

Great Expectations: The Tragic Comedy of John Wemmick

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THEMATIC correspondences and analogous characters and situations abound in *Great Expectations* and have been often and ably indicated.¹ John Wemmick, the focus of this essay, although often noticed in passing has escaped sustained analysis. He is, so obviously and amusingly, "the most modern man in the book,"² that critics tend to detach him from the novel, as if this modernity exhausted his implications. As Jaggers' clerk, to restate the case, Wemmick's note is: "Portable Property," repeatedly intoned from that "mechanical" smile on his "square wooden face, whose expression seemed to have been imperfectly chipped out with a dull-edged chisel."³ But, "Walworth is one place, and this office is another" (p. 315). At Walworth there is the endearing solicitude for Aged Parent, the distinctly unportable⁴ property of the moated castle, and the retreat and relief from the getting and spending of the Jaggers establishment. Wemmick has succeeded, such is his modernity, in divorcing his best self from his worldly self, and this so thoroughly that his best is free of contagion, his worldly ways beyond the reproach of undue softness. The stain of the world's contagion does not corrupt him, nor does his purity of heart disqualify him for his place at the mercantile forge. The separation is complete, the alienation acknowledged and accommodated, the raging conflict between the claims of Society and those of the person resolved by a thorough but harmless, even comic, schizophrenia.

The exegesis has a satisfying ring to it, and a useful moral or even political insight rises from it with the clarity

of diagram. But John Wemmick is in fact less "flat" than the diagram allows. His division into two selves is neither magical nor complete. It is strategic, serious, and defensive. And its implications have an illuminating relevance to the Dickens world. The analysis that follows attempts to show that, behind the masking of comedy, Wemmick is the novel's most deeply imagined victim. He neither understands nor protests against societal forces. His accommodation with the ways of the world are as self-destructive as is Miss Havisham's, but she is a creature of melodrama with whom sympathy is inappropriate. Dickens makes Wemmick a creature of comedy; sympathy with him, one speculates, would expose truths too painful for tears.

The alienation of Wemmick's best self from his ordinary self, an alienation which is at the core of *Great Expectations*, while familiar to our own times with its consciousness of dissociated sensibilities and the widening gulf between city and suburb, is, as the applicability of the Arnoldian rhetoric implies, firmly rooted in the Victorian experience. Indeed, Wemmick seems to have read Ruskin: "Experience, I fear, teaches us that accurate and methodical habits in daily life are seldom characteristic of those who either quickly perceive, or richly possess, the creative powers of arts; there is, however, nothing inconsistent between the two instincts, and nothing to hinder us from retaining our business habits, and yet fully allowing and enjoying the noblest gifts of Invention. We already do so, in every other branch of art except architecture . . ." ⁵ Ruskin, in leading up to a plea for freedom from misinformed academic regulation of architecture, understates the difficulty his own "hard times" presented to such as Wemmick. But Jaggers' clerk does center his private life around a comic approximation of Gothic architecture. It is here that he operates a machine, "with a relish, and not merely mechanically." And Wemmick's principles find their reflection, if not their source, in Ruskin's moral im-

peratives. He tells Pip: "It's a principle with me, if you have an idea, carry it out and keep it up." He understands the relationship between his castle's form and its functions as an efficient bastion under siege, and he agrees with Ruskin that the owner-designer can profit by taking part in the acts of labor: "I am my own engineer, and my own carpenter, and my own plumber, and my own gardener, and my own Jack of all Trades" (pp. 222-23).

Curiously, John Wemmick and John Ruskin were "neighbors," Ruskin's Herne Hill being in Wemmick's district of Walworth. And there are other suggestive links between the two. Both might well have entered the same industry: Wemmick being "brought up . . . to the Wine-Coopering" (p. 317), Ruskin, of course, the son of a prominent wine merchant. Both found the keeping of pigs on their suburban grounds subject for elaborated jest,⁶ and, more importantly, shared a profound and moving sense of filial respect and devotion. Wemmick's long engagement and his carefully secret marriage find a parallel in Ruskin's story of his parents. After an engagement of nine years, "the now not very young people were married in Perth one evening after supper, the servants of the house having no suspicion of the event until John and Margaret drove away together next morning to Edinburgh."⁷ That both the then published work of Ruskin and some details of his private life not yet in print lie behind Dickens' creation of Wemmick — that Wemmick is a caricature of Ruskin — is but an engrossing possibility, but that Wemmick's plight, however modern, is a Victorian one as well, is beyond doubt. From Carlyle to Pater the difficulties and necessities of being man and not machine resound. And Dickens' Wemmick shares a distinctively Victorian trait within this wide current of thought, an optimism that should have known better, and which, in fact, often did.

Ruskin's optimism stirs him, in the passage quoted above, to find "nothing inconsistent" between the demands

of the spheres, roughly, of commerce and art-imagination-charity. For a moment the "storm cloud" of the century is dissipated. Dickens optimism — surely its genesis is complex — makes Wemmick a figure of comedy, his tragedy obscured by his style. His *détente* with the world, however limiting, is buoyant and ingratiating. He succeeds where Orlick, most conspicuously among a host of failures, fails. But Wemmick is not Joe Gargary — the mark of Jaggers' finger and the stench of Newgate are upon him.

His name is a typical Dickens coinage, lightly suggestive both of an aural connection with that of his creator and of meaningful allusion. The old and distinguished Wemyss family boasts a forebear renowned in artillery, in fact, the "Master-gunner of England,"⁸ and, of course, Wemmick fires his "Stinger" each night at nine. A "wem" is a moral defilement, a bodily disfigurement or injury, and, in the sense that William Morris borrowed the archaism in 1858,⁹ a stain of sin. Sampson Brass, the attorney "of no very good repute" in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (ch. 9), owes some of that fame to his "nose like a wen." To "whim" is to be whimsical. No doubt Wemmick's name carries and mingles these overtones. The clear "symbolic suggestion" that Jaggers is "degraded and polluted" by the necessities of his business and so resorts to obsessive habits of personal cleanliness,¹⁰ finds a slight and disguised echo in the name of his chief clerk.

The connection between Jaggers and Wemmick runs deep despite the latter's endearing traits which tend to give the impression of contrast. If Wemmick has his suburban Walworth, Jaggers too appreciates the value of "a pleasant home," is probably working toward the establishment of one for himself,¹¹ and in the meantime lives in the Bohemian and not particularly convenient Soho. To be sure, his house is dreary, his furniture with "an official look," his books all business, and his prize exhibit a murderess tamed into domestic service. "He seemed to bring

the office home with him," notes Wemmick (p. 228). But Wemmick's castle has its prize curiosities too, and despite its owner's boast that "Walworth is one place, and this office another," "they were mostly of a felonious character; comprising the pen with which a celebrated forgery had been committed, a distinguished razor or two, some locks of hair, and several manuscript confessions written under condemnation — upon which Mr. Wemmick set particular value as being, to use his own words, 'every one of 'em Lies, sir'" (p. 225).

Both men bring home with them their involvement with crime. Jaggers' fascination however is more objective and, as it were, academic. To him Bentley Drummle and Molly the murderess are clinical subjects, and, as in the complex manoeuvres about Pip's monies, he is a thorough, deliberately disinterested professional. We know next to nothing of his personal life, merely the "sigh" and "a smile" with which he responds to Wemmick's suggestion that he has or wants to have private and personal interests. Pip laments his lack: "I could not help wishing more than once that evening, that Mr. Jaggers had had an Aged in Gerrard Street, or a Stinger or a Something, or a Somebody, to unbend his brows a little" (p. 315). But whatever personal life Jaggers may have or hope to have, one can imagine it being utterly divorced from his professional cares. One can see him, retired on a comfortable competence, a pleasant neighbor with the common Victorian addiction to criminal law and psychology.

Wemmick's connection with Newgate colors and distorts his sensibility. He has been genuinely if grotesquely touched by Old Artful and Bounceable and their gifts of funereal brooch ("representing the lady and the weeping willow at the tomb with the urn upon it") and mourning ring (pp. 215-16), and his celebration of their value as "portable property" does not succeed in hiding their sentimental value to him. As Walworth is imperfectly isolated from Newgate, so Newgate reverberates for Wemmick,

confusedly, with echoes of Walworth sentiments. He is "laden with remembrances of departed friends" (p. 183), carrying them with him as part of his dress. His need to humanize and personalize his "professional" duties, a need Jiggers does not exhibit, marks the failure of the bifurcated life, or at least the inadequate moral sustenance of the Walworth life. Sentimentality is not health, not success in life.

Jiggers is indeed a colder man, but his coldness may be a sign of the strength of his real attachments. Wemmick is warmer and weaker. Jiggers "keeps himself so high," risking no emotional involvements, so that, between master and subordinate, persons are caught and controlled, as Wemmick explains with delight, "soul and body" (p. 284). Wemmick's humane intentions and shallowness of sensitivity permit him to preempt, for Jiggers' purposes, the supposed humanity of the dispossessed. His emotional confusion makes him a perfect dupe, a pacifier of the not utterly undue resentment of the underdogs upon which Little Britain feeds. By displaying his sentimental sympathy with and for Jiggers' clientele, he disarms their rancor and confounds the protests of their humanity. It is a role, one suspects, Jiggers would not accept, but which Dickens himself has been accused of playing. Jiggers serves the mercantile society which supports him, but as a professional, not as a whole man. He renders to Mammon only what Mammon demands, and seeks only the fruits Mammon can bestow. He does not take advantage of his position to force or even allow friendships. Friendliness with Pip would require an openness Jiggers' business responsibilities will not allow, and seeing this clearly and coldly, he abstains. It is not courageous or idealistic, but it is realistic, intelligent, and most of all, fair. He is at great length to convince Pip that he is *not* acting as his friend and to hint with increasing broadness at the existence of complicating aspects of the great expectations. He knows the true terrors and unimpeachable shibboleths of

the cash nexus, knows that to storm its citadels in hope of affective satisfactions is a dangerous and debilitating endeavor. His heart is in the right place — isolated from Newgate. The compartmentalized life, of which Wemmick boasts, is possible, not for Wemmick, but for Jaggers.

While both men are quite corrupt, they are quite different in their moral or aesthetic sensitivity to that corruption. Perjured and suborned testimony is their staple. Jaggers is sensitive enough to insist that the pretense of honest dealing is upheld (p. 180), while Wemmick exhibits no such scruples. He is pleased with the opportunities for petty graft his position affords and seems uninterested or unable to discriminate between favors prompted by affectionate regard and those extorted by fear of his power. He reminds a former juryman that "we let him down easy," and wants an especially good fowl for his money. The shopkeeper, thereupon, offers the "best fowl in the shop" as a "present," and Wemmick accepts it, as he says, "of course" (p. 220). He often accepts "portable property" in the shape of mourning jewelry, and when a prisoner, "the Colonel," apologizes for having to neglect that custom, Wemmick presses him for a pair of fancy pigeons (p. 283). Unlike Jaggers who seeks and gets only professional success from professional dealings, Wemmick seeks not only his bits of property but continued fulfillment of affective needs. He makes friends, or what he imagines to be friends. He puts his heart in his work in a futile attempt to mitigate its heartlessness.

For all his protestations to the contrary, Wemmick's instincts are those of love. He likes the alliteration of his motto more than its substance. His attention to personal money gain is trifling compared to his search for sentiment. His admiration for Jaggers' high professionalism is a kind of love whose sign is the imitation of the beloved's style.¹²

But through ignorance of social, economic, and psychological mechanisms, fear of diverging from the nation's pub-

lic ethos, and a self-centeredness which directs him away from sensitivity to larger issues and other persons, Wemmick is an ally of the Newgate heartlessness. It is an epitome of the paradoxical trap into which Pip, Magwitch, Belinda Pocket, and others in the cast, fall. Unlike the fiery and analytical Ruskin, Wemmick compromises enthusiastically with the forces of evil which surround him and which he inadequately comprehends. In doing so he expresses a side of his creator's complex personality — that side some Marxists castigate for providing an opiate for the oppressed — and carries as a sign of this, part of his creator's name in his own: *Wemm-ick, D-ick-ens*.¹³

In a world of imposture, of false and forged positions and hidden relationships, Wemmick, says Jagers "smiling openly," "must be the most cunning imposter in all London" (p. 446). Pip's narrative confirms that judgment with perceptions of duplicity: Wemmick's face had "some marks in it that might have been dimples, . . . but . . . were only dints" (p. 182); "His mouth . . . [gave him] a mechanical appearance of smiling" (p. 183). Jagers impresses Wemmick as being, "deep as Australia If there was anything deeper, . . . he'd be it" (p. 214). But this supposed depth of Jagers refers to his knowledge of affairs, and to his ability to keep private matters private, to honor the sanctity of privileged information. It does not refer primarily to any unconscious confusion of public and private identity. That Jagers is himself a man in disguise remains a speculative possibility: "Mr. Jagers never laughed; but he wore great bright creaking boots; and, in poising himself on those boots, with his large head bent down and his eyebrows joined together, awaiting an answer, he sometimes caused the boots to creak, as if *they* laughed in a dry and suspicious way." But as Wemmick is quick to say of this, perhaps unwilling to concede any touch of humanity in his mentor, any duplicity shown is "not personal; it's professional: only professional" (p. 213). Wemmick's doubleness has its "professional" aspect

too. The imperfect separation into Walworth and Newgate attitudes effects a *détente*. But the habit of imposture and subterfuge pervades Wemmick's personal life, forming a style to support stresses that are not at all "professional."

Wemmick's castle is not simply a private assertion of values to which the world of Newgate and Little Britain is inimical, a world of openness and peace set against one of chicanery and crime. The castle itself is false to its own origins and milieu.¹⁴ Its suburban, really rural charms are masked by the elaborated pretence that it is a Gothic fortress, a bastion set against invading hordes. Its enemy is not weather or age or vandalism, but an imaginary armed force, against whose fancied assaults Wemmick mounts an antique cannon on a "fortress . . . of lattice-work," a small garden to preempt blockade, and a moat, "four feet wide, and two deep." Even Wemmick's livestock and kitchen garden are justified by the pretence: "If you can suppose the little place besieged, it would hold out a devil of a time in point of provisions" (p. 222-23). The motives that have led Wemmick to establish his Walworth life in opposition to the Newgate one have led him as well to see imaginary foes in the "rather dull retirement" (p. 222) of Walworth. The habits of fear, self-defence, and imposture, have come to exist without proximate cause.

Wemmick seems to disguise the very act of eating. At his desk, alone with Pip, he "threw [pieces of biscuit] from time to time into his slit of a mouth as if he were posting them" (p. 213). When Pip, on leaving, offers Wemmick his hand: "Mr. Wemmick at first looked at it as if he thought I wanted something." But he makes a fast recovery: "To be sure! Yes. You're in the habit of shaking hands? . . . I have got so out of it! . . . except at last" (p. 185). Unless Dickens has been careless here and forgotten this incident, Wemmick's explanation is untrue — Wemmick shakes hands regularly and with the

ease of habit.¹⁵ His hesitation in taking Pip's hand,¹⁶ here at the beginning of their association, may be a drawing back from the possibility of friendship. Wemmick's explanation then is defensive and deceptive, an attempt to disguise the evidence of a bruised psyche, one which has learned to conceal, even to doubt, its affectionate instincts. A clearer instance of this kind of protective overreaction is Wemmick's response to the plea of Mike, an old client who enters seeking aid for his daughter, just arrested for shop-lifting. This occurs very soon after Wemmick's Walworth life is inadvertently revealed by Pip to Jiggers. Wemmick's dismay at the revelation slowly fades before Jiggers' teasing, smiling, and winking, and he is soon nerved to suggest that Jiggers himself covets a Walworth of his own. Jiggers changes the subject to that of Estella's parentage, and speaks forcefully of Pip's love for her — better cut off both your hands than pursue that delusion. Wemmick, a man in an advanced stage of courtship holds his peace, but Pip senses a tension between him and Jiggers: "I observed that the odd looks they had cast at one another were repeated several times: with this difference now, that each of them seemed suspicious, not to say conscious, of having shown himself in a weak and unprofessional light to the other" (p. 448).

At this juncture Mike enters; his "eye happened to twinkle with a tear," and Wemmick's accumulated discomfort has its target. The exposure of his Walworth personality and the daring approach to familiarity with Jiggers require drastic denial. Mike's only excuse for his "snivelling" is this: "A man can't help his feelings, Mr. Wemmick." But some men have come to think that they must, and Mike is repulsed "savagely" (p. 449). Wemmick's habits of secrecy and subterfuge run too deep. The world has made him cruel, and, unlike even Miss Havisham, he is unaware of his own cruelty. Even repentance is denied him. The comic mask slips.

Wemmick's companion in the castle is his deaf and feeble "aged Parent," the nomenclature itself a denial of the affectionate relationship. It is an epithet one would expect in M'Choakumchild's Utilitarian school. The Aged's passivity, indeed the weakness which enforces passivity and benignancy, stands in stark and welcome contrast to the parade of strong, active, and unsatisfactory fathers and father substitutes with which Pip and the reader is confronted. The Aged is a Joe Gargary deafened at last by the sounds of the forge, as Wemmick is a Pip distorted and damaged at last by the great forge that is London. The relationship of Pip and Wemmick to their "fathers," Joe and the Aged, are parallel and recall other instances in Dickens in which a euphoria of affectionate intercourse is seized by a reversal of conventional patterns of feeling. Jenny Wren in *Our Mutual Friend* and Amy Dorrit play mother to their own fathers, and in *Hard Times* sibling relationships are distorted under similar pressures.¹⁷ The emotional satisfactions thus achieved, by character and reader alike, are short-lived. Pip, at last deepened in character so as to fully appreciate Joe's merits, has outgrown, with nostalgic regret, their heretofore sustaining closeness. Wemmick is a special case: his distortion of the conventional filial relationship suffers no change. The *ménage à trois* which Pip envisions — himself, Bidley, Joe — is chimera, but for Wemmick, the chimera of a threesome by the hearth (Ruskin's disastrous vision too) — himself, the Aged, Clara — is realized. Once called forth, it exists unchanged and eternal, in the world of comedy in which great expectations are met. Intimations of decay and mortality, even those of growth and change, seem foreign to our idea of that hearth as we close the book. That the Aged Parent will die, or that Clara Wemmick will produce a child, as Estella does, seem absurdly irrelevant speculations. Wemmick's dream — it is Dicken's dream too — of successful accommodation outlives the realities which limit the rest of us. That "heavy slab"

in the ceiling, intricately rigged above Wemmick's bed, as above Pip's, fails to fall (pp. 337-38). Comedy is tragedy that does not happen.

Wemmick's comic variations on the themes of *Great Expectations* are epitomized by his courtship of Miss Skiffins. She appropriately shares Wemmick's "wooden appearance," but impresses Pip as "a good sort of fellow," and one probably "possessed of portable property" (p. 318). She shares as well his habits of imposture, filling in, for example, for the servant girl, "in a trifling lady-like amateur manner that compromised none of us" (p. 321). She plays her part in the charming secret courtship nimbly:

As Wemmick and Miss Skiffins sat side by side, and as I sat in a shadowy corner, I observed a slow and gradual elongation of Mr. Wemmick's mouth, powerfully suggestive of his slowly and gradually stealing his arm round Miss Skiffins's waist. In course of time I saw his hand appear on the other side of Miss Skiffins; but at that moment Miss Skiffins neatly stopped him with the green glove, unwound his arm again as if it were an article of dress, and with the greatest deliberation laid it on the table before her. Miss Skiffins's composure while she did this was one of the most remarkable sights I have ever seen, and if I could have thought the act consistent with abstraction of mind, I should have deemed that Miss Skiffins performed it mechanically. (p. 322)

Both partners pretend to be passionless, to dissociate themselves from their very limbs in a most artificial minuet of spontaneity. The same pretence of uninvolved, or even unconscious action that lets Wemmick draw "his wine when it came round . . . just as he might have drawn his salary when that came round" (p. 423), characterizes his chosen. She thwarts his encircling thrust "with the neatness of a placid boxer" (p. 322).

The pattern of feigned spontaneity culminates in the marriage itself, where Wemmick's most thorough planning is disguised behind the bravado of *sprezzatura*. Spontaneous action, the unpremeditated and emotionally free response to persons and events is a traditional sign of personal and societal health. It is a Victorian commonplace,

and, of course, the touchstone of the early Carlyle's "Characteristics." The paradox is that Wemmick, not at all unlike John Stuart Mill, aspires to spontaneity by means of its opposites, and that the clerk should succeed where the sage fails demonstrates a truth of high comedy.

The wedding is presented to Pip as a casual morning walk with an informal breakfast along the way. The groom carries a fishing rod. "Halloa! Here's a church!" And the carefully stowed white kid gloves, two pairs no less, are "found" in his pocket. One can assume that they are the correct size. The Aged and the bride are in their places. They too don gloves, and the Aged is allowed to express once more his topsy-turvy fatherhood by having to be helped into his gloves, with maximum difficulty, by his son. "True to his notion of seeming to do it all without preparation," Wemmick pretends surprise at finding a ring. Even "a little limp pew-opener in a soft bonnet like a baby's," a gentle echo of the Aged's reversion to childhood, cooperates in the pretence by making "a feint of being the bosom friend of Miss Skiffins." After the ceremony Wemmick deposits his gloves in the font, surely according to plan but needlessly secretive, takes up his fishing rod, and leads the entourage to an "excellent breakfast . . . provided by the contract" (pp. 490-92).

For Wemmick and company, the pretence of spontaneity serves as well as real freedom. The "Newgate cobwebs," that network of constrictions and imprisonments of all sorts, are effectively dissolved. Outside the charmed circle no such release obtains. Prisoned souls and bodies litter the landscapes, for this is a world of victims.¹⁸ Miss Havisham devotes her life to perpetual preparations for the marriage she missed and the revenge marriage she plots for Estella. Magwitch strives with Victorian earnestness to "make" a gentleman. Jaggers' every word is guarded; spontaneous testimony is anathema to him. Pip plots his hopeless pursuit of Estella; then, turning to thoughts of Bidley, rehearse, word for word, his proposal

to her (p. 511). And the novel's conclusion turns on the intricate machinations whose goal is Magwitch's escape. To plan elaborately, in this world, is to fail. Success demands ignorance, or spontaneity, or luck. In contrast there are the characters whose innocence has saved them. Herb Pocket is unaware of the business plans that have been set in motion on his behalf; Biddy and Joe marry with a minimum of planning or publicity. In time, and with the help of Dickens' preference for an optimistic though autumnal denouement, Pip and Estella join the ranks of the innocent: their reunion begins with an accidental meeting, unplanned and unplanable. They meet, at Satis House, in what is for each of them their first visit there in many years (p. 524). Wemmick's marriage is a parody of such innocence. The charm of his feigned nonchalance masks the groom's terror at impending and inexplicable dangers.

It has been suggested that Wemmick's success is a function of his lack of normal sexual passion, the passion which here leads those who have it to tragedy.¹⁹ The distinction is of limited usefulness. While Wemmick is first presented realistically, that is, as a man subject to comparison with other men and bound by the common limits of men, his oddly-assorted complex of defensive reactions are graced with an unrealistic effectiveness and the character expands into one of Utopian comedy. In that realm, psychoanalysis pertains not so much to the character as to his creator, not so much to the experience of reading the novel as to the discovery of motifs that exist in the novel only at rudimentary stages of development, motifs aborted or abandoned. The foregoing analysis of Wemmick does not often correspond with the aesthetic experience of the reader. And much the same can be said of Julian Moynahan's well-known exploration of Orlick as an embodiment of Pip's darkest motives.²⁰ *Great Expectations* is not an unblinking analysis of the troubled Victorian scene or of its author's troubled psychic

landscape. It does not confront all its devils, nor exorcise them, nor transcend them. It manages to ignore them. *Great Expectations* is a comedy. That darker, even tragic, threads can be discerned, or unearthed, tells us something about the psychology of literary creation and perception. When such analysis seems necessary, when unassimilated material intrudes, we have a failure of art, although, to be sure, an opportunity for analysis. Wemmick, by and large, succeeds in deflecting us from feeling a need to pay closer attention to him than did his creator. Yet, as is often the case with Dickens, the devil intrudes to disturb our peace: Wemmick, "quite savagely," repulses poor Mike (p. 449). The cat is momentarily out of the bag.

NOTES

- ¹See, for example, Thomas E. Connelly, "Technique in *Great Expectations*," *PQ*, 34 (1955), 48-55, and John H. Hagan, Jr., "Structural Patterns in Dicken's *Great Expectations*," *ELH*, 21 (1954), 54-66.
- ²Paul Pickrel, "*Great Expectations*," in *Dickens, a Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Martin Price (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 164.
- ³*Great Expectations*, ed. Louis Crompton (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), p. 182. Subsequent quotations are from this text — based on the 1868 ed. collated with the first serial ed. and the first 3-vol. ed. — and are referred to by page nos.
- ⁴Pickrel, p. 164.
- ⁵Par. 27, "The Nature of Gothic," *The Stones of Venice*, Illustrated Cabinet Ed., 3 vols. (New York: Merrill and Baker, n.d.), II, 173.
- ⁶*Praeterita*, 3 vols. (New York: Merrill and Baker: n.d.), II, 290-94. Wemmick's pig is the vehicle for jest on pp. 225, 320, and 402.
- ⁷*Praeterita*, I, 221-22.
- ⁸James Wemyss (1610?-1667), *DNB*.
- ⁹Guendolen's song in "Rapunzel" (*The Defense of Guenevere and Other Poems* [London, 1858], p. 123) includes a plea to "Mary, maid withouten wem."
- ¹⁰Edgar Johnson, *Charles Dickens, his Tragedy and Triumph* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952), II, 990.
- ¹¹Jaggers nods his head and sighs when Wemmick makes this guess (p. 446).
- ¹²Wemmick revels in what he takes to be opportunities for secret, elaborately evasive and coldly disinterested interviews;

see for example pp. 398-401, where he gives Pip news of Magwitch in an absurdly circuitous manner, a parody of Jaggers'.

- ¹³Cf. Stanley Tick, "The Memorializing of Mr. Dick," *NCF*, 24 (1969), 142-53, in which Mr. Dick of *David Copperfield* is seen as "an image of the author himself" (p. 143).
- ¹⁴Only their concealment behind trees kept Ruskin "unappalled" by "certain Gothic splendours" his wealthy neighbors inflicted on Herne Hill. (*Praeterita*, I. 41).
- ¹⁵For example: with Aged Parent (p. 223), with the Colonel (p. 283) and with Pip (p. 402).
- ¹⁶The episode can be read in significant relationship to many others in which hands assume symbolic resonance. These include Magwitch's repeated attempts to shake his *protégé's* hand (pp. 341-50), Pumblechook's parody of this (pp. 165-66), and the burning of Pip's hands in the fire at Satis House (p. 435). There is also a comic reversal of the hands-love pattern: Pip's being "brought up by hand."
- ¹⁷Cf. Arthur A. Adrian, "Dickens and Inverted Parenthood," *Dickensian*, 67 (1971), 3-11, and Daniel P. Deneau, "The Brother-Sister Relationship in *Hard Times*," *Dickensian*, 40 (1964), 173-77.
- ¹⁸See John H. Hagan, Jr., "The Poor Labyrinth: The Theme of Social Injustice in Dicken's *Great Expectations*," *NCF*, 9 (1954), 169-78.
- ¹⁹Monroe Engel, *The Maturity of Dickens* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1959), pp. 162-63.
- ²⁰"The Hero's Guilt: The Case of *Great Expectations*," *EIC*, 10 (1960), 60-79.