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HUMOR, IRONY, SATIRE AND SYMBOLISM IN CHARLES DICKENS' PROTEST NOVEL

A RESEARCH WORK FOR LICENTIATE'S DEGREE IN ENGLISH

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CERTIFIES

That the present work has been supervised and reviewed on all its parts, and therefore authorizes its presentation.

Loja, December 1996

Leda. Fanny Aguirre de Moreira
Advisor
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DEDICATORY

To my parents, Blanca and José, to my sister María and to my brothers Mariano and José who constitute the best reason to continue in this life.

Luz
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Literature constitutes probably the most direct language that man has to communicate his individual reality and the problems of the environment that surrounds him in an elegant way. This valuable instrument has been used by the most famous writers of the different ages in order to describe the reality of the universal man with his vices and virtues.

That is why I have always considered that Literature is a very interesting prolific investigation field; its analysis will allow us to get more involved in human reality. For that reason, now I try through this bibliographical research to get a major knowledge of one of the most popular English writers: Charles Dickens. I have chosen this extraordinary representative of English and Universal Literature because his novels are really a literary treasure, worthy of being admired and diffused.

My purpose, through this bibliographical investigation, is to analyze Dickens' work in order to consider the diverse literary strategies that he used to describe and criticize the reality of his age. Besides, I have always felt a special interest in Literature and five years ago, I began to feel a great admiration for Charles Dickens after reading
one of his novels. Throughout the present research, I will enrich my knowledge about the writer I consider the greatest English novelist of the Victorian Age. Moreover, my purpose is to collaborate, with my investigation, to the diffusion of the English Literature and specially Dickens' literary work, which is the main object of my research work.

In order to get my goal, I will divide my work into four chapters which I will refer immediately.

In the first one, I try to locate and identify the social, historical, political and cultural context in which Charles Dickens' literary work was developed.

The second part is dedicated to the study of Dickens' life, his early years, literary success, his different travels to many countries of the world as well as his later life and success as a journalist, actor and lecturer. Besides, I refer to Dickens' literary work, divided into two phases during which he wrote the greatest group of immortal novels describing the reality of the Victorian Age.
In the third chapter, I demonstrate the proposed hypotheses about Charles Dickens' novel. The Hypothesis Formulation has been realized taking into account a General Hypothesis and two Specific Hypotheses which have their respective indicators and variables, they are the following:

1. General Hypothesis

Charles Dickens, one of the most outstanding English writers, is characterized by the development of protest novel and by the use of humor, irony, satire and symbolism, as literary devices to express his thought.

2. Specific Hypotheses

2.1 Charles Dickens' novel is characterized by the development of a protest message, which is especially evident in his novels: Bleak House, Oliver Twist, The Pickwick Papers and Dombey and Son.

2.2 Charles Dickens is considered the best popular writer of his epoch because of his outstanding use of humor, irony, satire and symbolism.
The indicators for the first specific hypothesis are based on the theme denouncement, because the protest message refers to the different forms in which Dickens denounced injustices. Denouncement of the Legal, Educational and Social systems and of the society itself for the many defects it had in his time.

The second specific hypothesis has a dependent variable and four independent variables with their indicators. The dependent variable is: Charles Dickens, a popular writer; the indicators explain his popularity taking into consideration the realism of his novel, the language used, the translations that have been realized, the form of publication as well as the fact that his novel has been considered the mass novel. The four independent variables are: humor, irony, satire and symbolism.

The indicators for humor refer to the different devices used by Dickens to create it: use of portrait, intervention of Quixotic characters, narration of comic adventures, misuse of words by the characters, play on words, use of samwellerisms and the characters' ingenuity and ignorance. The indicators for irony are: the use of equivalent expressions, intervention of false heroes and the use of hyperbole. The indicators for the variable satire are: the use of contrast and ridicule and the use of emphasis, reiteration and comparison. The indicator for the variable symbolism is the use of symbols which are analyzed in the novels Dombey and Son and Bleak House.
The last chapter of the present research work refers to the conclusions and recommendations I have considered necessary according to the development of this investigation.

Finally, my great desire is that this research be useful for students of the language Faculty and for people who are really interested in the theme.
CHAPTER I

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF CHARLES DICKENS' LITERARY WORK
1. **THE VICTORIAN AGE AND ITS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The Victorian Age is the time spanned by the reign of Queen Victoria, that is from 1837 to 1901. It was one of the most varied and diverse periods in the history of English life and letters. It was a time characterized by a strong change and a belief in progress.

The epithet "victorian" is bound to "moral" in a society where virtues such as honesty, hard work and loyalty were considered the means to get material prosperity; the victorian society practiced the norm of keeping up appearances in an exaggerated way, for them appearances were very important; there was excessive prudishness in matters related to sex.

Upon the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign, a rigid code of conduct had indeed come into vogue. Those who wished to be considered respectable observed the Sabbath with strict prohibitions against amusements, and spent the rest of the week in quiet and pious domesticity. Women were expected to be frail and sheltered creatures, silent, obedient, and decorative mothers of children equally silent and obedient. The model man could and often did rule his household with an iron will but gambling, swearing, intemperance and smoking were enough to remove him from the ranks of respectability. Actually, the familiar stereotype of the victorians as smug, prudish, and inflexibly formal is largely false.
England got its greatest development during the second half of the nineteenth century, that coincides with the reign of Queen Victoria: the Victorian Age. England became the first world-wide power because of its economic splendor and its colonies extension. Besides, in 1877, Queen Victoria was proclaimed the Indian Empress.

It was the time in which England undertook again the railroad constructions. In 1860, England had the most extensive railroad net and its merchant fleet represented the 75% of the world-wide tonnage showing in this way its industrial and commercial development. Besides, the electric telegraph was introduced.

The Golden Victorian Age began in 1851, when Queen Victoria opened the First World's Fair at the gigantic Crystal Palace in London showing the world a sample of the economic power that England had. This Fair represented the definitive consecration of the Industrialism: the progress of England.

During the Victorian Age, there were also pressing and apparently insoluble problems. The most worrisome problem was the condition of the workers, who frequently labored inhumanely for long hours shifts, under low wages, in filthy, dangerous factories, who lived in inadequate housing, and were subject to recurrent unemployment. Among the most horrifying of the abuses were the brutalities of child labor. In the Victorian Age, organized prostitution was greater than in any other period in England.
However, in the Victorian Age, England went through important electoral reforms. The two most significant were those of 1867 and 1884-1885, the first extending the franchise to urban workers, the second enfranchising workers in agricultural districts. However, the franchise did not extend to women, who had to wait until 1928 to gain equal voting rights.

By 1911, the House of Lords had been deprived of all power except a delaying veto, and England was on its way to become a modern democracy in which the people, through their representatives in the House of Commons, were politically sovereign.

Women were organized in the Feminist Movement, they created a revolution in women's dress and manners. Between the 1870s, and the 1880s campaigns for women's rights were formed in most of English towns to request the women right to vote; although, it was not obtained, by 1882, the Married Women's Property Act gave married women the right to own property and to keep what they earned. Besides, women themselves were conscious that the right of choosing a husband was theirs and that marriages should not be arranged by their ambitious parents.

The Victorian Age is also the time in which some scientific theories appeared, being the Darwinian theory about the Origin of Species the one that caused a crisis and a great impact since it theorized that the species now on earth had evolved over a great period of hundreds of thousands of years through a harsh struggle for existence which only the strongest survived. When this theory appeared, most people still accepted the
Biblical account of creation as literal truth, to them Darwin's proposal gave a particular shock, besides being against the religious conceptions exposed in the Genesis, Darwin's theory also opposed the Victorian pride protected under the idea of the creation of man with image and resemblance to God.

Politically, Conservatives alterned with Liberals for governing. Conservatives were represented by the minister Disraeli and Liberals by the minister Gladstone. Queen Victoria let both skilled ministers govern in a pacific way being herself innocent of the horrors of the dehumanization of a fully mechanized society; she died when England had already entered a more complex and turbulent century.
2. **THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

2.1. **The Industrial Revolution**

In this case, the term "revolution" is not used to indicate a violent social agitation but a change in social relations as a consequence of new production means and systems. The adjective "industrial" refers to the field of social activity. J.A. Blanqui was the first person who used the term "industrial revolution" in 1837\(^1\); since that date, the words industrial and revolution were used in a natural way in the writings of the epoch.

Therefore, the "industrial revolution" is that historical phenomenon which determined the passing of a society based on agriculture and craftsmanship to a society based on industry.

The Industrial Revolution was the result of the great technological advancement originated in the second half of the eighteenth century.

With the Industrial Revolution, there was a remarkable development in communication means, textile industry, mining, mechanic and siderurgical industries which were the most important.

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\(^1\) Grupo Editorial Océano, Océano Uno Diccionario Enciclopédico Ilustrado, 1990, p. 1570
Before the Industrial Revolution, English society had agriculture and craftsmanship organized in small shops and factories with many employees. With the Industrial Revolution, machines are the bases for industry, being able to replace the man, producing with fixed production schemes all the products in which the craftsman's creativity and skill were not important anymore.

Actually, the Industrial Revolution caused a deep transformation in the economic structure, it had great social repercussions. That transformation was the most radical since the discovery of agriculture.

The Industrial Revolution began in England and took roots that expanded to other European countries.

It could be considered that the Industrial Revolution had three supporting points as its bases: - a population which increased very quickly, - the existence of available and indispensable raw material and the discovery of new energy sources that facilitated the elaboration of the raw materials. Besides these factors, there were others such as: accumulation of capital to invest and the commercial spirit of English capitalists.

In England, the demographic increase was based on a decrease of the mortality rate since the last years of the eighteenth century. The birth rate continued being high. There is no doubt that the discovery of the vaccine against smallpox was very important in order to reduce mortality.
Agriculture had some important changes such as the application of new cultivation systems and new techniques: the triennial rotation was replaced by the alternation of cultivation, agricultural tools were improved with new types of plow and with the mechanic planter invented by Jethro Tull, new techniques for improving the chemical composition of the soils were created.

Cattle raising was developed in an intensive way. Stabling allowed the shortening of the period of raising and the selection of species. Cattle proprietors did great investments in order to improve their lands and livestock.

The discovery of new energy sources was decisive. The main innovation of this period was the motor power which cabled machines to move; the discovery of the steam machine by James Watt became the true launch of the Industrial Revolution. The steam machine used the soft coal as fuel and was immediately applied to the navigation and transportation industries. The increase of the siderurgical production was possible when the soft coal replaced the wood in the melting of metals, it was the result of the investigations of Abraham Darby who obtained the transformation of the soft coal in metallurgical coke. Later on, Henry Cort gave the decisive impulse when discovered the famous puddling system used to eliminate slag in the smelting process.

Every industrial process needs a capital that makes it possible the finance of the industrial investment. During the England Industrial Revolution, that capital came mainly from agriculture and the overseas trade. The bank system improving had a very
important role; during the last years of the eighteenth century, there were in London some private banks and many local banks which facilitated the industrial credits and the enterprises payments. Actually, the improving of anonymous societies, banks and other economic institutions was the indispensable condition for developing the financial capitalism which made it possible the finance of the industrial sector needing large capitals.

The cotton industry, along with the siderurgical, was one of the leaders in updating its technology during the last years of the eighteenth century. Several machines that renovated cotton industry were introduced: the spinning Jenny\(^2\), the continuous spinning machine, the intermittent spinning machine that twisted and spun the thread at the same time, the carder machine and the mechanic loom. Besides, there were some innovations in the dyeing and finishing determining the appearance of the industrial chemistry. This way, the productive capacity increased and European and also American markets were opened for England. The cotton industry was introduced into the great features of the Industrial Revolution: abundant and cheap raw material, renovation of techniques, industrial concentration, market importance and the trade as decisive factors. This way, cotton became the first raw material for England.

The siderurgical industry had a technological renovation with the methods created to obtain the coke that allowed to use the soft coal, solving the problem of fuel high cost; in the same way, the new procedure of eliminating slag improved the iron

\(^2\) The spinning machine was called "spinning Jenny" because Jenny was the inventor's daughter's name.
quality. But more than the technical innovations, the increase of the demand made this industry experience a high increase since the armament, tools, machinery, ships and mainly the railway needed it.

Transportation experienced a revolution too. In earthy and fluvial transportation, there was an important progress. England built a complete channels network. Mac Adam invented an especial pavement system improving causeways. These advances allowed the development of the postal diligence and the steam carriage. Subsequently, they began to apply the steam to a new transportation system: the railway. The first locomotive was invented by Trevithich, it had five railroad cars and could transport ten tons to eight kilometers per hour. Later, Stephnson perfected the locomotive beginning what was known as the rail age. The first train of passengers covered the course between Manchester and Liverpool in 1830. The most appropriate navigation to transport heavy and voluminous merchandise was also benefited by the application of the steam in 1807 by Robert Fulton who invented the steam ship.
2.2. Consequences of the Industrial Revolution

The early problems caused by the Industrial Revolution were social and moral: the birth of an industrial working proletariat class and the problem of man's alienation.

Among the consequences of the industrialization we can mention the following: division and despersonalization of the work, need of using movable capital, benefits for the enterprise bourgeoisie, birth of the proletariat, women and child work, moral misery because of the alienation process, and so on.

The division and despersonalization of the work is a consequence of the industrialization since before the Industrial Revolution, the craftsman was able to do all the necessary procedures to obtain his work and release it completely finished; but with the Industrial Revolution, workman became a machine slave and only performed a simple task, therefore, the work was divided among various workers increasing in a large scale the speed of the production but diminishing the value of individual work. In fact, any moment the workman could be replaced by other one since in most of the cases, his work did not require any specialization.

Other consequence of Industrialization was the need of using movable capital being the banks the credit institutions. Before the industrialization, the tendency of people who had money was to buy lands; but later all those capitals were invested in the industry. In this way, the figure of the industrialist-capitalist was born, in other words,
that personage that had much money and had credit so that the banks lent it to him in order to buy machinery. Also, the stockholder societies were created where the industrialist - capitalist sold a small part of his patrimony in form of stocks to get money for financing the enterprise.

The industrialization process also had a fundamental consequence which is the benefit for the enterprise bourgeoisie that realized that the industry and the commercial interchange were great wealth sources.

Other result of the Industrial Revolution was the birth of the proletariat. Proletariat is the term used to designate the working class, that is to say the workers of the factories who abandoned the lands to move to the city in which the conditions of life were apparently easier although reality was very different; they worked in the factories in inhuman conditions, with a workday journey of fourteen and fifteen hours and a miserable salary.

Women and children work was the most horrible consequence of the Industrial Revolution. When industrialists realized that children and women labor was cheaper and that the work in the tunnels of the mines could also be performed by children, they did not doubt in contracting them committing terrible abuses and causing very tragic situations of misery, illness and death.
Besides the physical misery, there was also moral misery since before the Industrial Revolution the workman or craftsman was owner of his tools, even if poor, but with the Industrial Revolution, the workman did not own other tools than his own hands which were sold as work force to an enterprise, alienating in this way the person and his work. This alienation concept is narrowly linked to the work division already mentioned.
3. **CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: PREDOMINANT LITERARY TENDENCIES**

**Realism**

It appeared as a reaction against romanticism, it refers to the literary and artistic style which is based on the observation of the reality. Actually, in literature, the narrator sets himself equal to the reader and the characters, letting the heroes act; their dialogues, countenances, gestures, clothes are simply the total reality that the writer presents us.

In England, the realism that this country practiced in politics spread in literature beginning with Charles Dickens who had a true contact with the reality with his realist novel. When Dickens began to write, that epoch was characterized by the industrialization and the railway, a great demographic increase. A period where the exportations triplicated, England was the most literated country in the world, with half of the population being urban and the other half rural; farmers were thrown outside of the lands where they had been allowed to live and had to offer their work to the industry. The new worker class was also conformed by children who were chosen according to their size being the shorter preferred to work in the tunnels of the mines. The number of workers of the domestic service was equal to the number of textile workers. When Dickens began to write, the urban poverty was the exact opposite of the victorian progress since in the prosperous England, the fourth part of the urban population lived in misery.
Other Literary Tendencies and Their Writers

Victorian literature reflects the mixture of opposites so characteristic of the age: hope and despair, faith and doubt, radical social theory and conservative social practice, the espousal of Christian love and gentleness combined with the ruthless use of power.

Some writers satirized the social abuses of the epoch using the realism that later was accompanied by an analysis of the man introspective reality. However, each one has his own type of novel.

After Dickens, the most important writers of this period were William Makepeace Thackeray, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope and Bronte sisters.

William Makepeace Thackeray was essentially a moralist, a great critic of life who studied human nature, and a satirical writer. His greatest novel is a historical novel.

Mary Ann Evans adopted the masculine pseudonym of George Eliot to sign her novels because of the prejudices against women writers. She deepened in the psychology of the characters who were characterized by the virtues and defects of the Victorian Age. Her novels fall into the category of psychological or problem novel.
Anthony Trollope presented with delicate humor and satire the life and ecclesiastical intrigue in a cathedral town. His works belong to the novel of manners.

Charlotte, Emily and Anne Bronte produced a type of romantic novel with mystery and imagination.

Before the appearance of the most significant writers which mark the transition period of the victorian novel to the modern novel, there were many authors that are taken into account in English Literature. The realism continues being the predominant form of the novel.

Elizabeth Gaskell's works are characterized by the description of the work conditions in the textile factories; she tried to show the horror of the struggle of classes and the need of having a humanitarian sense and of Christian charity; her works focused on social conflicts. Her works are inside the social novel.

In the same way, Charles Reade's books denounced the abuses in the insane asylums, the tortures practiced in English jails. Besides, he proposed concrete solutions to the social defects of his time.

Samuel Buttler wrote about the prototype of the victorian family.
George Gissing combined the innermost experience with the outside reality. He felt a special devotion for Dickens and Dostoievsky. In his novels described the horrible injustices of his social systems trying to find the way of modifying it.

Other writers which used the novel with a social purpose were: Walter Besant, Richard Whitering, Arthur Morrison and Israel Zanguill who described the misery of the poorest classes.

Also there was a group of novelists who satisfied the demands of a numerous public; we refer to the feminine literature, infantile narration, adventure, sensational and crime narrations.

Lewis Carroll (Charles Dogson) is the most popular infantile writer with his famous work "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland".

Robert Louis Stevenson's books are characterized by a great imagination, a mixture of supernatural and fantastic elements. His works belong to the adventure novel.

William Collins wrote about mysteries to be discovered, his best novels are detective novels.
During the Victorian Age, many novels appeared first in serial form, either in monthly editions or as installments in periodicals. Each installment was more or less a complete episode which ended at a point of high interest. Since the first installments of a novel usually appeared before an author had completely worked out all details of his plan for the work, many Victorian novels are episodic rather than tightly constructed. This method of publishing also tended to produce long, leisurely novels in which the interest centered on characters rather than on the plot.

As the Victorian Age advanced, the form of the novel gradually changed. Instead of long leisurely novels, shorter more tightly plotted novels in which each incident was integrally related to a central idea.

The variety of the Victorian Age is evident in the various kinds of novels that achieved wide popularity. Romantic and realistic novels, historical novels and novels of manners, psychological novels and novels of purpose were available to readers in the rich variety of victorian novel.

Poetry in the Victorian Age has been qualified as: poetry of a little poetic time, since for English poetry it was not a clear neither productive period if it is compared with the marvelous romantic poetry represented by Wordsworth and other romantic poets.
It is necessary to understand that England was living a period of utilitarianism and positivism, with great material successes. It was not the most propitious time for lyric.

However, there is a group of poetic representatives of this period such as Alfred Lord Tennyson, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barret, Mathew Arnold, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edward Fitzgerald and others.

Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892), is the most distinguished poet, he is the author of great exaltation to British glory in that development that reached its phase of obsolete zenith during the second half of the nineteenth century. However, Tennyson was also a refined and delicate poet with deep and complex feelings that conducted him to write poems that gave him prestige and wealth. Lord Tennyson's death marked a milestone in the poetic English movement: the end of the reign of the victorian verse that Tennyson had presided during more than forty years. Tennyson's influence on his own time was immense. He reflected the changing ideas of his age in his various poems.

Other great poetic figure was Robert Browning (1812 1889) who is valued as the creator of the dramatic monologue in poetry; instead of exposing personal feelings, he selected a historical, cultural or artistic figure that said wise reflections that sometimes were difficult to understand by some readers.
However, there were many readers that preferred Elizabeth Barret Browning (1806-1861), considered one of the England's greatest poetesses.

Mathew Arnold is other important poet whose poetry was weighed down by the problems of his time, much of his work is sad.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti wrote musical sonnets. He wrote about nature and replied that poetry ought to be based on the senses.

Edward Fitzgerald is considered one of the greatest English poetic translators.

In 1892, there was the edition of an anthology that united the works of poets emerged from the heart of the Victorian Age, such as Lionel Johnson, Ernest Dowson, Rudyard Kipling and others.

Besides, we can mention poetic figures that created the last verses of the Victorian Age: Robert Bridges, who was admired by his literary tone, moderation, lyricism and technical excellence; A. E. Housman and William Ernest Henley.
CHAPTER II

CHARLES DICKENS' BIOGRAPHY AND LITERARY WORK
1. CHARLES DICKENS' BIOGRAPHY

1.1. Early Years

Charles John Huffan Dickens was born at Portsea near Portsmouth, on February 7, 1812, the second child and eldest son of John and Elizabeth Dickens, neither of whom had any literary inclinations. His mother was of middle-class origin; both his paternal grandparents were domestic servants. His father, a clerk in the Navy Pay Office, was, however, only too anxious to be a gentleman. Easygoing and amiable, he was unable to handle money, a fault that up to his death in 1851 was to blight his son's life.

Dickens' earliest years were happy, particularly those between the ages of five and nine, which he spent at Chatham, where the family had moved after a short spell in London. A delicate, precocious, and imaginative boy, he roamed the country of the Thames and Medway estuaries. He fed his voracious reading appetite on the Arabian Nights, on Shakespeare, and on a store of eighteenth-century novels that he found in the attic. At school he was keen to learn and to distinguish himself.

This childhood world was shattered in 1822 with the transfer of Dickens' father to London, where he soon found himself in financial difficulties. When Charles, who had been left at Chatham to finish his school term, joined the family, he found them living in poverty in a small house in Camden Town. There was no more schooling for the boy, only household chores. Instead of the Kentish marshes he roamed the London
streets, often on errands to the pawnshops. The severest blow fell in February 1824, when his father was arrested for debts and taken to Marshalsea prison. Charles barely 12, was sent to work, pasting labels on bottles in a blacking warehouse for a wage of six shillings a week, with which he had to support himself. The rest of the family had taken up residence in the Marshalsea. His father received a legacy and was released in May 1824, but the parents, who were unaware of the extent of Charles’ despair, let him continue working for a few weeks longer.

These months of social humiliation and the resulting apparent defeat of all his personal ambition left Dickens with a lifelong wound, so painful that his own wife and children did not learn of this episode until after his death.

After a few more years of study, at Wellington House Academy, Dickens became, at 15, an office boy in the Holborn law firm of Ellis and Blackmore. Before long, however he became dissatisfied with this dull and unpromising work and turned to journalism. With ardent determination he learned shorthand and pursued opportunities in his chosen career. By 1832 he was general reporter for the True Sun and also parliamentary reporter for the Mirror of Parliament. As a sideline he began to write small fictional sketches, based on observations of London life, for magazines. Almost at once they attracted attention by their acute and lively humor, and with the publication of a two volume collection, Sketches by Boz, in February 1836, he was launched as a promising author.
1.2. Literary Success

By this time Dickens' first novel, Pickwick Papers (1836-1837), was well under way. He had originally been asked merely to provide the text for a series of comic sporting plates, but with his characteristic determination he took over the project, remolded it to his own design, and gave the world the immortal Mr. Pickwick and his associates. The first of its 20 monthly numbers appeared in April 1836. After the introduction of Sam Weller in the fourth number, the popularity of the serial soared and Dickens' name became well known and the sales increased from 400 to 40,000.

On April 2, 1836, soon after beginning The Pickwick Papers, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth, eldest daughter of George Hogarth, editor of The Evening Chronicle and music critic. Now a recognized author, Dickens entered, with a view to his domestic responsibilities, upon a period of feverish literary activity. Besides turning out an attack on recently proposed legislation for stricter Sabbath observance - Sunday Under Three Heads -, a burlesque - The Strange Gentleman -, and the libretto of an operetta - The Village Coquettes -, he undertook the editing of a monthly periodical, Bentley's Miscellany, to which he contributed The Mudfrog Papers and Oliver Twist (January 1837 to March 1839). The early numbers of this, his first real novel overlapped with The Pickwick Papers and launched his career as a social reformer. Implicit in this work which gives a vivid picture of the workhouse and the founding home, is an attack on the poor law and the conduct of charitable institutions. In February, 1839, he turned the editorship of the Miscellany over to Harrison Ainsworth.
His development as a social critic continued in his next work, Nicholas Nickleby, the publication of which began in April 1838 in monthly parts, nearly a year before the appearance of the final number of Oliver Twist, and ran until October 1839. A picture of the cheap Yorkshire boarding schools, it singled out for attack a particular schoolmaster, William Shaw, who had been found guilty in court for neglecting his boys. The novel arose the public conscience and was responsible for the closing of notorious schools. While working on Nicholas Nickleby, Dickens edited the Memories of the Clown Joseph Grimaldi, and during this period also wrote Sketches of Young Gentlemen in 1838 and Sketches of Young Couples in 1840.

Dickens' next venture was "Master Humphrey's Clock", a weekly journal in which he published a story per week. He conducted this journal which first number appeared on April 4, 1840, and when it failed to hold the public interest, he introduced The Old Curiosity Shop, which ran until January 17, 1841 and insured the success of the journal. With this sentimental story of Nelly Trent and her grandfather, Dickens had his readers on both sides of the Atlantic in tears. Barnaby Rudge, followed as the next serial in Master Humphrey's Clock, running from February 13 to November 27, 1841.
1.3. Dickens' Travels to America, Italy, and other countries

Dickens now looked around for other worlds to conquer. America had welcomed his books from the beginning. International copyright permitted American publishers to them without paying the author. Dickens longed to study America and its freedom at first hand; leaving their four children at home, he landed with his wife in Boston in January 1842. The town blazed with excitement; society was thrilled; there were dinners, receptions. Longfellow, Channing and others of the New England elite joined in the welcome. Young Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes was one of those who helped to organize it.

Dickens found in Boston friendships which he never lost, even when bitterness and disillusion altered his view of America. From Boston he went to New York, Philadelphia with a huge public reception; thence to Baltimore and Washington, where he met President Tyler and the Congress; thence to Richmond, which showed him what Southern culture could add to the boisterous welcome of the North. Such was the triumphant progress of the young author.

Always ready to raise his voice in defense of a cause he believed in, Dickens spoke everywhere of the need of an international copyright agreement that would protect the rights of both American and British writers. He felt it unfair and unjust that American publishers printed and sold his books without permission from him and without paying him any royalties. Dickens did not speak of himself as the sole victim of
this practice. He pointed out that all British authors' works were equally pirated; he also acknowledged that American authors, such as Poe, suffered from the pirating of their works in England.

The American newspapers leaped upon these forthright statements and accused Dickens of bad taste and of abusing American hospitality. Dickens' rosy view of America faded; it was not the America of his dreams and later, he expressed it in "American Notes", "Martin Chuzzlewit" and his letters to friends. The American all seemed to chew tobacco, they kept slaves, whom he never stopped to compare with factory workers of England, he found slavery uncouth and repulsive. American government seemed plunder and roguery. Then he went to the West and it completed his deception.

Dickens had no eye to see the pageant of America, the great epic of the settlement of the West neither to compare the commodious canal boat with the raft and the scow of earlier settlers. He spent two weeks in Canada consoled by the presence of friends at the English Garrison in Montreal. Then he returned home to rend America with his pen. The odd thing is that the Americans, after a little swearing at him, soon forgave him and admired his works.

By the mid-1840s, the pressure under which Dickens was working was making him increasingly restless. One of the ways in which he sought to release his nonliterary energies was through further travel and the whole family travelled to Italy where they
lived two years. Later, he wrote "Pictures from Italy", in which he expressed his memories when he was in Italy. Nine years later, he visited Italy again.

Dickens travelled frequently visiting France and also Switzerland in 1845, it is the time when he began to distinguish himself as a lecturer. By 1856, Dickens returned to Paris where he had a short stay. In 1867-1868, he went to the United States where he received a surprising and cordial reception; there his lectures were successful but damaged his health. Dickens visited Scotland and Ireland in 1868-1869, where he participated in lectures and social meetings.

1.4. Later life and success as a Journalist, Actor and Lecturer

With book writing went newspaper editing. Dickens felt the need of reforming all England. He felt that the way to do it, was to control and edit a great daily newspaper. Actually, he did it in the "Daily News"; he also founded a weekly journal: Household Words, in 1850. In 1859, he began to work in another periodical "All the Year Round" which involved Dickens in unceasing editorial activity for the last years of his life. A Tale of Two Cities (1859), and Great Expectations (1860-1861) were both first published in "All the Year Round".

Many of the journal articles dealt with the social evils that Dickens saw everywhere about him. He campaigned vigorously for reforms in prisons, slums, and poor houses; and he fought for free schools, pure water, and other vital public issues.
Another main outlet was his dramatic activities. From childhood, Dickens had been a great lover of the theater, enjoying the production and stage management aspects as much as the acting. There were frequent and elaborate private theatricals in his house in London, and between 1847 and 1857 the amateur company that he formed and led with unflagging zest appeared in public more than 60 times, in London and the provinces, and even performed before Queen Victoria.

To theatricals, he soon added public lectures and readings from his works. This activity began after he had read his famous Christmas Carol to a group of friends who received it enthusiastically. He made a succession of tours in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1858 to 1870.

Dickens' last years of life were characterized by his continuous literary successes, however, the Dickens of the later novels was more somber, less exuberant than when he was young; it was because of social disillusionment and partly because of personal and domestic circumstances. Dickens' marriage was falling apart, and in the spring of 1859 he and his wife separated. Catherine Dickens went to live in a house of her own with their eldest son; Dickens, with the rest of his children who still remained home, dwelt from this time on permanently at Gad's Hill Place, the country house in Kent that he had dreamt of owning in his childhood and that he had acquired in 1856. His household was managed, as it had already been for many years, by his sister-in-law Georgina Hogarth.
The immediate reason for the breakup, however, was Dickens' growing attraction for the young actress Ellen Lawless Ternan.

Dickens' last decade was one of continued professional success undermined by personal unhappiness, spiritual unrest, and failing health. The scandal brought on by his separation probably had its effect on him; but, more important, no real happiness seems to have resulted from his relationship with Ellen Ternan, the exact nature of which is not known. There were other personal worries too: his sons, though given all the advantages that he had lacked, did not turn out as well as he hoped; one or two of them seemed to have inherited their grandfather's cavalier attitude toward money and seemed destined for lives of useless snobbery.

Partly to ensure that he should leave a fortune to his large family, and partly because he loved the stage, Dickens spent much of his energy, from 1858 onward, in a series of public readings from his own works. He scored tremendous success throughout England, and in 1867, though his health was giving cause for concern, he visited again the United States, where he performed before a rapturous audience. He left the United States in April 1868, this time in a blaze of mutual goodwill. However, he also left as a man in irreparably broken health. A last series of readings in England had to be suspended midway because of his physical breakdown; but he persisted in giving a farewell series in London, from January to March 1870. For this he prepared a rendering of the murder of Nancy in his novel Oliver Twist, it was so powerful that left scores of women fainting in the audience.
Dickens persevered in his editorial and creative work, he was halfway through his last novel: "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" when he had a brain stroke and died, at Gad's Hill, on June 9, 1870. He was buried five days later in Westminster Abbey.

"Dickens' death was felt as a national calamity. The London "Times" summed up what he had meant to the English-speaking world: "Statesmen, men of science, philanthropists, the acknowledged benefactors of their race, might pass away and yet not leave the void which will be caused by the death of Dickens.... It needs an extraordinary combination of intellectual and moral qualities .... before the world will consent to enthone a man as their unassailable and enduring favourite. This is the position which Mr. Dickens has occupied with the English and also with the American public for the third of a century". 

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3 Enciclopedia Británica, Tomo 5 p.79.
2. LITERARY WORK

2.1. First Phase

2.1.1. The Pickwick Papers (1837)


2.1.2. Oliver Twist (1837-1839)

Describes the adventures of a poor orphan boy. The book was noted for its sensational presentation of London's criminal world and for its attack on England's mistreatment of the poor.

2.1.3. Nicholas Nickleby (1838-1839)

Dickens criticized greedy proprietors of private schools, who treated students brutally and taught them nothing.
2.1.4. **The Old Curiosity Shop (1840-1841)**

Today is considered by many critics to be the least important of Dickens' novels. It was admired when first published, but it is considered inferior today, because of the sentimental death of Little Nell.

2.1.5. **Barnaby Rudge (1841)**

It is a historical novel that centers around a series of riots in London in 1780.

2.1.6. **American Notes (1842)**

Its forthright and unfavorable comments on American manners and institutions, specially the famous chapter on slavery, made him many enemies in the New World.

2.1.7. **Martin Chuzzlewit (1843-1844)**

It is the second book that Dickens based on his trip to America. The book is best remembered for its unflattering picture of the crudeness of American manners and for its comic characters.
2.1.8. Christmas Carol (1843)

Is one of the most famous stories ever written. In the book, three ghosts show the old miser Ebenezer Scrooge his past, present and future. Scrooge realizes that he has been living a life of greed, and changes into a warm and unselfish person.

2.1.9. The Chimes (1844)

It is other of the Christmas Books.

2.1.10. The Cricket on the Heart (1845)

It is the third of Christmas Books that he wrote when he was living with his family in Italy. It was to be followed by three others:

2.1.11. Pictures From Italy (1846)

2.1.12. The Battle of Life (1846)

2.1.13. The Haunted Man (1848)
2.2. Second Phase

During the 1840s Dickens' view of Victorian society, and perhaps of the world, grew darker. His humor became more bitter, often taking the form of biting satire. The characters and plots seemed to emphasize the evil side of human experience.

At the same time, Dickens increasingly refined his art. The range of his tone widened and he paid more attention to structure and arrangement. He turned to symbolic themes to help to express and expand his observations on political and social issues and on larger matters on morality and values.

2.2.1. Dombey and Son (1846-1848)

It deals primarily with a selfish egoist man whose pride cuts him off from the warmth of human love. The book stresses the evils of the Victorian admiration for money. Dickens believed money had become the measure of all personal relations and the goal of all ambition.

2.2.2. David Copperfield (1849-1850)

Dickens temporarily abandoned social criticism for semiautobiography. The novel describes a young man's discovery of the realities of adult life.
2.2.3. **Bleak House (1852-1853)**

It is in many respects Dickens' greatest novel. It has a complex structure and many levels of meaning, mixing melodrama, satire and social commentary. The book deals with many social evils, chiefly wasteful and cruel legal processes. It also attacks the neglect of the poor, false humanitarians and clergymen, and the poor sanitation that caused epidemics in London.

2.2.4. **Hard Times (1854)**

It attacks philosopher Jeremy Bentham's doctrine of utilitarianism. Bentham believed all human ideas and actions as well as institutions should be judged by their usefulness. Dickens believed Bentham's philosophy reduced social relations to problems of cold, mechanical self-interest.

2.2.5. **Little Dorrit (1855-1857)**

Dickens continued his campaign against materialism and snobbery, which were represented by the rich Merdle family and their social-climbing friends. He also ridiculed government inefficiency.
2.2.6. *A tale of two cities* (1859)

It was the second of Dickens' historical novels. It is set in London and Paris and tells about the heroism of fictional Sidney Carton during the French Revolution.

2.2.7. *Great Expectations* (1860-1861)

Dickens returned to the theme of a youth's discovery of realities of life.

2.2.8. *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-1865)

It was Dickens' final novel of social criticism. Dickens again attacked the false values of the newly rich. He satirized greed, using great garbage heaps of the London dumps as a symbol of filthy money.

Dickens had completed about one-third of his novel *THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD* when he died. Nobody knows how Dickens intended the mystery to end, and it still intrigues scholars and readers.
CHAPTER III

DEMONSTRATION OF THE PROPOSED HYPOTHESES ABOUT CHARLES DICKENS' LITERARY WORK.
1. PROTEST MESSAGE IN CHARLES DICKENS' LITERARY WORK.

Many critics have considered that Charles Dickens is one of the first protest novelists. His literary work is a document to know the Victorian England and constitutes a social allegation against the abuses of that age. In some cases, his works provoked law reforms and contributed to lessen social injustices.

Sergio Pitol has qualified Dickens' work as a mirror where the Victorian Age reflects. His point of view is totally right since Dickens' novels include a great part of the interests of English public and private life: education, politics, legal systems, religion, philanthropy, industrial development, health and other social matters. That is why he denounced abuses, attacked organisms and institutions and severely censured the systems that prevailed in jails, orphanages, workhouses, education institutions, debtors' prisons, courts and so on.

Dickens' work constitutes a universal protest-cry because inside each one of the protagonists of his novels, there is a human being that suffers and can be identified with all the cries and claims of the human beings on earth.

Oliver Twist, Bleak House, Dombey and Son and The Pickwick Papers are the novels that best develop a protest message denouncing the different problems and injustices that English people suffered in the Victorian Age.

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1.1. Denouncement of abuses and mistreatment that poor people and children in social service institutions suffered.

In Dickens' novels, the poor had always a place. He dedicated his pen to denounce the abuses they had to suffer. Often, he placed great emphasis on children's problems: mistreatment, orphanage, starvation, illness and death. In Oliver Twist, the protagonist is precisely a child.

José Méndez Herrera deems that there is not anything too satirically touching as the first pages of the novel Oliver Twist⁵, in which Dickens describes his hero's coming to the world. Certainly, the circumstances related to Oliver's birth and early years are narrated in a way that makes the reader shake.

Oliver Twist was born in a workhouse, and for a long time after his birth there was considerable doubt whether the child would live...The pale face of a young woman lying on the bed was raised weakly from the pillow and in a faint voice she said, "Let me see the child and die"... The doctor placed the child in its mother's arms; she pressed her cold white lips passionately on its forehead, passed her hands over her face, gazed wildly around, shuddered, fell back and died.⁶

The opening pages present us the child, who had been wrapped (enveloped) in old robes, then, he had been badged and ticketed to fall into his place: the orphan of a workhouse, a humble half-starved waif (child) to be cuffed and buffeted through the world, despised by all and pitied by none.

⁵ José Méndez Herrera. Introduction to the novel Oliver Twist. p. 12
Oliver Twist represented hundreds of parentless children for whom, the government assigned a quantity of money; however, they received hardly enough to keep alive. We can see clearly that one of Dickens' targets was the English Poor Law of 1834, which he regarded as inhumane. Life in the work houses was very severe indeed, people who managed them made a rule that the children should work to earn their living, and that they should be given three meals of thin soup a day, with an onion twice a week and half a cake on Sundays. Each boy had one small bowl, and no more; the bowls never needed washing because the boys polished them with their spoons until they shone again.

In this way, the system of bringing up children only could produce pale, weak, very thin and rather below average height children who were brutally beaten and locked up for daring to say that they were hungry. The following quotation will explain what has been previously pointed out.

Oliver Twist and his companions suffered the pangs of slow starvation for three months; at last they got so wild with hunger that one boy told his companions that unless he had another bowl of soup every day, he was afraid he might some night eat the boy who slept next to him. He had a wild hungry eye, and they fully believed him. A council was held; lots were cast who should walk up to the master and ask for more; and it fell to Oliver Twist...The soup was served out and quickly disappeared; the boys whispered to each other and made signs to Oliver. He rose from the table; and advancing to the master, bowl in hand, said, "Please, sir, I want some more"...The master turned very pale and gazed with horror on the small boy, then aimed a blow at Oliver's head with his big spoon...There was a general alarm. Horror was on every face. "For more!" said Mr. Limbkins. "This boy will be hanged".

After reading the previous lines, we get angry because we can not conceive the idea of Oliver's begging "I want more" as a revolutionary insurrection or as a terrible sin. And if we feel that anger, we can say that Dickens attained his purpose as a protest writer.

Indeed, we can see that Dickens' work shows clearly his objectives as a social critic; those objectives establish the unity of his criticism (critics) and determine the way he describes those episodes we will never forget. His narration is a reliable picture that suddenly skips to the caricature, from the severe analysis to the satire, he advanced until the point of exaggerating some details; it is honest to say that in the content of Dickens' novels there is more than one exaggeration. However, that inclination seems to be justifiable and even necessary for his purposes.
1.2. Denouncement of the Legal System of his time as bureaucratic, expensive and inefficient.

In the novel Bleak House, Dickens centered the plot on the Legal System and used interlinking sets of characters which were all related to it. The focus of the structure, as well as of the social criticism, is the Court of Chancery. All the main groups of characters, from the proud Lady Dedlock to the inhabitants of the rotting slum Tom-all-Alone's, are involved in an exasperating Chancery suit. The Court of Chancery stands for the whole system of antiquated and dehumanized institutions under which England was stifling.

The High Court of Chancery was the oldest and most important court in England. Disagreements about the ownership of money or property were decided by the Court of Chancery. And the Court of Chancery had to decide the exact meaning of a person's will. When a disagreement was taken to the court, it became one of the Court's cases. The case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce was about a will.

The case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce is described by Dickens in the following way:

The case before the Court was the case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce, and that case had never done anyone any good. The lawyers had lost all interest in Jarndyce and Jarndyce many years before. Whole families had been born and died during the history of Jarndyce and Jarndyce. Pretty young wards of court had grown old and sad, strong young man had lost hope, and still the case had not ended. Over the years, Jarndyce and Jarndyce had slowly ruined the lives of many innocent people.  

We can see that, Dickens used the case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce to show how the expenses and the long delays of the Court of Chancery made people poor and very unhappy.

Jarndyce and Jarndyce stands for all the cases before the Court which had been commenced some decades ago, and whose solution was not by any means closer to an end at Dickens' time than when they were begun.

But if the long delay in Jarndyce and Jarndyce had ruined many people and driven others to madness and unhappiness, the so desired outcome (ending) was only a smirk (joke). Dickens presents us it in the lawyer's words:

"Ah yes, the will. The will was not discussed. You must understand, that this has been a great cause, this has been a protracted cause, that this has been a complex cause. Jarndyce and Jarndyce has been termed, not inaptly, a Monument of Chancery practice", said the lawyer with a certain condescending laugh. "That on the numerous difficulties, contingencies, masterly fictions, and forms of procedure in this great case, there has been expended study, ability, eloquence, knowledge, high intellect. For many years, only the best lawyers have been working on it. If the public have the benefit, and if the country have the adornment, of this great Grasp, it must be paid for in money. The money has all gone, it has been taken by the costs of the case".

In this case, not only the money was lost; hope, time and life itself had been lost in the long delay. However, it had made the professional gentlemen so happy that they put their hands in their pockets, and died laughing at them. In between the happiness of a few ones and the ruin of many others laid. The case was over for ever.

In the preface of the novel Bleak House, Dickens (1853) says: "I mention here that everything set forth in these pages concerning the Court of Chancery is substantially true, and within the truth". That is why we soon notice that, in spite of the romantic plot of the novel, his target was to punish the iniquities of the High Court of Chancery which was finally abolished in 1922.
1.3. Denouncement of the bad sanitary conditions that caused epidemics in London.

Chesterton (1952) said that Dickens understood the streets because he had the key to open them. Actually, Dickens was one of the first novelists that explored the modern city, as a metropolis, as a social fact and as a human landscape. It is a complicated exploration because there were many miserable places inhabited by human beings, victims of progress. Dickens did not hide the real conditions of life in those places; his pages were dedicated to their denouncement with the purpose of looking for definitive solutions.

In some novels, Dickens denounces the sanitary conditions of those places that were unknown and ignored by the authorities and by rich people. In the novel Bleak House, Dickens refers to London slums where epidemics caused a high number of deaths.

But there were some streets in London where the sun never came. They were black, dirty streets where it was dangerous to walk. Many years before, the houses in these streets had been pleasant to live in. But now they were black with dirt, the wood was rotten and the windows with no glass in them stared like blind eyes. The stone steps in front of the houses were slippery and green with damp. Now, these tumbling tenements contain a swarm of misery. As on the ruined human wretch, vermin parasites appear, so, these ruined shelters have bred a crowd of foul existence that crawls in and out of gaps in walls and boards; and coils itself to sleep, in maggot numbers, where the rain drips in; and comes and goes, fetching and carrying fever, and sowing more evil in its every footprint than all the fine gentlemen in office.\(^{10}\)

\(^{10}\) Charles Dickens. Bleak House. p. 204.
In describing the slum conditions of London, Dickens is here expressing a common contemporary fear that in them may be bred not only a violent outbreak, but the fever: the cholera. This disease, bred in fetid conditions, affected London in 1832, 1848, 1849 and 1854, when thousands died; and Dickens was in the forefront of those reformers who stressed the first importance of sanitary reform.

Actually, Dickens did not want only to torment us with his terrible pictures describing the most shocking conditions of poverty; his purpose was to look for a remedy because he was convinced that the reform of the poor people's houses had to precede the rest of social reforms.

In another part of his novel Bleak House, Dickens shows his concern about the situation of contagion in which epidemics spread quickly.

"I'm being frozen, then burned. Frozen and burned up. My head's tired and my bones ache"...She had caught poor Jo's illness, but she was far more ill than he had been. This illness could kill or completely take away a woman's beauty. 11

In the previous lines, Dickens refers to smallpox, an epidemic that had been one of the causes of the high mortality rate in England during the eighteenth century. Although the vaccine against smallpox had been discovered in 1796, the health authorities did not worry about what was happening in London slums.

Besides, not only the slums, but also other places were not adequate for human dwelling. The sanitary and moral condition of British prisons was dreadful because debtor’s prisons were the real tombs where men and women were buried alive.

Descriptions, like the following, show us what has been focused:

“It was a large, bare, desolate room, with a number of stump bedsteads made of iron, on one of which lay stretched the shadow of a man - wan, pale, and ghastly. His breathing was hard and thick, and he moaned painfully as it came and went. At the bedside sat a short old man in a cobbler's apron, who, by the aid of a pair of horn spectacles, was reading from the Bible aloud...”

Dickens is here referring to the miserable conditions in which debtors had to live in the debtors' prisons where many of them died. Precisely, the prisoner who was near death, exclaimed these words:

“I hope my merciful judge will bear in mind my heavy punishment on earth. Twenty years, my friend, twenty years in this hideous grave! My heart broke when my child died, and I could not even kiss him in his little coffin. My loneliness since then, in all this noise and riot, has been very dreadful. May God forgive me! He has seen my solitary, lingering death.”

However, the fact that the debtor's prisons were finally abolished shows that Dickens' novels indeed influenced on English society.

Some critics have qualified Dickens as a social reformer and they are right. But, let's think what Dickens would say if he came and see now that the great mass of humankind are the poor he always defended.

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1.4. Denouncement of the Educational Institutions for being inefficient and cruel.

Education always has been one of the most important aspects in the development of a country. Every child should be educated to behave well in the different circumstances that life presents him.

Nowadays, as much as in the Victorian Age, education and its problems must be attended by authorities in every country of the world.

In some of his novels, Dickens refers to educational institutions to denounce their brutal ways of dominating Victorian children. He also points out that Education was an instrument to exploit to "the inferior classes", as the following lines indicate.

"I'm far from being friendly", pursued Mr. Dombey, "to what is called by persons of levelling sentiments, general education. But it is necessary that the inferior classes should continue to be taught to know their position, and to conduct themselves properly. So far I approve schools" 14

This text shows the pride of class and wealth, the reduction of human connections to the convenience of the rich.

Dickens wrote about Education as a general system that was in crisis. However, he took a specific example, a specific school: the Charitable Grinders.

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14 Charles Dickens. Dombey and Son. p. 117.
In the Victorian Age, there were many Charity Schools, like the Charitable Grinders. These Charity Schools were financed by subscription, entitling rich donors.

Dickens attacks these school's inefficiency and the humiliation they inflicted upon their pupils. His work had an influence on many educational commentators of his time who echoed his message.

The following paragraph shows Dickens' concern about the kind of teachers that Grinders School had. This educational institution stands for all the schools where children suffered abuses.

That very morning, he had received a perfectly unsolicited black eye on his way to the Grinders' establishment, and had been punished for it by the master: a superannuated old Grinder of savage disposition, who had been appointed schoolmaster because he did not know anything, and wasn't fit for anything, and for whose cruel cane all chubby little boys had a perfect fascination. 13

In the above text, there is a short explanation related to a brutal unqualified teacher that, instead of practicing pedagogy, practiced sadism.

It is interesting to see how his argument is reinforced by many other descriptions and dialogues among the characters, as the one that follows.

"We put each other to the torture there, Sir. We roasted the new fellows at a slow fire, and hung them out of a three pair of stairs window, with the heads downwards. Joseph Bagstock was held out of the window by the heels of his boots, for thirteen minutes by the college clock." 16

In this way, Dickens denounced an Education based on fear and intimidation. An education that children did not deserve to have because it deprived them of normal childhood happiness; happiness, which was changed to traumas and were very nervous.

Perhaps, the problems of current Education are not the same of the Dickens' time. However, everybody should remember that his message as a denouncer influenced on the conscience of people of his time, in the same way as nowadays education problems should do on our society.

1.5. **Denouncement of the society of his time for being ambitious, alienating and selfish.**

Dickens' novel *Dombey and Son* first appeared in 1848. It was a year of outstanding importance in English and European history. We can see the 1840's as the decisive period in which the consciousness of a new phase of civilization was being formed and expressed. The radical transformation of life in Britain, by the extended development of the first industrial revolution, by the transition from a predominantly rural to a predominately urban society, and by the consequent political struggles for representative democracy and for and against the emergence of an organized working class. It was a decade of economic and social changes that brought up problems.

In *Dombey and Son*, Dickens examines in great detail a society ruled by commercial interests rather than by human feelings. This heartlessness of a system pitted against man is the chief concern of this novel. The whole work centers on the big London business house of Dombey and Son, the characters and plot are all related to it and to the merchantile ideal for which it stands.

The great opening moment in the novel *Dombey and Son* is the birth of a child in a house; a birth at once transformed, deformed, by a different sense of human ends: "The House will once again, Mrs. Dombey", said Mr. Dombey, "be not only in name but in fact Dombey and Son...Dombey and Son!". ¹⁷ There is a reduction of human

connections to their convenience for business. But the human agent of this foundation
dies; the mother dies. The child, the future partner, needs human care, another mother.
Human milk would be bought from a "hired serving woman", the wife of a railway-
worker with several children of her own. Mr. Dombey interviews her with her husband
in the following way.

"My good woman", said Mr. Dombey, turning round in his easy chair, as one piece, and not
as a man with limbs and joints, "I understand you are poor, and wish to earn money by
nursing the little boy, my son, I have no objection to your adding to the comforts of your
family by that means. So far as I can tell, you seem to be a deserving object. But I must
impose one or two conditions on you, before you enter my house in that capacity. While you
are here, I must stipulate that you are always known as, say as Richards, an ordinary name,
and convenient. Now, Richards, if you nurse my bereaved child, I wish you to remember this
always. You will receive a liberal stipend in return for the discharge of certain duties, in the
performance of which, I wish you to see as little of your family as possible. When those
duties cease to be required and rendered, and the stipend ceases to be paid, there is an end of
all relations... When you go away from here, you will have concluded what is a mere matter or
bargain and sale, hiring and letting: and will stay away." 18

Dickens is here expressing a practical alienation: the use and abuse of others, as
a mere matter of bargain and sale, hiring and firing. The woman, who is giving her own
child milk, is deprived of her family and of her name which is indifferently replaced by
Mr. Dombey according to his own scheme of things. This is the pressure, all the time on
ordinary people: to fit in with the needs of those who can hire them; to suppress their
particular life.

This cold use of others is even recommended, as here by Miss Tox, as a way of
teaching a higher kind of life: service could be seen as a kind of cultural advantage to the
servant. But this, once again, is a question of identity: an attempt to replace the

18 Charles Dickens. Dombey and Son. p.67-68.
particular person, and substitute what is taken as a higher style. What is deeply encouraging, as always in Dickens, is that this last alienation is resisted:

"Lor, you'll be so smart", said Miss Tox, "that your husband won't know you, will you, Sir?"
"I should know her", said Toodle, gruffly, "anyhows and anywheres". Toodle was evidently not to be bought over. 19

And it is not only that he will not be bought. It is that he retains a kind of human recognition, of human knowledge, which is deeper and more decisive than the recognition-signals of wage-work. It is this spark of recognition, of life-recognition, which Dickens is always trying to fan into a flame, against a conventional, calculating, alienating and somber society.

1.6. Denouncement of the society for being creator of vices, poverty and death.

Basically, Dickens' novels speak up for a man as an individual, against the dehumanizing forces of institutionalized society. He protested against the suppression of the human spirit, the repression of human feelings, by utilitarianism forces.

It is profoundly important to see this great novelist, at a particular crisis of English society. When Dickens began to write, the urban poverty was the exact opposite of the great Victorian progress; in that prosperous England, fourth part of the urban population lived in misery.

The condition of the workers, who frequently labored inhumanely long hours, for low wages, in filthy and dangerous factories, inadequate housing, unemployment, child work, epidemics were some of the most worrisome problems of Dickens' time. These problems caused tragic situations of abuse, misery, illness and death.

However, in Dombey and Son, Dickens goes beyond, he refers to misery, not only the known misery of the neglected and rotting slums, but an invisible misery, that rots the hearts and minds of the socially and physically confident and secure ones.

It is interesting to see how he presents us his argument, with a creative and magical intervention:
"Those who study the physical sciences, and bring them to bear upon the health of Man, tell us that if the noxious particles that rise from vitiated air were palpable to the sight, we should see them lowering in a dense black cloud above such haunts, and rolling slowly on to corrupt the better portions of a town. But if the moral pestilence that rises with them, and, in the eternal laws of outraged Nature, is inseparable from them, could be made discernible too, how terrible the revelation!"

Thus, Dickens shows a society which is very far from being transparent, which is indeed in some decisive ways opaque, as he sees in the image of the dark but invisible cloud above the city.

In Dombey and Son, Dickens is attempting to look beyond isolated errors and vices to their breeding ground within society. What is seen, and challenged, is a system which breeds misery. In his descriptive passages, and in the plot itself, Dickens responds to the real contradictions of Britain's new industrial power; its potential for creation and destruction, for life and death.

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2. DICKENS' POPULARITY, AS AN EFFECT OF HIS HUMOROUS, IRONIC, SATIRICAL STYLE AND THE USE OF SYMBOLS.

A writer's popularity could depend upon many factors and circumstances according to the different ages. Indeed, it is important to remember that the literary movements, the content, the message, the language and specific literary resources are some of the aspects that influence on the consciousness of the mass of people who will later cause the author's popularity.

It has been considered that the most decisive aspect in the novel of the Victorian Age is their effect on the conscience of people of that transforming, liberating and threatening time. If we take only the major achievements in novels, we find a variety of methods and a creation of forms to express new whole experiences. And what must be recognized is that Dickens' methods, which proceeded directly from the problems and manners of the widest popular life, were the most decisive contribution and discovery for expressing this transformation and crisis.

Humor, irony, satire and symbolism are the four key literary devices used by Charles Dickens in his protest novel. It is a matter of great interest to discover how the four elements are wisely used and combined through the unforgettable pages created by this immortal writer.
Dickens' humor was his first step to success, his humorous novel The Pickwick Papers is the work of a young genius who could introduce, from the very beginning, most of the problems to the confrontation of which he was to devote his life as a writer.

Dickens' irony is found in all his novels. It is a literary device that he used according to his intention as a writer. Oliver Twist, The Pickwick Papers, Dombey and Son, Bleak House, among other of his works, are novels in which we will find clear examples of irony.

Dickens' satire was the best literary technique to denounce the defects of the Victorian society. He demonstrated through his novels, that he could achieve the best way to satirize people and institutions that represented injustice in his society. Although all of Dickens' works have satirical hints, it has been affirmed that Bleak House is his best satire and the best one among the Victorian satirical novels.

Finally, Dickens' symbolism is the aspect of his art that puts the separate resources together. There is symbolism throughout his work, especially in the last novels which have a predominant symbol that unifies the plot to achieve a social purpose.
2.1. Charles Dickens, a popular writer.

Charles Dickens, the Shakespeare of the novel, reveals us a formidable imagination that any novelist has ever had, on the point he is considered as an extraordinary case of the Modern Universal Literature.

Dickens is generally considered one of the greatest English writers; besides, he is one of the few writers whose works maintain popularity after his death.

Dickens was a great novelist and one of the most popular writers of all time. He created some of the most famous characters of English literature and also created scenes and descriptions of places that have delighted readers for more than a hundred years. Dickens was a keen observer of life, and had a great understanding of people. He was also a wonderfully inventive comic artist; the warmth and humor of his personality appear in all his works.

Certainly, Dickens was the most popular writer of the nineteenth century; since the publication of The Pickwick Papers his success was great and irreversible. He is now regarded as one of the major figures in English literature, but his position was not always so high. His reputation declined between 1880 and 1940; it was partly due to the increasing sophistication and psychological emphasis that became fashionable in novels after Dickens' death. Critics valued Dickens chiefly as an entertainer and, above all, as a creator of a huge gallery of comic, pleasant and
villainous characters. They recognized him as a master creator of plot and scene, and as a sharp-eyed observer of London life. But these critics considered Dickens' outlook too simple; they believed he lacked artistic taste and subtlety, and that he relied too much on broad comedy, dramatic effects, sentimentality and superficial psychology.

However, since 1940, a flood of books and essays have described Dickens as a writer of much depth and complexity and as a sensitive and philosophical observer of "the condition of man". They have associated him in this sense with such writers as Fedor Dostoievski, Franz Kafka and Herman Melville.

Recent criticism of Dickens has demonstrated his greatness as a superbly inventive comic artist sustained by an awareness and appreciation of human comedy. In more recent times, he has been taken very seriously, both as a literary artist and as a social analyst.
2.1.1. The contents of Dickens' novels are not separated from the popular point of view since he was a realist who won over the English public who could see their tendencies and predilections expressed in Dickens' writings.

It is necessary to remember that the realism appeared as a reaction against romanticism. Realism refers to the literary and artistic style based on the observation of the reality. In England, the realism that this country practiced in politics spread in literature, beginning with Charles Dickens who had a true contact with reality.

Dickens' novel is a picture of real Victorian Age life and manners. In his novels, the plot comes from reality. He chose London streets as the setting of his novels and poor people were the center of his descriptive pictures. And the perfection of his art is to represent every scene in so natural a manner that we perceive everything as real.

Critics consider that Dickens wrote with the eye upon the customs and manners of the men and women of his time. Actually, it is true; the following passage from the novel Oliver Twist shows it.

"Near to that part of the Thames on which the church at Rotherhithe abuts, where the buildings on the banks are dirtiest and the vessels on the river blackest with the dust of colliers and the smoke of close-built low-roofed houses, there exists the filthiest, the strangest, the most extraordinary of the many localities that are hidden in London, wholly unknown, even by name, to the great mass of its inhabitants ... To reach this place, the visitor has to penetrate through a maze of close, narrow, and muddy streets, thronged by the roughest and poorest of waterside people, and devoted to the traffic they may be supposed to occasion... In such a neighbourhood, beyond Dockhead in the
Borough of Southwark, stands Jacob's Island, surrounded by a muddy ditch, six or eight feet deep and fifteen or twenty wide when the tide is in..."21

In this and other novels of Dickens, the door to realism is opening. His realism came naturally as his talent. This richness of descriptive detail, based upon what Dickens had actually seen through his life and experiences is the main aspect of his realism.

Let's read the following description from the novel Dombey and Son which is considered one of the best novels of the 1840s because of its realism.

"She often looked with compassion, at such a time, upon the stragglers who came wandering into London, by the great highway hard by, and who, footsore and weary, and gazing fearfully at the huge town before them, as if foreboding that their misery there would be but as a drop of water in the sea, or as a grain of sea-sand on the shore, went shrinking on, cowering before the angry weather, and looking as if the very elements rejected them. Day after day, such travellers crept past, but always, as she thought, in one direction - always towards the town. Swallowed up in one phase or other of its immensity, towards which they seemed impelled by a desperate fascination, they never returned."22

Here, Dickens shows us the real situation of poor people who wandered in the huge city of London where finally they died. Actually, indifference and neglect were the unique answers for the situation of the poor and the fast growth of miserable slums.

22 Charles Dickens. Dombey and Son. p. 562-563
2.1.2. The language Dickens used was popular and clear; it permitted his novel to be read by a reader belonging to any social class.

Dickens' novels were read in the whole country, Europe and part of America. Many people of different classes, ages, interests and capacities enjoyed and appreciated his literary work.

The total acceptance that Dickens' works had, shows that this writer was able to choose and arrange ideas, words, images and details in a proper and such a simple manner that could be understood by any audience.

Dickens knew how to develop his stories, how to do the best choice of characters: their interplay, their various themes, the thematic lines and their intersection; he introduced various moves of the story to produce some effects and impressions. Besides, his special tricks, his use of rhetorical devices and their combinations constitute a magic key to his popularity.

Critics say that literature consists, not of general ideas but of particular revelations, not of schools of thought but of individuals of genius. Literature is not about something: it is the thing itself. Missing the masterpiece, makes the existence of literature improbable. That is why, I will refer to Dickens, as the genius and to The Pickwick Papers, as his masterpiece.

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The Pickwick Papers, which persists as a "classic", is the best demonstration of Dickens' popularity. Its characters suddenly became figures in the national life, a mania; there were Pickwick hats, coats, canes, cigars, jokebooks, songbooks, representations on the stage, etc. It soon became the topic of conversation among all classes, who laughed over its unexpected situations, and word plays such as, "Mr. Pickwick proceeded to put himself into his clothes, and his clothes into his portmanteau"; entered popular speech, where some of them, as "in a Pickwickian sense", still remain; in the course of time it found its way into nearly every European language.
2.1.3. His novels have been translated almost to any important language. Some of them have been adapted to the theater and to the movie screen.

Dickens' popularity also has been shown through the international spreading and knowledge of his works. Translation of his works have proliferated; his novels have been dramatized, filmed and adapted into musicals. Many film adaptations from his novels have been made specially in England. Oliver Twist, A Tale of Two Cities, David Copperfield and other of his works have been brilliantly presented and have continued being popular. Everybody has watched on television Dickens' Christmas Carol.

At the present, Dickens' work importance has been valued. His novels appear in films and theaters. Let's remember that in the Victorian Age, Dickens himself went into the theater because in his own words he had an actor's heart.

Dickens' extreme energy was not exhausted by his unique success as a novelist. His weekly journalism made heavy demands on his time after 1850, and he constantly turned to the stage; first, in many amateur theatricals, given privately or for charity, where he produced and took leading roles with great brilliance; later, in his public lectures. His concern with social reforms in his novels and journalism was matched by an active personal interest in several charitable projects.
From childhood, Dickens had been a great lover of the theater, enjoying the production and stage management as much as the acting. There were frequent and elaborate private theatricals in his house in London, and between 1847 and 1857 the amateur company that he formed and led with unflagging zest, appeared in public more than sixty times, in London and the provinces, and even performed before Queen Victoria. From 1858 onward, he dedicated much more time and energy to many public readings from his works; he had tremendous successes throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland; and in 1867 he visited the United States again where he performed before great audiences.
2.1.4. Critics have considered Dickens the creator of the novel of social group, that is the mass novel.

Dickens was, from the very beginning, another kind of creator, in another and essentially different historical period and scenery. He starts from the popular tradition as a magic way of responding to a very particular and rapidly changing world. It is not the old tradition of a pre-industrial society; it is that tradition altered, extended, sharpened, by the experience of industrial life. Dickens began from this because it was his own way to look at his world. We can see that the popular tradition gives birth to a new form of imaginative creation, to a unique and necessary way of appreciating and responding to what was then an unprecedented (new) world; to the crowded and noisy world of the nineteenth century city, and of the industrial-capitalist civilization of which the city was the principal embodiment.

Through Dickens' novel spoke Britain. They did not find a responsive voice in other writers. His novels focused on general problems of the mass, he went beyond isolated problems or vices to their breeding ground within society. This is specially achieved in his novel Dombey and Son, where Dickens refers to Mr. Dombey's pride and to society as a creator of vices and injustices. In this novel, there is a new way of estimating, a new way of appreciating the qualities that make for and against life and good. This novel includes an appeal to an individual to awake from his errors before it is too late and an appeal to a society to awake from error to make the world a better place.
In Oliver Twist, Dickens expresses his concern about the situation of children that, because of neglect and poverty, were corrupted by the wickedness of the world. And that was a general concern because London had become a very dangerous city where increasing of the population, insecurity and poverty were problems that affected society.

In the preface of the novel Oliver Twist, Dickens states:

"It appeared to me that to draw a knot of such associates in crime as really did exist; to paint them in all their deformity, in all their wretchedness, in all the squalid misery of their lives; to show them as they really were, for ever skulking uneasily through the dirtiest paths of life, with the great black ghastly gallows closing up their prospect, turn them where they might, it appeared to me that to do this, would be to attempt a something which was needed, and which would be a service to society. And I did it as I best could."  

Of course Dickens' life and works constitute an attempt of improving his society and the world. And we can affirm that his attempt was in some ways successful because his message found a place in each English heart.

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24 Charles Dickens. Oliver Twist, p.xxi
It is interesting to observe that Dickens created a great variety of characters in his novels. He includes representatives of each social class. For example, in the novel *Bleak House*, we realize that Lady Dedlock belongs to the richest and most respectable class of the city, while Jo, the crossing-sweeper is the poorest of London poor; between them there is a middle-class represented by Ada and Richard. Every character appears to be important for the development of the novel, every character has his own problems that may be different from the other character’s problems, depending on the social class to which they represent.
2.1.5. Dickens' novels were easily acquired since they were published in monthly and weekly editions, which were sold at low price.

During the Victorian Age, many novels appeared in serial form, either in monthly editions or as installments in periodicals. Each installment was more or less a complete episode which ended at a point of high interest.

The relation between writer and public was never so intense as in the nineteenth century; but never the risk of being totally enslaved to the popular caprice was greater.

Dickens' novels appeared in serial form, being The Pickwick Papers his first one. Although, early sales were unexceptional, The Pickwick Papers (1836-7) soon became a publishing phenomenon, and its characters the center of a popular cult. Part of the secret was the method of cheap serial publication, which Dickens used for all his subsequent novels and which was copied by other writers.

Monthly or weekly serialization of his novels, sometimes in magazines edited by himself, kept him in close touch with his reading public. Occasionally he bowed to the pressure of his readers, for example as when sales of some of his novels began to fall off and he quickly provided new interests. More often, however, he educated public taste and taught his readers to expect new and different things from him; the public, laughed with him, would also cry with his stories.
Because of his novels were written in serial form and released to the public one chapter at a time, Dickens often included puzzling details and mysteries. These details, which are important in the later unfolding of the plot, were meant to hold the reader's interest until the next chapter was published. Some characters who, in one chapter are not even named, in later chapters are completely discovered and identified. An example of this is in the novel Oliver Twist, where Dickens refers to a mysterious character in one chapter, and later, he is identified as Mr. Monks.

This method of writing also allowed Dickens to introduce new characters to recuperate the reader's interest. He did it in The Pickwick Papers when he created Sam Weller. It brought a great sudden success; when Sam appeared in the tenth installment, the sales, that in the first installment had been of four hundred, raised to forty thousand, giving Dickens immense popularity.
2.2 Charles Dickens' use of humor.

Humor comes from the English word humour. In the sixteenth century, "humour" denoted an unbalanced state, an unreasonable caprice, a fixed vice or folly. Then, the peculiarities of the humorist were seen as fit subjects for comedy.

Many critics of the earlier part of the eighteenth-century regarded humor as being inconsistent with true politeness, since the well-bred were supposed to have learned to repress their feelings and adapt their manners to a rigid code of decorum. But the last eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw the growth of a more tolerant attitude to humor as amusing, innocent, generous, benevolent, allied to sympathy and pathos. With Charles Dickens, the word humor takes its definitive modern meaning as something that causes pleasant amusement and the ability to experience it. Humor is considered as a literary and artistic movement of great transcendence and influence at the present time.

Humor is the most human, the noblest, the most delicate and transcendent manifestation of charm and genius.

Humor is a spontaneous, natural and sometimes unconscious expression of character. Humor is complexly simple, it can find its way to the heart and feelings of even the least sophisticated. However, it gathers its strength from the context, taking into account the previous life of a character and the relationships among characters.
Dickens is the English greatest humorist. His humor was always near the reality since, the region where humor dwells is somewhere between the real and the ideal; in an imaginative treatment of real life.

Humor is the device that made Dickens famous; and The Pickwick Papers, the first of his novels which persists as a classic, the best of his works, the most loved and least criticized among all of his works. Actually, The Pickwick Papers is one of the greatest works of Universal Literature and Dickens' unique humorous novel. That is why I have chosen it in order to discover and analyze the aspects that cause Dickensian humor.
2.2.1 **Humor based on ignorance and ingenuity of the characters.**

Dickens' humor has many components that make his novel unique. He created different characters with specific roles and specific qualities and defects. Ignorance and ingenuity are some of the characteristics some of Dickens' characters have; those qualities are often a cause for creating conversations, discussions and different situations that result comic.

Ignorance, or lack of knowledge or information about something, as well as ingenuity, or innocence that does not allow to see the evil, involve the characters. In many special circumstances, ignorance is worthy of being read.

The following conversation is an example of how ignorance may make people believe extraordinary things that are not true or admire people who do not deserve great admiration.

"My friend Mr. Snodgrass has a strong poetic turn," said Mr. Pickwick.
"So have I," said the stranger. "Epic poem-ten thousand lines-revolution of July-composed it on the spot-Mars by day, Apollo by night-bang the field-piece, twang the lyre."
"You were present at that glorious scene, sir?" said Mr. Snodgrass.
"Present! Think I was; fired a musket-fired with an idea-rushed into wine-shop-wrote it down-back again-whiz, bang-another idea-wine-shop again-again-pen and ink-back again-cut and slash-noble time, sir ..."25

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25 Charles Dickens. The Pickwick Papers.p.34.
The previous dialogue occurred in the year 1827 and the Revolution they talked about occurred in 1830. The remarkable force of Jingle's prophetic imagination and his lack of knowledge of the exact date of the revolution led him to express that he had been in that glorious scene and that he had written a long poem on the spot; Jingle said that he was a poet as Mr. Snodgrass. It turns out to be funny because Mr. Pickwick and his friends also ignored if that revolution had already occurred or was only the stranger's invention fruit. Moreover, they believed all what Jingle said and admired his courage and poetic talent.

Mr. Pickwick represents ingenuity since his kindness sometimes does not take into account the evil of the world. He is sometimes deceived by Mr. Jingle who makes fun of his plans.

That is why once Jingle's servant, under advice of his artful master, made Pickwick believe that a rapture was going to take place since Jingle, using a false name, was going to run away with a rich heiress from boarding-school and also, he convinced Mr. Pickwick that the best way of helping was to surprise Jingle in the every fact. Mr. Pickwick himself, helped by Sam, climbed up the wall of the boarding-school and at eleven o'clock was in the garden, ready to unmask Jingle who never arrived. Mr. Pickwick was discovered, and as the expected fact was not visible, he was taken as a robber or as a madman. Finally, everything was clarified;
however, the cold night and the jump affected Mr. Pickwick's health. He said that the next time he see Jingle, he would punish him.

2.2.2. The use of portrait.

A portrait is the description of physical and spiritual characteristics of a person. Dickens used portrait in all his novels in order to describe specific characteristics of his innumerable characters. He was a keen observer of life and a keen observer of people. His descriptions are too well painted in words that when we read his novels, we can feel that his characters: comic, pleasant, kind or villainous are too near to any real man.

As humor is human, Dickens wanted to make us laugh describing characteristics and situations that only human beings may have or live. In The Pickwick Papers, he used portraits to contribute to the humorous development of the fifty seven chapters that constitute this famous novel.

The following description is an example of the use of portrait. Let's see how the existence of these details can help to cause an innocent smile in the reader.

"On his right hand sat Mr. Tracy Tupman - the too-susceptible Tupman, who to the wisdom and experience of maturer years superadded the enthusiasm and ardour of a boy, in the most interesting and pardonable of human weaknesses: love. Time and feeding had expanded that once-romantic form; the black silk waistcoat had become more and more developed; inch by inch had the gold watch-chain beneath it disappeared from within the range of Tupman's vision; and gradually had the capacious chin encroached
upon the borders of the white cravat; but the soul of Tupman had known no change—
admiration of the fair sex was still its ruling passion.”  26

Now, we know how Tracy Tupman is. Dickens introduced us his character and told us his virtues and defects. Our idea of Mr. Tupman is that he is a lover; however, only reading the rest of the novel we will discover why the previous portrait will result more humorous.

Let’s see another portrait through which we will know how Mr. Justice Stareleigh is.

“Mr. Justice Stareleigh was a most particularly short man and so fat that he seemed all face and waistcoat. He rolled in upon two little turned legs, and having bobbed gravely to the bar, who bobbed gravely to him, put his little legs underneath his table and his little three-cornered hat upon it, and when Mr. Justice Stareleigh had done this, all you could see of him was two queer little eyes, one broad pink face, and somewhere about half of a big and very comical-looking wig... The silence awoke Mr. Justice Stareleigh, who immediately wrote down something with a pen without any ink in it, and looked unusually profound, to impress the jury with the belief that he always thought most deeply with his eyes shut.”  27

Reading The Pickwick Papers we enjoy line after line because of the genial handling of humor. And knowing, by means of portraits, what the characters look like, we transport ourselves to their amusing world where we will leave part of our soul.

Not only The Pickwick Papers, but all Dickens' novels include portraits that tell us how each character is. He was an artist and that is why he is the creator of a gallery of immortal characters that remain as definitive types in the history of literature.

2.2.3. Intervention of Quixotic characters: Samuel Pickwick (Don Quixote) and Samuel Weller (Sancho Panza).

Dickens' novel was always regarded as a phenomenon, even in its own time. Almost overnight Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller became figures in the national life, perhaps a mania. There were Pickwick hats, coats, canes, cigars, and chintzes. Pickwick jokebooks and songbooks, representations on the stage of episodes from Pickwick, parodies, plagiarisms and sequels, all of these produced for entertainment without Dickens' permission and without his any direct profit. Doctors read it between patients, judges read it on the bench while their juries were out deliberating. The expressions: pickwickian theory, pickwickian breast, pickwickian point of view, anti-picwickian glance, etc., soon entered in the popular speech. Indeed, it became that kind of event in culture about which everyone seemed to have a story. And the key elements of this great mystery were only two characters: Samuel Pickwick and Samuel Weller.
The greatest passages in the novel are those that represent the companionship of Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller. They are sustained with an incomparably delicate poise, and as the affectionate communion between these two men develops and deepens it becomes the novel’s principal focus of interest.

Often, The Pickwick Papers has been considered famous for including Quixotic characters: Mr. Pickwick, regarded as an English Modern Quixote and Samuel Weller, his loyal servant that has much resemblance to Sancho Panza.

As Quixote, Pickwick is great and immortal. He is an innocent dreamer, an adventurer, a discoverer. He is always looking for justice, he suffers disaster; among his curious travels he became a persecutor of evil men, that is the case of Jingle and Job.

Mr. Pickwick defined himself as an observer of human nature, he said that his great desire was to benefit the human race. All of Pickwick’s virtues are associated with benevolence. He is always eager to help people to solve different problems. He was ready to set people in a new way of life, he does so with his friends: he offers his help to Mr. Winkle if his father refuses to accept Winkle’s wife, he plans to set Sam up in a business of his own. He regenerates those he meets through his
presence and through his contagious, spontaneous goodwill, his universal concern and charity. Even those, whom he persecuted because of their wickedness, received his help to begin a new life.

As Sancho Panza, Samuel Weller is loyal and realist; when his master plans a new adventure, he remembers him that it is time to order the dinner. "Sam", as Mr. Pickwick names him, is who holds together a skeptical judgement of experience and Mr. Pickwick's absolute and ideal morality. He is unique in the canon of Dickens' novels; never again Dickens created a man of Sam's experience combined with Sam's selfpossession and mastery of that experience. As Sancho did, Sam uses proverbs to give lessons of experience to his master and to other people; the difference is that Sancho's proverbs are folk and Sam's sayings are the result of his pure invention, as we will see later.
2.2.4. **Narration of comic and diverse adventures.**

The novel *The Pickwick Papers*, as Dickens himself said, contains a faithful record of the preambles, perils, travels, adventures and sporting transactions of the corresponding members of the club.

It is really impossible to enumerate all the comic adventures and situations narrated in the eight hundred and sixty three pages of this famous work. It is the reading of the novel which make us enjoy fully these adventures and comic situations; without them, the novel would lack humor which is essential in its plot.

Some of the main adventures are: The Pickwick Club members travel to Rochester, where a singular character who goes by the name of Jingle, whom they met when leaving London, leads Mr. Winkle to a difficult situation because of a mistake, Mr. Winkle was challenged to a duel although there were not fatal consequences. Then, they go Dingley Dell's, where Mr. Wardle lives; Jingle escapes with Rachael, Mr. Wardle’s sister, and Pickwick with the furious brother persecute the raptor and recovers her. Sam Weller appears to be Mr. Pickwick’s servant, from this moment the novel becomes more interesting. In Eatanswill where there are elections, Mr. Pickwick meets Mr. Pott who is a local journal manager, also he meets new friends. Jingle and his servant Job deceive Mr. Pickwick who chases them up to Ipswich. In this place, Mr. Pickwick and his servant stayed in an inn where Mr. Pickwick has problems for mistaking his bedroom and entering in a middle-aged
lady's bedroom. Then, Mr. Peter Magnus, the lady's admirer, accuses Mr. Pickwick before the judge Nupkins telling that he is a challenge searcher. Mrs. Bardell, owner of the house where Mr. Pickwick rents a room in London, imagines that he had the intention to marry her and accuses him for breaking promise of marriage; the defendant is sentenced to pay seven hundred and fifty pounds for damages, but as he refuses to pay, is sent to prison. In Fleet prison, he finds Jingle and his servant in a very poor situation and helps them.

Other important episodes are: Christmas in Dingley Dell. The trip to Bath, where Mr. Winkle has problems with Mr. Dowler and then courts Arabella Allen. There are other incidents in which Sam's father and Mr. Stiggins participate. Bob Sawyer and Benjamin Allen are two singular characters that study medicine and begin as interns. The outcome of the novel is Mr. Pickwick's retirement to a quiet and peaceful life, Mr. Winkle's marriage with Arabella and Mr. Snodgrass with Emily Wardle as well as the final dissolution of the Pickwick Club.

As I have mentioned, there are many adventures, episodes and situations that are unforgettable because of their humor. Next, I will try to summarize, in some parts, one of the most well known situations in which Mr. Pickwick was involved.

It happened in a beautiful sunny day. Mr. Pickwick and his friends and servant decided to go hunting birds. As the honorable Mr. Pickwick was temporarily crippled because of an attack of rheumatism, Sam carried him in a barrow where he
fell asleep after having lunch and drinking too much punch. While Mr. Pickwick snored comfortably in the shade, his friends and Sam decided to continue with the expedition which was not to exceed an hour’s duration. Mr. Pickwick had not been asleep half an hour, when Captain Boldwig, the fierce owner of those lands, followed by two gardeners, came striding along as fast as his size and importance would let him. After looking around, he ordered the gardeners to roll the ground, to keep the place in good order and to remind him to have a board done about trespassers and spring-guns to keep the common people out. If the fury was great when one of his gardeners discovered that there had been trespassers that very day, then it duplicated when his eyes encountered the wheelbarrow and Mr. Pickwick.

"Who are you, you rascal?" said the captain, administering several pokes to Mr. Pickwick’s body with the thick stick.
"What’s your name?"
"Cold punch," murmured Mr. Pickwick as he sunk to sleep again.
As Mr. Pickwick continued asleep, Captain Boldwig, who was tired of insulting the impudent drunk, ordered to wheel him to the devil and then he changed his mind and ordered to wheel him to the Pound.
Inexpressible was the astonishment of Mr. Pickwick’s friends when they returned to find that he had disappeared and taken the wheelbarrow with him. It was the most mysterious that a lame man have got upon his legs without any previous notice, and moreover, to wheel a heavy barrow before him by way of amusement: it was a miracle. They searched everywhere, together and separately; they shouted, whistled, laughed, called—and all with the same result. Mr. Pickwick was not found. After some hours of fruitless search, they decided to go without him.
Meanwhile Mr. Pickwick had been wheeled to the Pound and safely deposited therein, fast asleep in the wheelbarrow, to the immeasurable delight and satisfaction not only of all the boys in the village but three fourths of the whole population, who had gathered round in expectation of his waking. If their most intense gratification had been excited by seeing him wheeled in, how many hundred fold was their joy increased when, after a few indistinct cries of “Sam!” he sat up in the barrow and gazed with indescribable astonishment on the faces before him. 28

2.2.5. Misuse of words by the characters and use of play on words in order to cause a humorous effect.

One of Dickens' tricks is to play with words, he knew how to arrange them in different ways in order to cause a humorous result.

Sometimes his characters use a wrong word, they also choose words that have different meanings. Besides, the phonetics of the words play an important role.

In the following texts, let's discover how misuse of words and play on words may result comic.

"Except of me Mary my dear as your valentine and think over what I've said. My dear Mary I will now conclude". 29

The previous lines are part of a letter sent in Valentine's Day. Indeed, what the character pretended to say was accept, not except.

"What's that?" inquired Sam.
"A legal instrument, which is as much as to say it's no go" replied the cobbler.
"I see, " said Sam, "A sort of brother -in- law o' the have -his- carcass. Well.". 30

Have -his- carcass, Sam’s version of habeas corpus, is totally different in meaning but has some phonetic likeness.

"Pig Vig or Big Vig -what you call- lawyer -eh? I see that is it. Big Vig." And the count was proceeding to enter Mr. Pickwick in his tablets as a gentleman of the long robe, who derived his name from the profession to which he belonged, when Mrs. Leo Hunter interposed.

"No, no, Count," said the lady. "Pickwick".

"Ah, ah, I see," replied the count. "Peek -Christian name; Weeks -surname; good, very good. Peek Weeks. How do you do, Weeks?" 31

The text shows how the name of a gentleman is misunderstood. Pickwick is confused with Big Vig and with Peek Weeks. At the beginning, the Count understood Big Vig because he thought Mr. Pickwick was a lawyer; let’s remember that in England lawyers used wigs. Then, the Count understood Peek Weeks. Actually, the error may be explained since the Count Smolttork is a foreigner who confused unconsciously the similar sounds.

"Serjeant Buzfuz and Mr. Skimpin for the plaintiff," said the judge, writing down the names in his notebook and reading as he wrote; "for the defendant, Serjeant Snubbin and Mr. Monkey."

"Beg your lordship’s pardon, Phunky." 32

Again, the use of a word instead of other could result in a funny name. As Phunky sounds a little like monkey, the judge misheard the correct one. In other part of the novel, the same judge hears Daniel instead of Nathaniel and comic misunderstandings are produced.

LINES TO A BRASS POT

Oh, Pott! if you'd known
How false she'd have grown
When you heard the marriage bells tinkle,
You'd have done then, I vow,
What you cannot help now,
And handed her over to W.....

Pot, the kettle, is pronounced in the same way as Pott, the last name of a man whose wife had a relation of effusive friendship with Mr. Winkle. Of course, tinkle rhymes with Winkle; that is why Mr. Pott's political enemy, who wrote these lines in a town journal, chose the words pot and tinkle to achieve his purpose of offending Mr. Pott.

2.2.6. **The way of talking by characters. Especially Sam Weller, who uses expressions that are equivalent to sayings which have been called [samwellerisms](#).**

It is important to observe how the characters handle language. We find throughout the novel different levels of expression. There is an elegant language used by ladies and gentlemen. We also find typical common ways of talking in people of middle class and servants.

What is important to recognize is that there are special characters who, because of their particular way of talking, are transcendent and unforgettable. Let's take two characters of this group in order to show what has been mentioned: Alfred Jingle and Sam Weller.

The following is a part of Mr. Jingle's speech:

"Heads, heads-take care of your heads!" cried the loquacious stranger as they came out under the low archway, which in those days formed the entrance to the coach-yard. "Terrible place-dangerous work-other day-five children-mother-tall lady, eating sandwiches-forgot the arch-crash-knock-children look round-mother's head off-sandwich in her hand-no mouth to put it in-head of a family off-shocking, shocking!..."[34](#)
This kind of telegraphic prose spoken by Mr. Jingle is found after reading the first ten pages and is to be found everywhere in the novel. Let's remember that Jingle, a representative of the world evil, is an essential character.

Sam Weller is perhaps the center of the novel. Mr. Pickwick's complement, that is why Sam is so important as his master. When Sam appeared in the tenth installment, the sales, that in the first installment had been of four hundred raised to forty thousand. The fact is that Sam Weller, who was constantly using sayings to explain and clarify any situation, was a definitive contribution to the success of the novel.

The sayings used by Sam have been called samwellerisms which are the result of his invention. These sayings also produced a comic effect.

Let's see some samwellerisms which may result absurd but anyway humorous.

"Here's your servant, sir. Proud o' the title, as the Living Skellinton said ven they showed him." 35

Of course, the character referred to skeleton when he uses Skellinton.

"All good feelin', sir - the very best intentions, as the gen'l'mn said ven he run away from his wife 'cos she seemed unhappy with him." 36

35 Charles Dickens. The Pickwick Papers p.239.
As we can see, the samwellerisms are characterized by the mutilation of words.

"Not content with writin' up Pickwick, they put "Moses" afore it, vich I call addin' insult to injury, as the parrot said ven they not only took him from his native land but made him talk English langwidge afterwards." 37

Sam uses afore instead of before, vich by which, langwidge by language, arterwards by afterwards, etc.

"Wery sorry to 'casion any personal inconwenience, ma'am, as the housebreaker said to the old lady when he put her on the fire." 38

Here, in the same way like in other samwellerisms, we find w instead of v.

"Yes, sir, " "Wotever is, is right, as the young nobleman sweetly said wen they put him down in the pension list 'cos his mother's uncle's wife's grandfather vunce lit the king's pipe with a portable tinder-box" 39

Sam Weller is trying to say whatever, sweetly, when, wife, once, with. His usage of words is not perfect but anyway it is understandable.

"He wants you partic'lar; and no one else'll do, as the devil's private secretary said ven he fetched away Doctor Faustus" 40

In this samwellism, the character takes Doctor Faustus, from Goethe's work, in order to make a funny comparison.

"Stick a bit o' Christmas in 'em. T' other dish opposite. There; now we look compact and comfortable, as the father said ven he cut his little boy's head off to cure him o' squintin' ." 41

Sam was a cockney, that is the typical Londener that lived in the East End of London city and spoke in a peculiar way. That is why we find that Sam’s expressions are defective and his words are deformed. Among other things, he uses v instead of w and vice versa; sometimes he adds, removes and changes the letters of some words. In the previous samwellisms and in all the samwellisms that the novel has, we always will find the words as and said; that is why I had underlined them in the seven samwellisms already quoted.

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2.3. Charles Dickens' use of irony.

Irony is one of the major tones of satire. Charles Dickens used both: irony and satire. He was a great creator: a good ironist and a good satirist, that is why I will regard irony and satire in a more extended way.

Irony is the term used to describe a contrast between what appears to be and what reality is.

The term irony derives from a Greek word meaning "dissembler". In Greek comedy, the dissembler was a character who assumed a false appearance, who pretended to be less intelligent than he was, who dealt in understanding, and who was able in these ways to triumph over his opposite, the fundamentally stupid, boastful character who tended to take things at their face value and was easily deceived. At the root of all irony is a contrast between what is being said, implied or suggested and what is actually the case. In every instance one is aware of the clever ironist or ironic observer on the one hand, and the unfortunate victim of the irony on the other. The ironist pretends to be unaware that the appearance is only an appearance; the victim of the irony is really unaware of the contrast between reality and appearance.
Some critics suggest that irony is present when the surface meaning of a passage must be rejected and another, incongruous and "higher" meaning must be reached by reconstructing the evidence.

The basis of irony as applied to language is, as G. N. Leech points out, "the human disposition to adopt a pose, or put on a mask." Actually, the mask of irony is not normally meant to deceive anyone; if someone takes an ironical remark at face value, he could not appreciate the irony of it.

One figure of speech is commonly associated with irony. It is hyperbole, the figure which distorts the literal truth by overstating things, and is very extensively used by writers.

Irony and hyperbole have in common one significant feature: in none of them is the true state of things expressed. In the case of irony, the speaker says or implies the opposite of what he knows to be true and hyperbole goes too far. Then, the effect depends on the reader being conscious of the reality from which the writer deviates for the sake of effect; it is not used to deceive. In order to succeed, irony must carry with it some indication that it is not to be taken at face value; the reader is induced to discover the "true" interpretation by rejecting the literal one as inappropriate or impossible in the context.

Charles Dickens has been considered as an ironist, in all his works we find ironical overtones that are characteristic of his style.

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42 Patrick Murray. Literary Criticism. p.77.
Dickens' irony comes from a special verbal formula that has three main elements: the use of equivalent expressions, intervention of false heroes and the use of hyperbole.
2.3.1. Use of equivalent expressions.

Dickens used expressions whose actual meaning is often the opposite of what they literally say. These are called equivalent expressions and are used to cause irony.

I will quote some equivalent expressions used by Charles Dickens in some of his novels.

"Oliver, whose face and hands had by this time been washed in a hurry, was led into the room by his benevolent protectress". 43

Here, irony comes from the words benevolent protectress. Actually, Mrs. Mann, the woman whom the author refers to, had nothing of benevolence. She had young orphan children, as Oliver, under her charge and, because of her ambition, gave them hardly enough to keep them alive; they suffered of hunger and bad treatment.

"Then I'll whip you when I get in, " said the voice, and having made this kind promise, the speaker began to whistle." 44

The kind promise is not actually kind but cruel. Nobody could conceive that to whip a hungry child is an act related to kindness. That is why the expression becomes ironical.

“Stay, Mr. Jingle!” said the spinster aunt emphatically.
“You have made an allusion to Mr. Tupman-explain it.”
“Never!” exclaimed Jingle with a professional air. “Never!”
And by way of showing that he had no desire to be questioned further, he drew a chair close to that of the spinster aunt and sat down." 

If we consider the situation in which the previous dialogue occurs, we realize that Mr. Jingle was actually eager of being questioned by the single aunt because his purpose was to discredit Mr. Tupman in a very artful and dissembling way. His attitude of drawing the chair close to her and sitting down next to her contradicts his words, not his plans; actually, he was helping her to question him. After discrediting Mr. Tupman, he would court her.

"The friend was a charming young man of not much more than fifty..."

Actually, a man who is fifty years old is not called or considered a young man.

"Anybody here?" inquired Dowler suspiciously. 

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When the character said anybody, he refers to the most important people of the town: the élite of Bath.

All the expressions included in the previous examples cause ironical effects. Dickens' use of equivalent expressions in all his works is one of the aspects that explains Dickensian irony that causes his work to be unique.

2.3.2. Intervention of false heroes.

Dickens' irony is also the result of the intervention of different false heroes that play an important role in his unforgettable pages.

Dickens' false heroes have two characteristics: their pretensions to be something which they are not and an exaggerated notion of skill of a certain type that they lack the most.

We find false heroes in the novel The Pickwick Papers. Among them, we have Mr. Winkle, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Snodgrass, Mr. Dowler and so on.

Mr. Winkle is first described as the “sporting Winkle” who was destined to earn fame in the sports of the field, the air and the water; sporting fame was the uppermost desire in Winkle's breast. He always dressed himself in sport clothes
according to his sport skills. However, it is very interesting and contradictory to see our sport hero in the following situations.

"The deputy restrained the animal's impetuosity, and the principal ran to assist Mr. Winkle in mounting.
"T' other side, sir, if you please."
"Blowed if the gen'lm'n won't a-gettin' up on the wrong side", whispered a grinning post-boy to the inexpressibly gratified waiter.
Mr. Winkle, thus instructed, climbed into his saddle, with about as much difficulty as he would have experienced in getting up the side of a first-rate man-of-war.48

Here, we realize that the sport which Winkle had never had was ridding horses; he did not even know what side was the correct one for mounting. Some great heroes have hidden skills, perhaps Mr. Winkle was one of them and was going to show his prowess in other sporting activities. The next quotation will help us to discover if Mr. Winkle possessed other different sport skills.

"Bless my soul," said Mr. Winkle. "I declare I forgot the cap!"
The slight omission was rectified. Mr. Pickwick crouched again. Mr. Winkle stepped forward with an air of determination and resolution; and Mr. Tupman looked out from behind a tree. The boy shouted; four birds flew out. Mr. Winkle fired. There was a scream as of an individual-not a rook-in corporeal anguish, Mr. Tupman had saved the lives of innumerable unoffending birds by receiving a portion of the charge in his left arm.49

Actually, Mr. Winkle's keen hand, instead of shooting at the bird, shot at his friend's arm causing a confusion almost impossible to describe. We doubt and distrust of Mr. Winkle's experience and skill as a sportsman. Let's see how the third situation mentioned below make us change our minds or reaffirm our suspicion.

48 Charles Dickens. The Pickwick Papers p.86.
49 Charles Dickens. The Pickwick Papers p.111.
"Mr. Winkle, stooping forward with his body half doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller, in a very singular and un-swan-like manner...

With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity or practice could have ensured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the centre of the reel at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty. Mr. Winkle struck wildly against him, and with a loud crash they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to his feet, but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind in skates. He was seated on the ice, making spasmodic efforts to smile; but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance." 50

Finally, we can see the desperation of our hero who, trembling violently and holding Sam’s arms with the grasp of a drowning man, asked to be assisted over the ice by Sam because the ice was very slippery. After the crash and fall, Mr. Winkle’s swan-like style could not be completely performed since Mr. Pickwick ordered Sam to take Mr. Winkle’s skates off. Mr. Winkle had shown again that he was not the sportsman he had pretended to be and as everybody considered him. He is a false hero.

In the same way, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Dowler are characters that ironically pretend to be exactly what they are not.

Mr. Tupman’s fame of being conqueror of female hearts results contradictory since he never married.

50 Charles Dickens. The Pickwick Papers p.454.
The great poet, Mr. Snodgrass has never written anything to encourage his reputation.

Mr. Dowler, who pretended to appear as the most vindictive and sanguinary man on earth, was actually one of the most egregious cowards that have existed.

We can see how irony derives from the recognition of the character's pretensions on the one hand, and the unpleasant reality on the other.

2.3.3. **Use of hyperbole**.

Hyperbole is a figure of speech involving great exaggeration made for special effect and is not meant to be taken literally.

Dickens used hyperbole to achieve different effects. His hyperboles have comic, ironic, satiric and sentimental effects.

At the beginning, Dickens' hyperboles were comic as his first novels; later, Dickens became a more serious writer, his hyperboles were not too comic and soon became ironical.

The three following exaggerations are examples of hyperboles. Let's discover their effect.
"It is the best idea," said Mr. Pickwick to himself, smiling till he almost cracked the night-cap strings. 51

The character's act of smiling is the object of this exaggeration.

"Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle looked on, petrified at beholding such a scene between two such men" 52

Of course, Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle were not petrified, they suddenly recovered themselves from intense astonishment.

"He drew his breath hard and coloured up to the very tips of his spectacles" 53

All the previous hyperboles result to be comic, furthermore, it is necessary to remember that they belong to his first humorous novel. It is interesting to compare them with the following hyperboles which have a different effect.

"Oliver Twist and his companions suffered the tortures of slow starvation for three months: at last they got so voracious and wild with hunger, that one boy, who was tall for his age, told his companions that unless he had another bowl of soup every day, he was afraid he might some night eat the boy who slept next to him." 54

The previous lines contain a hyperbole that is deeper and make us think instead of laughing; moreover, it presents us a problem that would be better understood if the reader continues discovering what happens through that novel.

"We drove slowly through the dirtiest and darkest streets that ever were seen in the world..." 55

This hyperbole shows how bad sanitary conditions may make appear that some parts of a city are the dirtiest and darkest in the world.

Here, again Dickens sets down ironically:

"The earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in, and the sun and moon were made to give them light. Rivers and seas were formed to float their ships; rainbows gave them promise of fair weather; winds blew for or against their enterprises; stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre..." 56

It is a clear exaggeration to say that the earth, the sun, the moon, rivers, seas, stars, rainbows and winds were at the service of Dombey and Son and functioned around them since had been created for their trade. These hyperboles show how economic power sometimes creates a destructive indifferent pride which make us think that we are the owners of the world and its center.

55 Charles Dickens. Bleak House. p.27.
56 Charles Dickens. Dombey and Son. p.50.
2.4. **Charles Dickens' use of satire.**

Satire is used to diminish the status of its subject in the eyes of its readers. The satirist does this by arousing ridicule, amusement, contempt, hatred, anger, scorn, disgust or other hostile emotions. Many satirists have proposed more lofty aims for themselves. Whatever the aim, the classic targets of satire are folly and vice, and its field of operation is human society. The satirist is more fully conscious than most people of the contrast between the way things are and the way they ought to be; he exploits the difference that exists between appearance and reality, between what people officially stand for and how they behave, between words and deeds. It is clear that the number of possible subjects for satire is unlimited. Actually, satire has an interest in everything that men do. The satirist can direct his attack at an individual or type, a social class or set of institutions, an organization, a nation, or even mankind. The great majority of satirists have confined their attention to those vices and follies for which men are morally responsible.

Dickens' novels are satirical, running the entire scale from light burlesque to fierce invective. He attacks education, politics, law administration, sanitary conditions, mismanagement of workhouses, debtor's prisons, social vices and every defect of the society of his age.

Besides using irony, which has been previously analyzed, Dickens used contrast and ridicule, emphasis, reiteration and comparison to make his work a great piece of satire.
2.4.1. **Use of contrast and ridicule.**

Contrast and ridicule are two elements used by Dickens in his novels. These elements contribute to the development of satire which is one of the characteristics of his literary work.

First, I will try to explain Dickens’ use of contrast through some examples and taking into account the critics’ considerations.

Critics have pointed out that Dickens was the first English novelist that explored the modern city in its form as a metropolis, as a social fact and as a human landscape. Actually, Dickens took London city as a controlling element of the social world. In his novels we find descriptions of different parts of the city: the places where rich people live, the noisy and commercial streets and the poorest and dirtiest slums.

In the novel Bleak House there are many passages containing clear descriptive details that show a contrast between two scenes of human life. Let’s see what Dickens referred in the text below.

“And hence the stately old dame, taking Time by the forelock, leads him up and down the staircases and along the galleries and passages, and through the rooms, to witness before he grows any older that everything is ready; that floors are rubbed bright, carpets spread, curtains shaken out, beds puffed and patted, still-room and kitchen cleared for action—all things prepared as beseems the Dedlock dignity...
Dreary and solemn the old mansion looks, with so many appliances of habitation... Through some of the fiery windows, beautiful from without, and set, at this sunset hour, not in dull-grey stone but in a glorious house of gold...”

This was the description of one of the Dedlock's houses. It is clear that the Dedlock family was very respectable, proud and wealthy.

“But there were some streets in London where the sun never came. They were black, dirty streets where it was dangerous to walk... The oldest, dirtiest street, with the blackest, dirtiest houses was called Tom-All-Alone's. Nobody knew who Tom had been, but he must have been in Chancery. Poor people crowded into Tom-All-Alone's like rats into holes. Every miserable room was full. The poorest of these people was Jo, the crossing-sweeper. All he had was a broom. The money Jo earned from sweeping his crossing kept him alive.”

Here, Dickens refers to one of London slums in which very poor people lived because they had nowhere else to live. Jo is the poorest boy in Tom-All-Alone's and his unique wealth was a broom.

The two following descriptions from the novel Dombey and Son will reinforce the contrast previously established.

“The apartments which Mr. Dombey reserved for his own inhabiting, were attainable from the hall, and consisted of a sitting-room, a library, and a kind of conservatory or little glass breakfast-room beyond, commanding a prospect of the trees before mentioned, and, generally speaking, of a few prowling cats. These three rooms opened upon one another. In the morning, when Mr. Dombey was at his breakfast in one or other of the two first-mentioned of them, as well as in the afternoon when he came home to dinner, a bell was rung for Richards to repair to this glass chamber...”

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59 Charles Dickens. Dombey and Son. p.75-76.
The text presents us part of Mr. Dombey’s luxury and comfortable mansion.

Mr. Dombey was a very rich man.

Now, let’s turn our eyes upon a different landscape:

“A woman. A solitary woman of some thirty years of age; tall; well-formed; miserably dressed; the soil of many country roads in varied weather—dust, chalk, clay, gravel-clotted on her grey cloak by the streaming wet; no bonnet on her head, nothing to defend her black hair from the rain, but a torn handkerchief, with the fluttering ends of which, and with her hair, the wind blinded her so that she often stopped to push them back, and look upon the way she was going... Though her tread was bold and courageous, she was fatigued, and after a moment of irresolution, sat down upon a heap of stones.”

This passage shows how a poor woman, after walking during some days, sat down to rest upon some stones because, although it was raining, she did not have a place for shelter.

Basically, we realize that Dickens makes a contrast between two worlds: the world of the rich and the world of the poor. Actually, this difference between these two worlds is Dickens’ main concern.

Not only in Bleak House and Dombey and Son, but in the rest of Dickens’ novels, we find descriptions showing that different situations and conditions make the world unjust for the great part of human beings: the poor.

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60 Charles Dickens. Dombey and Son. p. 563.
Dickens’ use of ridicule is evident in most of his works since he made that some people, things or situations appear foolish, absurd and funny.

A good example of ridicule is found in the novel The Pickwick Papers, it is the chapter relating to the Elections in Eatanswill.

"It appears, then, that the Eatanswill people, like the people of many other small towns, considered themselves of the utmost and most mighty importance, and that every man in Eatanswill felt himself bound to unite, heart and soul, with one of the great parties that divided the town—the Blues and the Buffs...

If the Buffs proposed to new skylight the market-place, the Blues got up public meetings and denounced the proceeding; if the Blues proposed the erection of an additional pump in the High Street, the Buffs rose as one man and stood aghast at the enormity..." 61

In this way, Dickens presents us two political parties: the Blues and the Buffs. These are two parties of Eatanswill town. The name of the town, Eatanswill, suggests us something: eat and swill. The names of the political parties are two colors: blue and buff.

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61 Charles Dickens. The Pickwick Papers. p.188.
In the following text we find Mr. Pickwick and his friends, surrounded by a mob that roared triumph for one of the candidates.

“Slumkey forever!” roared the honest and independent.
“Slumkey forever!” echoed Mr. Pickwick, taking off his hat.
“No Fizkin!” roared the crowd.
“Certainly not!” shouted Mr. Pickwick.
“Who is Slumkey?” whispered Mr. Tupman.
“I don’t know,” replied Mr. Pickwick in the same tone.
“Hush. Don’t ask any questions. It’s always best on these occasions to do what the mob do.”
“But suppose there are two mobs?” suggested Mr. Snodgrass.
“Shout with the largest,” replied Mr. Pickwick.

Thus, Dickens ridiculed politics; the Eatanswill election results to be an amusing rural uproar where two political parties appear and whose unique difference is their color. Politics is seen like nothing more than a complicated and extravagant ceremony.

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2.4.2. Use of emphasis, reiteration and comparison.

Dickens used emphasis, reiteration and comparison as three special tricks that make his works become an interesting piece of satire.

Critics say that the repetition of words is a sign of interest and emotion: phonetic reiteration represents growing emphasis.

Emphasis is bound to reiteration since the reiteration or repetition creates the emphasis that Dickens places on some words and phrases destined to impart to the reader some information that helps him to discover what is going on.

In the novel Oliver Twist, we find that the strongest figure in the book is Fagin. Fagin, we can not forget, is “the Jew”. Throughout the novel he is called “the Jew” and remains as “the Jew” in our mind. Dickens’ emphasis and reiteration is expressed in his obsessive repetition of “the Jew”; clear examples are found in chapters nineteen and twenty-six, where we find the words “the Jew” fifty seven and fifty times respectively. Let’s see how Fagin appears in scene and from the very first moment is presented as “the Jew”.

“...In a frying-pan, which was on the fire, and which was secured to the mantel-shelf by a string, some sausages were cooking; and standing over them, with a toasting fork in his hand, was a very old shrivelled Jew, whose villainous-looking and repulsive face was obscured by a quantity of matted red hair.” 63

63 Charles Dickens. Oliver Twist. p. 58.
In all the chapters in which Fagin is seen, he is called “the Jew” and plays an important role in the novel since he is the villain.

In the novel Bleak House, Dickens enjoys making magic reiterations and giving special emphasis to some words and phrases. In the following text, we find Dickens using emphasis and reiterations.

“On such an afternoon, if ever, the Lord High Chancellor ought to be sitting here... On such an afternoon, some score of members of the High Court of Chancery bar ought to be-as here they are-mistily engaged in one of the ten thousand stages of an endless cause, tripping one another up on slippery precedents, groping knee-deep in technicalities, running their goat-hair and horse-hair warded heads against walls of words, and making a pretence of equity with serious faces, as players might. On such an afternoon, the various solicitors in the cause...” 64

One soon notice here the presence of three booming on such an afternoon. Dickens’ emphasis in that phrase prepares the reader for the facts that will take place in that day and that follow from that afternoon in the High Court of Chancery. Besides, we begin to realize that something obscure and mysterious is going to happen. We begin to have an idea of what the High Court of Chancery was, what happened there and who worked there. All the plot is constructed around the High Court of Chancery.

Dickens also used comparisons in all his novels. In a comparison there are two parts that have something in common. Dickens' comparisons make the reader aware of deeper and true aspects of some people, things and situations. The following examples of comparisons show us their importance for achieving a specific goal.

The first two quotations are taken from the novel Bleak House which is considered as a biting satire on English legal systems of his time.

"A narrow street of high houses, like an oblong cistern to hold the fog." 65

According to the previous description, we can see how the carriage, taking Esther, Ada and Richard to stay the night at Mrs. Jellyby's house, turns up "a narrow street of high houses, like an oblong cistern to hold the fog". Here, we find the characters' perception of London city as a new, strange and foggy landscape.

"Mr. Vholes, quiet and unmoved, as a man of so much respectability ought to be, takes off his close black gloves as if he were skinning his hands, lifts off his tight hat as if he were scalping himself, and sits down at his desk". 66

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Mr. Vholes appears as a very respectable lawyer; everything he does is intended to be a mark of respectability. His acuteness, steadiness, perseverance, seriousness and even the way in which he takes his gloves and hat off is a sign of his pretension to be a respectable learned man.

"The man said yes, and as they passed in, looked at Paul as if he were a little mouse, and the house were a trap". 67

This comparison is clearly understood when we read the novel Dombey and Son and discover that Paul actually felt like a little mouse in the educational establishment, managed by Dr. Blimber, who was famous for devoting all his energies to the study and treatment of infancy, where Mr. Dombey let Paul convinced that he would become a perfect and clever man. The child was six years old and instead of becoming a clever man, he soon became an ill, weak and unhappy creature that suffered in that trap because he was not able to understand the books that he was given, he was deprived of his sister's love and could not play and have the freedom he wished.

"It seemed just the night when it befitted such a being as the Jew to be abroad. As he glided stealthily along, creeping beneath the shelter of the walls and doorways, the hideous old man seemed like some loathsome reptile, engendered in the slime and darkness through which he moved: crawling forth, by night, in search of some rich offal for a meal". 68

68 Charles Dickens. Oliver Twist. p. 137.
The previous text shows the comparison between Fagin and a serpent. Immediately, the serpent give us the idea of wickedness; Fagin, the Jew has the role of villain in the novel Oliver Twist. Fagin is a thief, corrupter of the young, a devilish ringleader that glided along in the darkness do the night.

“It’s as dark as the grave”, said the man groping forward a few steps”. 69

Dark as the grave was Fagin’s den which was placed in the dirtiest, ugliest and strangest of the many localities hidden and unknown in London city; this dark den was reached after penetrating through a maze of close, narrow and muddy streets.

2.5. Charles Dickens' use of symbolism.

Literary symbolism comes about when the objects represented by the words stand for things other than themselves. The literary symbol appeals to the imagination and to the instinctive feelings of the reader.

Symbolism may be described as the art of expressing emotions not by describing them directly, nor by defining them through overt comparisons with concrete images, but by suggesting what these ideas and emotions are by recreating them in the mind of the reader through the use of unexplained symbols. These symbols help to convey a mood to the subconscious mind rather than an appeal to the rational faculties.

Symbols can be used in many ways. At one extreme, the symbolist writer can make use of symbols so purely private, personal and indeterminate that it is difficult for the reader to discover what is being suggested, and even the context cannot do much to help the symbols generate their meanings. But most symbols are not so private and personal as to leave the reader at a loss; many are close enough to be conventional, and many are able to generate some appropriate meanings in their contexts.

Critics have regarded Charles Dickens as a symbolist writer. Actually, symbolism is a mark of the power of his creation.
Dickens' symbolism is the aspect of his art that pulls its separate strands together. There is incidental symbolism throughout his work, but each of the mature novels is unified by a predominant symbol, often obvious enough and often socially weighted, like the train in Dombey and Son, the fog that envelopes the Chancery-ridden world of Bleak House, and so on; these are not only effective structural devices setting the social atmosphere, they also embody states of the mind and of the soul. To pay serious attention to such features in Dickens' writings is to realize that he gets his greatest achievement by being an entertainer, social critic and poet.
2.5.1. Use of symbols which permit the author to create the atmosphere that the plot requires.

Charles Dickens created symbols that enrich his literary work. The symbol of the novel Bleak House is the fog. Dickens presents us the fog in the first chapter as something that is invading the city.

"Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping, and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city...Fog covered the boats on the river and filled the boatmen's eyes. Street lamps sent a pale, yellow light through the thick, foggy air..."  

The previous description, in which fog appears everywhere, helps to create the appropriate atmosphere to develop the mysterious plot of the novel. Then, Dickens continues using the fog to treat a theme involving the High Court of Chancery and the Lord High Chancellor.

"The raw afternoon is rawest, and the dense fog is densest, and the muddy streets are muddiest, near that leaden-headed old obstruction, appropriate ornament for threshold of a leaden-headed old corporation: Temple Bar. And hard by Temple Bar, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, at the very heart of the fog, sits the Lord High Chancellor in his High Court of Chancery."

As Dickens mentions, the High Court of Chancery and the Lord High Chancellor, we feel that we can visualize the fog that envelopes in a greater way the Chancery environment. Let's see how his description continues.

"Never can there come fog too thick, never can there come mud and mire too deep, to assort with the groping and floundering condition which this High Court of Chancery, most pestilent of hoary sinners, holds, this day, in the sight of heaven and earth. On such an afternoon, if ever, the Lord High Chancellor ought to be sitting here-as he is-with a foggy glory round his head, ...and outwardly directing his contemplation to the lantern in the roof, where he can see nothing but fog."\(^{72}\)

The fog, that envelopes the High Court of Chancery, continues spreading itself throughout the novel until turning life into a great tribunal from which is impossible to escape and whose fog traps everybody.

The fog represents a universal force: the evil.

The symbol of the novel Dombey and Son is the train. The train represents the progress including all that it brings with it.

To see the railways as the agents of change was not particularly difficult. Their physical presence was obvious, in this decisive period of expansion. But what is remarkable is that Dickens uses their power both as a dramatic force and as a social agency.

His description of the disintegration of an old social world by this new kind of activity is striking enough:

\(^{72}\) Charles Dickens. Bleak House, p.2
"The first shock of a great earthquake had, just at that period, rent the whole neighbourhood to its centre. Traces of its course were visible on every side. Houses were knocked down; streets broken through and stopped; deep pits and trenches dug in the ground; enormous heaps of earth and clay thrown up; buildings that were undermined and shaking, propped by great beams of wood. Here, a chaos of carts, overthrown and jumbled together, lay topsy-turvy at the bottom of a steep unnatural hill; there, confused treasures of iron soaked and rusted in something that had accidentally become a pond...There were a hundred thousand shapes and substances of incompleteness, wildly mingled out of their places, upside down, burrowing in the earth, aspiring in the air, mouldering in the water, and unintelligible as any dream." 73

This is the way Dickens describes a terrible catastrophe more clearly explained in the following paragraph:

"In short, the yet unfinished and unopened Railroad was in progress; and, from the very core of all this dire disorder, trailed smoothly away, upon its mighty course of civilisation and improvement." 74

Dickens is here referring to the building of the London railway line, begun in 1834. The building operation demolished many houses in some slums, one of them was Camden Town. The line was opened in 1838, when the first train left Euston, London’s first terminal station; and in Chapter twenty, Mr. Dombey leaves precisely from this station on his journey to Leamington.

But, the slums of Camden Town were not the only victims of the railway revolution; Dickens’ old school, the Wellington House Academy in the Hampstead Road, was cut in half by the new development. That is why Dickens uses certain

73 Charles Dickens. Dombey and Son, p.120-121.
74 Charles Dickens. Dombey and Son, p.121.
expressions, as the following, to refer to the train: monster train, monster of the iron road, triumphant monster, indomitable monster, etc.

However, it is interesting to see the later chapters of the novel, in which the society is shown as reorganized, reorganizing itself, around this new force and method.

"As to the neighbourhood which had hesitated to acknowledge the railroad in its straggling days, that had grown wise and penitent, as any Christian might in such a case, and now boasted of its powerful and prosperous relation. There were railway patterns in its draper's shops, and railway journals in the windows of its newsmen. There were railway hotels, office-houses, lodging houses, boarding-houses; railway plans, maps, views, wrappers, bottles, sandwich-boxes and time-tables; railway hackney-coach and cab-stands; railway omnibuses, railway streets and buildings, railway hangers-on and flatters out of all calculation...
To and from the heart of this great change, all day and night, throbbing currents rushed and returned incessantly like its life's blood."  

Here, Dickens refers to the new power of the industrial revolution: the circulation by railway is the "life's blood". But there is also the sense of this power overriding other human habits and purposes; that sense which is confirmed, later, in:

"The power that forced itself upon its iron way-its own-defiant of all paths and roads, piercing through the heart of every obstacle, and dragging living creatures of all classes, ages, and degrees behind it, was a type of the triumphant monster, Death."  

It is at once the "life's blood" and the "triumpant monster, Death". Actually, year by year, the new railway technology was remaking London in its own image. In the different descriptive passages and in the plot itself, he responds to the real contradictions of Britain's new industrial power; its potential for creation and destruction, for life and death.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
1. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

After finishing this research, I have the following conclusions:

- Charles Dickens was one of the greatest English writers and indeed the most popular in the Victorian Age. Besides, he is an extraordinary representative of the Modern Universal Literature.

- Dickens’ literary work is a valuable document to know the Victorian England during a decisive transformation period in European History. But he went further, the message of his novel is a protest against the defects and injustices of his age.

- Dickens was a great creator, a great writer and a great actor; his originality and the literary devices he used gave him total success as all of them.

- Humor, irony, satire and symbolism are the key literary devices used by Charles Dickens in order to develop his protest message which is present in all his novels, especially in Bleak House, Dombey and Son, Oliver Twist and The Pickwick Papers.

- The characters of the Dickensian novel constitute the greatest gallery ever created. In his pages we find women, men and children too near to real human beings that it seems we can understand them, because their problems are the real problems people have.
As recommendations, I have considered necessary the following:

- It is recommended that the students of the Language Faculty be motivated to read a lot, especially English Literature which has great representatives such as Charles Dickens, one of the most popular writers of all time. This will help them to know and practice English grammatical structures as well as to discover and handle a large vocabulary. Besides, little by little they will realize that their capability and speed for reading will improve progressively and that to open a book is to walk by a road through which a variety of advantages will be discovered.

- It is recommended that students, who are trying to find a research topic to be developed successfully, take into consideration that one of the most important conditions is the availability of information about that topic. This condition is even more important when we talk about bibliographical investigations in which literary researches are included.

- It is recommended that further research works about Dickens' novels be realized since the study about his literary works has not finished. Many careful researches can be fulfilled and each one of them can constitute a new and valuable contribution.
Finally, I would recommend students who are in the two last levels of the Language Faculty to choose a theme for their research work relating to Literature after having taken into account two aspects:

1. Do they really like literature?
2. How many literary works are they going to analyze?

It is easy to say that we like Literature because immediately a beautiful story will come to our minds; but it is not very easy to read two, three or four complete novels of nine hundred pages and then analyze them.

Besides, when we begin a research work, we think we can easily include many literary works in it; however, when we have finished the fourth part of our investigation, we realize that we have been very ambitious and that time will become our enemy.
GLOSSARY

- **Humor:** Traditional literary style which is used in poetry, comedy, novel, etc. Humor is the quality of being amusing or comic; to appreciate and show things, situations or people that are comic.

- **Irony:** The term used to describe a contrast between what appears to be and what really is. In verbal irony the actual meaning of a statement is different, often opposite, from what the statement literally says.

- **Literary devices:** Group of means and techniques, etc, used by a writer to produce an effect on the reader and to give form and meaning to a literary work.

- **Novel:** A long work of prose fiction dealing with imaginary or historical characters, situations and settings that imitate those of real life.

- **Protest novel:** A type of novel which shows disapproval or disagreement against something already established that is considered unjust.
**- Realism:**
A way of representing life as it seems to the common reader. The material selected tends to represent, with almost photographic precision and detail, ordinary people in everyday speech, experiences and settings.

**- Satire:**
The technique that employs wit to ridicule a subject, usually some social institution or human foible, with the intention to inspire reform.

**- Style:**
The distinctive handling of language by an author. Style involves the specific choices made with regard to diction, syntax, figurative language, etc.

**- Symbolism:**
The use in literature of objects or events to represent something other than themselves, frequently abstract ideas or concepts.

**- Victorian Age:**
(1837-1901). The time spanned by the reign of Queen Victoria. It was one of the most varied and diverse periods in the history of English life and letters. It was a time characterized by energetic changes and a belief in progress.

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