reconciliation and forgiveness while the works of his earlier period have spirit of serenity, which lightness or sombre violence. It is neither melodramatic nor romantic in atmosphere. Here the author expresses his own views like a child with concreteness and symbolism. K. J. Fielding has rightly observed in his famous book, *The Critical Anatomy of 'Great Expectations'*:

> "Whatever may be true of some of the other novels, Dickens never depended less on 'bouncing the reader into accepting what was happening, nor more successfully and deliberately detached himself from his work so that it stands almost completely on its own, offering the reader what he can make of it for himself."

The title of the novel is not only suitable but also suggestive. The theme revolves round the great expectations of its chief characters, and especially the expectations of its hero, Pip. Not to say of this, the novel is a story allegorized. Mr. Jackson truly remarks, "Self-satisfied, mid-Victorian, British society buoyed itself up with as great 'expectations' of future wealth and glory as did poor, deluded Pip...."

The plot construction of the novel is also superb. Everything in the novel is under the control of the author. The plot opens out stage by stage till the end. But its opening is very marvellous and attractive. It is a very dramatic opening. *Great Expectations* is a masterpiece of verbal art, whether in narrative or description or in dialogues. "Almost

everything in *Great Expectations,*" says K. J. Fielding, "is done better than before."

Great Expectations is Dickens's curious and brilliant novel. "The entire drift of the story reveals how clearly Dickens had at last 'come to see that making his living by sticking labels on blacking bottles and rubbing shoulders with boys who were not gentlemen, was as little shameful as being the genteel apprentice in the office of Mr. Spenlow, or the shorthand writer recording the unending twaddle of the House of Commons and its overflow of electioneering bunk on the hustings of all the Eastonswills in the country."

T. A. Jackson remarks, "Both as art and as psychology it was poor counsel that Lytton gave in urging that the shaping of a lifetime in Estella be miraculously undone. Save for this though, *Great Expectations* is the most perfectly constructed and perfectly written of all Dickens's works. It should close with that misty moonlight scene in Miss Havisham's ruined garden, but, as Shaw suggests, with Pip and Estella then bidding each other a chastened farewell and Pip saying, 'Since that parting I have been able to think of her without the old unhappiness; but I have never tried to see her again, and I know, I never shall."

> "In spite of its theme of disillusion, *Great Expectations* is not in its pervading atmosphere a melancholy book. Not merely does it move to an ending of serene and twilight peace, but there are many scenes of high-spirited enjoyment and of the comic gusto Dickens had always been able to command even in the midst of his deepest despair. There is the child Pip's flight into a series of fantastic whoppers when Uncle Pumblechook is badgering him to tell what happened at his first visit to Miss Havisham's and he invents a picture of Miss Havisham sitting in a black velvet coach having cake and wine on gold plates while they feed veal cutlets from a silver basket to four large dogs, wave flags, and shout hurrahs. There is Mr. Wopsle's famous performance of *Hamlet*, with the Danish nobility represented by a noble boy in the wash-leather boots of a gigantic ancestor, a venerable Peer with a dirty face, who seemed to have risen from the people late in life, and the Danish chivalry with a comb in its hair and a pair of white silk legs presenting on the whole a feminine appearance, and the church in the graveyard scene resembling a 'small ecclesiastical wash house'. There is Trabb's boy imitating Pip's progress down the High Street by pulling up his shirt collar, twining his side hair, sticking an arm akimbo, smirking extravagantly and drawing, 'Don't know yah, don't know yah, 'pon my soul don't know yah!' There is Joe's description of how the robbers looted Pumblechook's shop : and they drinked his wine, and they partook of his wittles and they slapped his face, and they pulled his nose, and they tied him up to his bedpost, and they giv' him a dozen, and 'hey stuffed his mouth full of flowering annuals to prevent his crying out."

"But these joyous moments do not undermine the predominant seriousness of *Great Expectations* and its theme. As Pip and Estella, with

linked hands, leave that misty and forlorn garden of their childhood they are reminiscent of the parents of humanity exiled, but not utterly without hope, from another garden.

> The world was all before them, where to choose
> Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.
> They hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow.
> Through Eden took their solitary way.

From the view-point of characterization also, *Great Expectations* is a successful piece of art. The characters in this novel are much more real than those in his other novels. Estella and Biddy are better than anything he had done in portraying women before. The way in which Dickens weaves snobbery and sexual passion together is skillfully convincing. In Jagger's the master defender of criminals, and in Wemmick his confidential clerk, Dickens attempts at once a pair of surprising and diverting characters. Of the two, Wemmick with his passion for 'portable property', who is one man in Little Britain, another in Walworth, comes to life. Very real for the time she lasts, is Pip's domineering and shrewish sister, naturally known only as Mrs. Joe, who not only brought Pip up by hand, but also gave him the impression that she "must have made Joe Gargery marry her by hand." Joe himself, with his unshakable honesty and unwavering affection, grows on one, as Herbert Pocket, with his 'natural incapacity to do anything secret and mean'. Despite this Dickens makes the returned convict highly probable, even before he puts forward his life history. A deserted child, an outcast from the beginning, inevitably hardened under the prison system, what else was he likely to be? The passionate gratitude to Pip, curiously intermingled with the desire to thrust something of his own making upon the society which refused to recognise him, is perfectly in place in such a man. Possibly Dickens ought not to lay such stress on the change in Magwitch, after the search for him has begun. Surely the greater change takes place in Pip, and just because of this he sees his convict benefactor in another light.

Other qualities that make *Great Expectations* so great and so good are humour, pathos and the blend of these two. Dickens has made the novel more spicy by putting some touch of autobiography also. The language and the style all natural and the narration easy and spontaneous. The novel has been narrated by Pip in the first person.

Great Expectations is so rich in meaning and purpose that various interpretations to this have been given by critics. Humphrey House interprets it as 'a snob's progress'; Miller holds that it is a search for 'authentic self-hood'; Moynaham thinks that it is an expression of the [illegible] of 'great expectations', the outcome for the individual's

CHARACTER SKETCHES

(A) MAJOR CHARACTERS

(1) Pip
(2) Joe Gargery
(3) Miss Havisham
(4) Estella
(5) Biddy

(B) MINOR CHARACTERS

(1) Herbert
(2) Mrs. Joe
(3) Abel Magwitch
(4) Compeyson
(5) Pumblechook

CHARACTER SKETCHES

(1) MAJOR CHARACTERS

(1) Pip

Pip is undoubtedly one of the best drawn heroes of Dickens. He is the most naturally conceived of all his creations. He is brought up by hand by his sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery. Mrs. Joe Gargery treats him badly because he is an orphan. "I was always treated as if I had insisted on being born in opposition to the dictates of reason, religion and morality and against the dissuading arguments of my best friends." This is what Pip thinks of his existence. Pip, in fact, has no social prestige, no dignity of a human being. His is a childhood of reproach and shame. He is called 'small and flabby and mean' by Mrs. Joe Gargery.

In spite of his poor birth and breeding, Pip possesses a noble heart. He himself is interesting, and still more interesting are the ordeals through which he arrives at self-knowledge, realizes the value of what he has slighted in Joe Gargery and Biddy, and puts himself right at last with those faithful friends. According to Prof. Baker,

> "Pip's character-study is Dickens's one serious study of the growth of personality; and, though he lets Pip tell the story, he manages with great skill to bring out the true significance and the humour of the strange situations, without showing his own hand, and notably, without the heavy moralizing which Thackeray put in the mouth of his imaginary autobiographer in *Lovel the Widower,* which appeared this same year."

Pip is unlike David. His airs of dignity and condescension make him an easier prey to ridicule, and are the cause of untold anguish when he discovers the odious source of all his great expectations. He has a great disgust for Uncle Pumblechook and Orlick. He has his own impulses and his own childish fears. It is fear that prompts him to obey the dictates of the convict and to take victuals and a file to him.

Miss Havisham is the turning point in his life. It is his visit to Satis House, the house of Miss Havisham, that makes him determine everything which follows in his life. It brings great changes in his life. Pip himself says,

> "That was a memorable day to me, for it made great changes in me. But it is the same with any life. Imagine one selected day struck out of it and think how different its course would have been."

'The coarse and common labouring boy' becomes a young boy of great expectations. He begins to live like a gentleman. He is already

discontent with blacksmithy. The desire to possess Estella strikes deep roots in his boyish heart and begins to disturb his boyhood dreams.

His attitudes towards some people also change. He regards Miss Havisham as a beautiful angel who is bringing him up as a gentleman. He imagines that Miss Havisham is spending on him such a vast amount of money that it leaves no doubt about his marriage with Estella. He thinks all these great expectations come from Miss Havisham and her Satis House. Under this new inspiration and enthusiasm, he forms very wrong impressions about the people.

He rejects old gods and becomes ashamed of his home and the forge. The romantic flame of love for Estella consumes all his affection for angel-like Joe Gargery. He is very happy at his lot and declares about Miss Havisham:

> "She adopted Estella, she had as good as adopted me, and it could not fail to be her intention to bring us together. She reserved it for me to restore the desolate house, admit the sunshine into the dark rooms, set the clocks again and the cold hearths ablazing, tear down the cobwebs, destroy her varmint; in short, do all the shining deeds of the young knight of romance, and marry the Princess."

So, Pip becomes a Knight of romance. His desire to possess Estella gets stronger. Estella becomes the princess of his waking life and the queen of his dreams. In every moment of his life Estella has a major share. In a passionate utterance, he tells Estella,

> "You are part of my existence, part of myself. You have been in every line I have ever read, since I first came here, the rough common boy whose poor heart you wounded even then. You have been in every prospect I have ever seen since on the river, on the sails of the ships, on the marshes, in the clouds, in the light, in the darkness, in the wind, in the woods, in the sea, in the streets. You have been the embodiment of every graceful fancy that my mind has ever become acquainted with. The stones of which the strongest London buildings are made, are not more real, or more impossible to be displaced by your hands, than your presence and influence have been to me, there and everywhere, and will be."

Hence, it is as a lover that Pip appeals to the readers most. His love for Estella is true and deep. As he himself says, he loves her against reason, against promise, against peace, against hope, against happiness. He loves because he feels that he cannot live without making love to her. Though he always regards Estella as something greater than and superior to himself, yet he clings to the belief that sooner or later the real mind will conquer the artificial and a new Estella will come out of it.

Pip is an ardent lover. He says, "I saw her often in town, and I used often to take her and the Brandleys on the water; there were picnics, fete days, plays, operas, concerts, parties, all sorts of pleasures, through which I pursued her – and they were all miseries to me. I never had one hour's happiness in her society, and yet my mind all round the four-and-twenty hours was harping on the happiness of having her with me unto death."

But 'Pip's love for Estella,' says Prof. Miller, 'is by its very nature a self-deception, because it is a love which is based on its own impossibility. From the very beginning Estella looks down upon Pip like a cold star. Although Pip is aware of this fact and his pigmy existence, yet he imagines that he will succeed in bringing down the star from the sky and will be able to marry her. Of course, Pip marries Estella in the end. But what is the use of roses when the spring is over? Estella he marries is not the Estella of her youth.

> "She was no longer that roselike fresh blooming maiden, whom he had loved – but a shattered, frustrated, vanquished woman, staggering and creeping with the burden of shame and remorse on her shoulders."

At last Pip discovers that his real benefactor is not Miss Havisham, the representative of society, but Magwitch. "This discovery is a discovery of the self-deception of his great expectations, his recognition that they were based on an irreconcilable contradiction. Pip has been climbing slowly toward Estella and toward the freedom and security of gentility. Now the ladder has collapsed, and he finds himself back at his origin again, back where he was at the opening of the story." Now, he has discovered that the source of his *expectations* is not Miss Havisham, but that same convict. Moreover, he has discovered that Estella, the star of his expectations and the symbol of his desire for gentility is really the daughter of Magwitch. He is like a man lost in the woods who struggles for hours to find his way out, only to discover suddenly that he has returned by a circuitous route to the exact spot where he first realized that he did not know where he was."

Pip faces his downfall. He is thrown back on his initial isolation. From the height of great expectations, he is hurled down again into the abyss of disinheritance. Life to him becomes a walking shadow, a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing. At the end of the second stage of his expectations, he finds himself at the deepest point of his wretchedness. He feels that the ship in which he has been sailing so far, has now gone to pieces. But he remains faithful to Magwitch.

Pip has always been honest and sincere. He is sincere in his love, in his friendship and in his life. His friendship with Herbert is commendable. Pip's nature is painstaking. He is worried, yet he keeps his spirits on. His whole life in fact has been a tale of aspirations and ambitions, of expectations and disappointments, of miseries and troubles. But sweet are the uses of adversity. It is in the school of adversity that Pip gets his first lessons and is united to Estella never to depart again.

(2) Joe Gargery

Joe Gargery is one of the most representative characters of Dickens. He typifies his pure and good characters. As known to all readers, Dickens can portray characters only good or bad. So Joe Gargery is an angelic character. He is a man with an innocent soul. His innocence is undoubtedly childlike. His mission of life is like that of a bishop. Biddy calls him "worthy, worthy man." Never was there a truer example of what has been called a "Nature's gentleman".

Joe is a sublime creature. He is far away from greed and selfishness. He regards life as a comfortable journey. So he travels in his life slowly and patiently. He is never on the horns of dilemma. He never stands as a rebel to circumstances. But he obeys every dictation of Fate. He is god-fearing and just. He is never tyrannical against anybody.

"There is a veritable sublimity in such goodness of heart and utter selfishness, such sweetness of disposition, and humility combined with a proud self-respect that it sounds superhuman. But Joe is credible; the man lives." (Baker) He is, indeed, one of the most lovable creatures ever born on the earth.

Joe is a blacksmith. He marries Pip's sister. He is a fair man with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with eyes of such a very undecided blue that they seem to have somehow got mixed with their own whites. He is a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going dear fellow—a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness. He always performs his duty with a strong hand, a quiet tongue, and a gentle heart.

Joe has a deep love for Pip. He takes delight in Pip's childish pranks. When Pip, first, learns the alphabet from Biddy, and writes a letter to Joe, Joe receives it as a miracle of erudition. He calls him a great scholar and inspires him to read. Joe's early education was neglected because his father was given to drinking and did not care for him. So Joe had to earn his livelihood and feed his mother and himself.

Joe has an admirable and unshakable honesty and unwavering affection for his wife. Though his wife is an ill tempered lady, yet he always appreciates her and tells Pip, "Your sister is a fine figure of a woman." After her death, he grows more calm and serious and becomes a picture of misery. When Biddy enters the sad life of Joe, happiness again wooes Joe. Pip also tells Biddy, "Dear Biddy, you have the best husband in the whole world."

Joe's love for Pip reflects in his service to Pip. When Pip falls ill, Joe serves him tenderly like a nurse and affectionately like a mother. He sits beside him all day and night and pays off all his bills. Pip says about him,

> "After I had turned the worst point of my illness, I began to notice that while all its other features changed this one consistent feature did not change. Whoever came about me, still settled down into Joe. I opened my eyes in the night, and I saw in the great chair at the bedside, Joe. I opened my eyes in the day, and sitting on the window-seat, smoking his pipe in the shaded open window, still I saw Joe. I asked for cooling drink, and the dear hand that gave it me was Joe's. I sank back on my pillow after drinking,and the face that looked so hopefully and tenderly upon me was the face of Joe."

Joe has a forgiving temper. He is a true Christian. He possesses the Christian virtues of love, simplicity, and sincerity. Dickens loved integrity and reverence and goodwill and he made Joe a mouthpiece for them. Although Pip in London looks down upon Joe and forgets him under the banner of great expectations, yet Joe is not revengeful upon

him. His is an unwavering affection for Pip. He rushes to the rescue and help of Pip as soon as he hears of him.

Joe's homely philosophy is contained in his teaching to Pip, "Pip, dear old chap, life is made of ever so many partings welded together, as I may say, and one man's a blacksmith, and one's a whitesmith, and one's a goldsmith, and one's coppersmith. Divisions among such must come, and must be met as they come. If there's been any fault to-day at all, it's mine. You and me is not two figures to be together in London; not yet anywhere else but what is private,and be known, and understood among friends. It is not that I am proud, but that I want to be right, as you shall never see me no more in these clothes. I'm wrong out of the forge, the kitchen, or off the meshes. You won't find half so much fault in me if, supposing as you should ever wish to see me, you come and put your head in at the forge window and see Joe the blacksmith, there, at the old anvil, in the old burnt apron, sticking to the old work. I'm awful dull, but I hope, I've beat you something nigh the rights of this at last. And so God bless you, dear old Pip, old chap God bless you!" In this way Joe's attitude towards life is simple and elemental.

Though Joe is very humble and meek, yet he never loses his self-respect. He is proud of his own profession and simple life. When Pip suggests to Biddy that he might 'remove Joe into a higher sphere,' she says, "He may be too proud to let any one take him out of a place that he is competent to fill, and fills well and with respect." Joe is not prepared to accept so readily a change in his status as Pip does. A change in status to Joe would mean an affront to his pride and independence. However, his portrait has been drawn by the author very successfully.