night-wind the noise of distant shouting, and the roar of voices mingled in alarm and wonder. Any sound of men in that lonely place, even though it conveyed a real
cause of alarm, was something to him. He regained his strength and energy at the prospect of personal danger; and, springing to his feet, rushed into the open air.

The broad sky seemed on fire. Rising into the air with showers of sparks, and rolling one above the other, were sheets of flame, lighting the atmosphere for miles round, and driving clouds of smoke in the direction where he stood. The shouts grew louder as new voices swelled the roar, and he could hear the cry of Fire! mingled with the ringing of an alarm-bell, the fall of heavy bodies, and the crackling of flames as they twined round some new obstacle, and shot aloft as though refreshed by food. The noise increased as he looked. There were people there—men and women—light, bustle. It was like new life to him. He darted onward—straight, headlong—dashing through brier and brake, and leaping gate and fence as madly as the dog, who careered with loud and sounding bark before him.

He came upon the spot. There were half-dressed figures tearing to and fro, some endeavouring to drag the frightened horses from the stables, others driving the cattle from the yard and outhouses, and others coming laden from the burning pile, amidst a shower of falling sparks, and the tumbling down of red-hot beams. The apertures, where doors and windows stood an hour ago, disclosed a mass of raging fire; walls rocked and crumbled into the burning well; the molten lead and iron poured down, white-hot, upon the ground. Women and children shrieked, and men encouraged each other with noisy shouts and cheers. The clanking of the engine-pumps, and the spiriting and hissing of the water as it fell upon the blazing wood, added to the tremendous roar. He shouted, too, till he was hoarse; and, flying from memory and himself, plunged into the thickest of the throng.

Hither and thither he dived that night: now working at the pumps, and now hurrying through the smoke and flame, but never ceasing to engage himself wherever noise and men were thickest. Up and down the ladders, upon the roofs of buildings, over floors that quaked and trembled with his weight, under the lee of falling bricks and stones, in every part of that great fire was he; but he bore a charmed life, and had neither scratch nor bruise, nor weariness nor thought, till morning dawned again, and only smoke and blackened ruins remained. (Oliver Twist, chap. 48)

Among the many features of this scene is the combination of implicit and explicit comment. Dickens tells us quite a lot: that Sikes is energized at the thought of personal danger, that it is like new life, that he is escaping from memory and himself. But he also leaves a lot to the action's eloquence, and it tells us that Sikes could only escape from one torment into another, that he needed men and women, that a delirium of action worked, but did not last. It is a perfect instance of Dickens contriving an event which despite
melodramatic violence and improbability makes itself accepted because it is such a good carrier of passion. That makes it sound too static: it is, rather, a generator of new passion. We see an aspect of guilt and fear; we also see the needs, sensations, and perceptions that join Sikes with common humanity. I need not labor the additional work Dickens gets out of his action: the fire-fighting gives symbolic expression to violence, destructiveness, desperation, and ruin; Sikes needs the fire, he is also like the fire—burning, raging, and rocking.

This kind of multiple expressiveness of passion recurs in other novels. Perhaps the two most striking examples come in Dombey and Son where they not only act locally but also link with one of the main themes and in addition link terrible hands from Dombey to Carker, opposed as apparent lover and cuckold, in rivalry and jealousy, joined as victims of Edith’s self-punishing and other-punishing sexual pride and honor. The examples I have in mind are the two railway scenes, the first expressing Dombey’s reaction to Paul’s death, the second accompanying Carker’s death.

The fire expressly exists in order to render Sikes; it is attached to no before-and-after realities in the scene, people, or action of the novel, and this is chiefly why I have called it melodramatic and even improbable. It has the status of sensitive scenery. Not so with Dombey’s train journey. The railway is connected with the whole industrial scene of the novel, and we see it grow, make changes, and employ real people. More important though, Dickens makes quite plain the gap between the railway’s symbolic rendering of Dombey and its larger life. The railway stands for Death, but like the fire it provides smaller symbolic nuances. Dickens picks up, for instance, the violence of its noise, the iron way, and the speed which “mocked the swift course of the young life that had been borne away so steadily and so inexorably to its fore-doomed end.” He also makes it quite plain that Dombey’s sensations and feelings are selecting the symbolic points, that the train’s journey, landscape, and effects are not wholly or simply as Dombey interprets them:

He found no pleasure or relief in the journey. Tortured by these thoughts he carried monotony with him, through the rushing landscape, and hurried headlong, not through a rich and varied country, but a wilderness of blighted plans and gnawing jealousies... Away, with a shriek, and a roar, and a rattle, from the town, burrowing among the dwellings of men and making the streets hum,
flashing out into the meadows for a moment, mining in through the
damp earth, booming on in darkness and heavy air, bursting out
again into the sunny day so bright and wide... .

Throughout the long descriptions of Dombey's journey in
chapter 20 there are these and other broad and objective descrip-
tions that make the selection plain: Dombey chooses the dark but
there exists the light, there is a wilderness without like the wilder-
ness within, but there is also richness and variety. When Dombey
moves into the industrial horrors, Dickens make explicit what was
formerly implicit.

There are dark pools of water, muddy lanes, and miserable habita-
tions far below. There are jagged walls and falling houses close at hand,
and through the battered roofs and broken windows, wretched rooms
are seen, where want and fever hide themselves in many wretched
shapes, while smoke and crowded gables, and distorted chimneys, and
deformity of brick and water penning up deformity of mind and body,
choke the murky distance. As Mr. Dombey looks out of his carriage
window, it is never in his thoughts that the monster who has brought
him there has let the light of day in on these things: not made or
caused them. It was the journey's fitting end, and might have been the
end of everything; it was so ruinous and dreary.

So, pursuing the one course of thought, he had the one relentless
monster still before him. All things looked black, and cold, and deadly
upon him, and he on them. He found a likeness to his misfortune
everywhere.

This is more complex than the use of the fire, because Dickens
is using the symbol and the appropriately violent thing and action
not only in order to make the passions plain but also in order to
say something about the symbol-making action of passion. It is a
way of having your symbol and explaining it.

By the time the railway is used to render Carker's passions of fury
and fear, it has picked up resonance from chapter 20. It has come
to stand for a monstrous Death by both showing and telling.

The whole long episode following Edith's disclosure in the Dijon
Hotel is both telling and yet obscure. Obscure because Carker's
fear of Dombey seems excessive. From the moment when Edith
warns him, "Look to yourself!" saying that she has seen her
husband in the street, Carker is blanched and shaken by terror. A
bell rings and goes on ringing, and with it starts a state of great
physical terror which continues throughout the next chapter (55)
and which is marked by superstition and confusion. It still seems out of proportion to any fear of Dombey, but Dickens tries to account for this, rather cleverly, by relating it to the sexual humiliation Carker has just suffered which seems to "have rent and shivered all his hardihood and self-reliance":

Spurned like any reptile; entrapped and mocked; turned upon, and trodden down by the proud woman whose mind he had slowly poisoned, as he thought, until she had sunk into the mere creature of his pleasure; undeceived in his deceit, and with his fox's hide stripped off, he sneaked away, abashed, degraded, and afraid.

The fear and panic are enlarged beyond the obvious cause and like the sensations of Dombey in the earlier journey are enlarged and generalized by the use of the railway. Only, on this occasion the symbol's resonance appears before the train itself to increase the irrational blurred force of Carker's feelings:

Some other terror came upon him quite removed from this of being pursued, suddenly, like an electric shock, unintelligible and inexplicable, associated, with a trembling of the ground,—a rush and sweep of something through the air, like Death upon the wing. He shrunk, as if to let the thing go by. It was not gone, it never had been there, yet what a startling horror it left behind.

Carker is afraid of death, and throughout the description of his flight Dickens incorporates the unknown object of the fear into the fear itself. He also makes excellent use of all the rational apparatus of fear. The man feels alienated chiefly because he has been mortified and hit where he felt most confident, in his sexual vanity. He also feels alienated because he is in a foreign country. And Dickens also makes his very self-consciousness increase the feeling of dissociation in a brilliant perceptive stroke: "The dread of being hunted in a strange remote place, where the laws might not protect him—the novelty of the feeling that it was strange and remote, originating in his being left alone so suddenly amid the ruins of his plans." Like Sikes the character opens out and largely by means of acutely rendered new feeling. But the whole episode is also an inner melodrama of violent fear and desperate turmoil of feeling—the violence is right for Carker, as it was for Sikes, but it also keeps us on the highroad of normal experience. Dickens exploits the symbol's pre-echo; the rush, the bell, the sweep of "something
through the air” are only explained when Carker—like other strong characters in nineteenth-century fiction—is destroyed by the train. Before the train hits him and mutilates him Dickens describes his journey in terms rather like those of Dombey’s, the inner feelings being expressed by the outer landscape, but the selectivity made quite clear. The journey is “like a vision, in which nothing was quite real but his own torment.” Dickens rushes through pages of descriptive summary where the very rapid generalization serves excellently to convey featureless motion, monotony, haste, change, painfully incessant traveling.

When at the end the description stops and stills as Carker goes on an English train to a little inn where he hopes for rest, the descriptive detail has blurred and whirled into a correlative for his sensations. We are utterly convinced by the comment that “imbecile discomfiture and rage—so that, as he walked about his room, he ground his teeth—had complete possession of him,” for what might seem melodramatic and external detail is by now the acceptable gesture of a familiar passion. Like Sikes and Dombey, Carker is possessed and obsessed: he cannot feel at a standstill but has to keep in motion, “riding on nevertheless, through town and country, light and darkness, wet weather and dry, over road and pavement, hill and valley, height and hollow, jaded and scared by the monotony of bells, and wheels, and horses’ feet, and no rest.” He forgets the day and the time, he increases his “disorder” with wine, he is lured down to the railway and seems to see the trains as Devils and to be fascinated and terrified, holding on to a gate “as if to save himself.” Gradually a state of derangement is made clear, though it is finally neither the lure of the train nor the fuddled mind which brings him on the rail. He meets Dombey (and his eyes), staggers, slips, and then meets the red eyes of the train.

In these three very characteristic set pieces, where Dickens attenuates and heightens the action in order to dwell on a passion, there is outward and inward violence. But in two of the later novels, *Little Dorrit* and *Great Expectations*, Dickens becomes interested in strong feeling that cannot be expressed in external events of this kind, where the characters have to feel their passions without outlet. It is true that Dombey does a lot of secret thinking and feeling, and in him Dickens shows from time to time a silence or repose eloquent of repression and reserve. But when Dombey suffers on the railway journey, there is the correspondence of action
The Passions

with the inner passion. In Arthur Clennam's depression or Pip's misery there is no such outlet; the strong feeling cannot get expressed or acted out but leads its secret life, visible only to the reader to whom it is shown in appropriate quiet.

*Little Dorrit* allows Dickens to show Arthur's depression continuously but quietly because its total environment is a match for it: the miserable city buildings, the dark houses, the dank weather, the prison climate, all provide continuous expressive material. The prevailing passion of the main character is a version of the prevailing feeling and theme of the novel:

It was a Sunday evening in London, gloomy, close and stale. Maddening church bells of all degrees of dissonance, sharp and flat, cracked and clear, fast and slow, made the brick-and-mortar echoes hideous. Melancholy streets in a penitential garb of soot, steeped the souls of the people who were condemned to look at them out of windows, in dire despondency. ... Nothing to see but streets, streets, streets. Nothing to breathe but streets, streets, streets. Nothing to change the brooding mind, or raise it up. Nothing for the spent toiler to do, but to compare the monotony of his seventh day with the monotony of his six days, think what a weary life he led, and make the best of it—or the worst, according to the probabilities.

This is the opening description in chapter 3 which is immediately followed by the arrival of Arthur Clennam. The anonymous example in the general picture conforms perfectly to the character who actually arrives. It is the kind of correspondance of small image and large character which animates George Eliot's commentary and links it to the scene and persons. Such links are not always present in Dickens. For instance, in the famous opening description of *Bleak House* there is no tiny image of Esther Summerson, and I would suggest that one of the large weaknesses of that great novel lies in a certain discord of feeling, in which the cheerfulness of Esther constantly grates against the depression and anger that mark the narrator of the general narrative and are constantly invoked in the reader. It is of course not just a matter of the friction of passions but of the social attitudes they suggest. But in *Little Dorrit* there is a conformity of passion which makes the local happy-ever-after fit modestly and suitably into the darker and more melancholy larger scene. One is tempted to suggest that the passions of characters are

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2I do not count "the death of the sun." My point is precisely that Esther triumphs and does not die.
vivid expressions of the central passion of the novelist. Even Flora Finching's love-gush, for instance, is a sad business both in its fat middle-aged self-knowledge, its goodbye to romance, and its acceptance of moderation as the best in this world. "It was not ecstasy but it was comfort," she says so memorably of her marriage, while her love for Arthur had been "the morning of life it was bliss it was frenzy it was everything else of that sort in the highest degree."

(A beautiful comic example of the refusal to distinguish, separate, and name the passions.)

Dickens's serious treatment of the tender passions is never his strong point; he is much better on sexual jealousy, pride, revulsion, fury, fear, gluttony, sloth—almost anything—than on Love. Just as his cheerfulness, which is sometimes marvelous, sometimes (as in Gilbert and Sullivan) maddening, begins to ebb out of the novels, so a certain improvement can be seen in his treatment of love. It is true, as Garis observes, that Arthur Clennam's subdued love for Pet Meagles is very archly shown, but the feeling for Little Dorrit perhaps needs some such preliminary. Dickens need not have been so coy, certainly, but a feeling both tender and yet untragic is just right for Arthur's middle-aged-but-not-all-that-middle-aged controlled emotional activity. The feeling for Pet is right because it allows him to suffer the right kind of blindness to Little Dorrit (it is incomparably better done than David's blindness to his love for Agnes) and because it keeps him in the right fairly depressed state. His visits to the Circumlocution Office and his relations with Daniel Doyce also bring out his combination of energy and depression. Arthur is not a cynic, because Dickens thought cynicism too wicked to let his hero feel it (Gowan can, of course), but he verges on cynicism. His energetic depression can pick up images and occasions for its strength of feeling from the environment and themes of the novel. Of course it also illustrates the environment and themes. Arthur's disappointment and gloom are fairly consistent but are gathered into the moral energy of his desire to do things for people—not an optimistic but a muted desire. Although he is a striking and central instance of reserve, there is another. Dickens observes explicitly that his history must sometimes see through Dorrit's eyes, and so it does. As Arthur sees quite clearly, she is not used to dwelling on her emotions, and there is one splendid instance of her reserve which can also illus-
trate the reserve of her author. The instance is "The Story of the Princess."

In "The Story of the Princess" Dickens shows in the storytelling that he knows how fictions may be used to express wish-fulfillment or life-as-it-is, to relate passion obliquely or directly. Dorrit tells the story of a Princess because Maggie needs stories about Princesses, "beyond all belief, you know!" and with "lots of hospitals, because they're so comfortable." But for herself the story has to have "a poor little tiny woman," not at all beyond belief and not at all comfortable. The little woman's secret place—like the novel called Little Dorrit—has a shadow in it. The storytelling's impromptu making and the fits and starts and interruptions by Maggie (the Common Listener) is a reserved expression of Dorrit's own secret passion. Not a subtle expression but a quiet one and typical of the novel's prevailing feeling from beginning to end.

This kind of quietness and reserve also shows itself in Great Expectations in the form and the content of its passions. The form is chiefly an explicit one, since the novel is a first-person narrative. Pip keeps no secrets from the reader. We notice that he insists on certain complications in loving which the early Dickens would have passed over. Pip keeps on insisting, for instance, on the misery of loving Estella, and if we go right back to Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, The Old Curiosity Shop, and Martin Chuzzlewit, we will conclude that even this insight is an advance. But the novel is also full of insight into the general nature of passion. We are often shown the confusion and derangement that marked the extreme passions of Sikes and Carker and again shown Dickens's refusal to name, separate, and classify the passions. In chapter 49 Pip feels both amazement and—he adds—"even terror" when Miss Havisham begs his forgiveness on her knees. He leaves her and goes down "into the natural air" and walks round the wilderness of casks, wet and rotting, the cold, lonely, and dreary yard, and ruined garden. Then he sees the image of Miss Havisham hanging from the beam and comments that "the mournfulness of the place and time, and the great terror of this illusion, though it was but

*I must make it plain that the whole novel is not reserved in its expression of feeling. In chap. 31, where the Dorrit family rebuke Little Dorrit for walking arm-in-arm with Old Nandy, for instance, we find the characters starting, firing off words, head-shaking, trembling and turning pale, passing a handkerchief over the face, grasping convulsively, clenching, weeping, crying "half in a passion and half out of it" (Fanny), and gasping. Dickens uses the stage fire from beginning to end.
momentary, caused me to feel an indescribable awe as I came out between the open wooden gates where I had once wrung my hair after Estella had wrung my heart.” Even the little joke is melancholy. The account of Pip’s “fancy” is quieted as well as explained by the explanation.

This recognition of emotional complication comes into the grim account of Orlick’s attack in chapter 53. Here Pip manages to describe a mixture of physical pain, religiously “softened” thoughts, detestation, despair, terror, and considerable mental activity. The varying passions are linked and rendered by this insistence on the way the mind worked “with inconceivable rapidity.” He repeats the phrase, even outlining the range of subject-matter he covered in inner action during one of Orlick’s short speeches. Pip is interested in the kind and quality of imagery, as well as the imagination’s speed, and says:

My rapid mind pursued him to the town, made a picture of the street with him in it, and contrasted its lights and life with the lonely marsh and the white vapour creeping over it, into which I should have dissolved.

It was not only that I could have summoned up years and years and years while he said a dozen words, but that what he did say presented pictures to me, and not mere words. In the excited and exalted state of my brain, I could not think of a place without seeing it, or of persons without seeing them. It is impossible to over-state the vividness of these images, and yet I was so intent, all the time, upon him himself—who would not be intent on the tiger crouching to spring!—that I knew of the slightest action of his fingers.

It is always dangerous to speak of Dickens changing, and if we turn back to the end of Oliver Twist we find Fagin’s terribly alerted perceptions described in the court scene. But there is a new control and restraint, I think, in Pip’s self-analysis. More important, the interest in shifts and shades of feeling is not confined to this kind of crisis in action.

Take the very different scene in which Pip questions Jaggers about Estella’s parentage. In chapter 48 there is the account of a dinner-party at Jaggers’s house, and Pip’s sudden suspicion that Molly is Estella’s mother. The realization is shown to dawn in a slow but sure train of association: Jaggers mentions Estella’s marriage and predicts that she has got in the Spider a husband who will either beat or cringe. With the subject of marital brutality
silently in his mind, Pip notices Molly making a knitting movement with her hands and after a minute remembers that he has seen Estella's fingers moving like that as she really knitted when he last saw her at Miss Havisham's. The sense of discovery is accompanied by a fusing of all Pip's previous feelings of inexplicable connection. Once again we have not only the dramatized process but the explicit comment which controls and increases reserve: "I thought how one link of association had helped that identification in the theatre, and how such a link, wanting before, had been riveted for me now, when I had passed, by a chance, swift from Estella's name to the fingers with their knitting action, and the attentive eyes. And I felt absolutely certain that this woman was Estella's mother."

This sense of reserve and passion is continued through a conversation with Wemmick, through the next interview with Miss Havisham, where he touches on the subject, and then culminates in the interview with Jaggers in chapter 51. Dickens makes the point that Pip's appearance, arm bandaged and coat over shoulders, and the need to tell Jaggers about the fire at Satis House, made for a promising informality, "caused our talk to be less dry and hard." There is the small rich spurt of wit in the image of the two murderers' casts "congestively considering whether they didn't smell fire at the present moment." Pip then tells Jaggers that he has asked Miss Havisham about Estella and reveals his guess. When Jaggers still tries to turn back to business, Pip makes "a passionate, almost an indignant appeal to him to be more frank and manly with me." One of the vivid phrases in his paraphrased appeal to Jaggers is the phrase, "little as he cared for such poor dreams."

There follows a high point of narrative and emotional discovery. The scene is moving because Jaggers tells Estella's story, but also because in telling it he reveals that other side of himself, the side not shown, as it is in Wemmick, but from time to time implied. The language of the disclosure is legal—"Put the case"—and cautiously so. It is also impersonal—"he lived in an atmosphere of evil"—and cautiously so. The whole story expresses his sympathy and generosity and there are explicitly telling breaks, as when he picks up Pip's assumption that he would not care for the "poor dreams":

Mr. Jaggers nodded his head retrospectively two or three times, and
actually drew a sigh. "Pip," said he, "we won't talk about 'poor dreams'; you know more about such things than I, having much fresher experience of that kind."

And again, in the middle of his story:

"But add the case that you had loved her, Pip, and had made her the subject of those 'poor dreams' which have, at one time or another, been in the heads of more men than you think likely, then I tell you that you had better—and would much sooner when you had thought of it—chop off that bandaged left hand of yours. . . ."

It is such implications of reserve, and of the capacity and history of the reserve, that show the other side of Jaggers. This show of restraint and passion makes not only that moving impression of the felt life and complexity of a minor character, but more importantly, for this novel, of the unprofessional and unconditioned "natural" life that the barrister shares with his clerk. Their affinity is made very plain when Pip tries to use Wemmick's Aged-Parent side to pry open Jaggers's heart, and Jaggers smiles in response. The point is reaffirmed at the end of the chapter when Wemmick challenges Mike's comment, "a man can't help his feelings," and says severely, "his what?" while Jaggers adds, "I'll have no feelings here."

It is tempting to exaggerate this restraint as a feature of the mature Dickens, but we must remember the feeling implicit in the brilliant comic reserve of Dick Swiveller and the Marchioness, one of Dickens's few moving love stories and one of his most eloquent appeals on behalf of the victimized child. What we can say with some certainty is that Dickens comes to provide a greater continuity of feeling in his later novels. A thematic analysis would point out the idea of nature and denaturing running not only through the stories of Pip, Estella, and Miss Havisham but also through the minor figures of Wemmick and Jaggers, but I prefer to stress the community of feeling created in this and other late novels. Perhaps after all Pip learnt something that Wopsle and Collins did not know about the adult passions—that they are always with us, whether spoken or acted out or not, that they are always with all of us, and that they do not come on one at a time.