CHAPTER-III
DAVIDCOPPERFIELD

David Copperfield (1849-50) has been universally acclaimed as the masterpiece of Charles Dickens. In the introduction of the primary text Dickens himself says, “Of all my books, I like this best” (I). The ethos of David Copperfield stands as a proof for Dickens’s consummate artistry. The novel traces the biography of Dickens’s mental landscape. The accompanying imagery of this autobiographical novel is rich with elements of nature such as the sun, the moon, and the five elements. Water and land play a vital role in portraying the inner nature of the characters. The meaning of the novel and the insight into the psyche of the characters involved can be apprehended by the exploration of the imagery.

The novel begins with the birth of a child, but the birth is preceded by the demise of father. David is born with a caul. He says, “I was born with a caul, which was advertised for sale, in the newspapers, at the low price of fifteen guineas” (5). Being born with a caul is the symbol of good fortune. The common belief is that the babies born with a caul will escape from drowning, a very prevalent form of death in this novel. A caul is also said to indicate the psychic ability i.e. the ability of David to cross the hurdles in his life to reach the end. At the beginning of the novel itself the novelist strikes down the contrasting elements: the water and the land. These two elements play a vital role in throwing certain psychological light upon the characters. The very fact that David’s father is lying buried under the grave makes David’s life dark and dismal and he has a groping sensation in understanding the world. In Tamil literature there is a saying that the duty of a mother is to give birth to a baby and that of a father is to make him or her wise for the world. Here David lacks fatherly guidance. He associates the earth element with the imprisonment of his father and feels bad for locking the door against the solitary graveyard, opposite to his house. He says:
My father's eyes had closed upon the light of this world six months, when mine opened on it. There is something strange to me, even now, in the reflection that he never saw me; and something stranger yet in the shadowy remembrance that I have of my first childish associations with his white grave-stone in the churchyard, and of the indefinable compassion I used to feel for it lying out alone there in the dark night, when our little parlour was warm and bright with fire and candle, and the doors of our house were—almost cruelly, it seemed to me—sometimes-bolted and locked against it. (6)

David Copperfield is a posthumous child born six months after his father's death. Mr. Copperfield has tried to set himself up as a country gentleman by calling his home Blunderstone Rookery. Here the Rookery is placed on the old elm tree before his house. Thus the death of Mr. Copperfield can be associated with the destroyed old elm trees by the wind. David says,

As the elms bent to one another, like giants who were whispering secrets, and after a few seconds of such repose, fell into a violent flurry, tossing their wild arms about, as if their late confidences were really too wicked for their peace of mind, some weather beaten ragged old rooks'-nests, burdening their higher branches, swung like wrecks upon a stormy sea. (8-9)

After eating the forbidden fruit of knowledge, Adam and Eve are driven out of the Garden of Eden. The Tree in Genesis is a Tree of Life before the fruit is eaten, but after the fruit is eaten, it becomes a Tree of Death, as Adam and Eve are driven out of the Garden of Eden. On the other hand, the tree is also an important archetype. The symbolism of the tree connotes the life of cosmos, its consistence, growth and proliferation, generative and regenerative process. But in David Copperfield the elm tree acts as a tree of death in the case of Mr. Copperfield. In Hardy’s Far From the Madding Crowd the elm tree is shown
as a sacred one and it is a guardian tree. When Fanny dies her coffin is tied to a huge elm
tree that guards Fanny in her death. But in *David Copperfield*, the destroyed branches of
the elm trees symbolise the lack of fatherly guidance in David’s life. In Tony Morrison’s
*Beloved* the most damaging of all tree theme is the ‘tree’ grown on Sethe’s back, a
physical reminder of brutal treatment that left on her flesh a lasting scar reminiscent of a
chokecherry tree. Sethe’s back is implanted with the tree of death. Here this tree reflects
both the individual and the collective sorrow. Similarly in *David Copperfield* the
destroyed old elm tree represents the individual sorrow of David. Usually birds stand for
the free, bright, beautiful and fanciful atmosphere. The destroyed rookery symbolises the
banished stage of beauty and light in the house after the death of Mr. Copperfield.

David’s life is spent in idyllic happiness, surrounded by the loving and devoted
women of his house, his mother and Clara Peggotty. Clara Peggotty is more than a
servant; a companion, friend and an advisor. Into this idyllic existence comes Mr. Edward
Murdstone, whom David dislikes and mistrusts instinctively. Dickens explains the idyllic
existence of the family through the fruits in their garden. “… and where my mother
gathers some in a basket, while I stand by, bolting furtive gooseberries and trying to look
unmoved” (17). The rich ripened fruits show the blooming love between David and his
mother. Similarly, Emily Bronte in her *Wuthering Heights* has used the bloomed apple
tree to show the love between Cathy and Hareton. In *Great Expectations*, the change of
the season, where in the winter comes and the summer goes is used to show the happiness
of the family which is to be short lived because of the entry of Mr. Murdstone. “A great
wind rises, and the summer is gone in a moment. We are playing in the winter twilight,
dancing about the parlour” (17). as soon as Mr. Murdstone enters the house things
become awful in Blunderstone Rookery. For David the house in the land is associated
with worries and separations in the form of Murdstone. He is very much affected by
Murdstone’s cruel behavior. Animal imagery is used to show how he treats David. David says, “I very soon started back from there, for the empty dog-kennel was filled up with a great dog- deep mouthed and black-haired like Him-and he was very angry at the sight of me, and sprang out to get at me” (39). Not only Murdstone, but also his sister, Miss Murdstone comes to the Blunderstone Rookery. David says,

   It was Miss Murdstone who was arrived, and a gloomy-looking lady she was; dark, like her brother, whom she greatly resembled in face and voice; and with very heavy eyebrows, nearly meeting over her large nose, as if, being disabled by the wrongs of her sex from wearing whiskers, she had carried them to that account. She brought with her two uncompromising hard black boxes, with her initials on the lids in hard brass nails. When she paid the coachman she took her money out of a hard steel purse, and she kept the purse in a very jail of a bag which hung upon her arm by a heavy chain, and shut up like a bite. I had never, at that time, seen such a metallic lady altogether as Miss Murdstone was. (43)

Miss Murdstone’s rigid and terrifying behaviour towards the people in the house are shown through her possessions, like the hard black boxes, hard steel purse and the heavy chain. The evil in Miss Murdstone is transparent by her initials in hard brass nails on the hard black box a contrast to Miss Peggotty’s with St. Paul’s image on the lid. After the arrival of Murdstone, David’s position becomes hopeless, and he is wallowing in a bog of nonsense. David says, “I could have done very well if I had been without the Murdstones; but the influence of the Murdstones upon me was like the fascination of two snakes on a wretched young bird” (49). The image of the serpent destroying the Edenic garden’s heavenly bliss is brought out by the image of two snakes killing a young bird. The young bird is David who is living in perfect rapport with his mother and Miss Peggotty. The image of the two serpents killing the two birds is derived from the fact that the place they
are living a rookery, an abode of many birds. David is treated as though he is less than human. Murdstone treats him like a dog and David behaves like a dog. As David is treated like an animal by Murdstones, his only anchoring place is Yarmouth. He goes to Yarmouth with Miss Peggotty.

David’s mother is another child in the hands of Miss Peggotty, a strong minded woman. David wants the flow of life, which involves the fluid understanding of the rigid world and Miss Peggotty is able to fill up the vacant mind of David with her love and affection. The role of father is played by Miss Peggotty. She makes David come out from the four walls and visit the sea. His trip to Yarmouth is rather an exploration of the world beyond his narrow atmosphere. The idyll of Blunderstone is limited to the domestic sphere, but Yarmouth looks like a lively pre-industrial community which, Miss Peggotty describes, “…is the finest place in the Universe” (28). David describes it as Edenic, timeless, classless and innocent without the knowledge of good and evil. His loss of hope; affection; of rapport with his mother are reflected when he enjoys the Yarmouth sea. It gives some solace to the mind of David who is in a helpless position. David says,

   It looked rather spongy and soppy, I thought, as I carried my eye over the great dull waste that lay across the river; and I could not help wondering, if the world were really as round as my geography book said, how any part of it came to be so flat. But I reflected that Yarmouth might be situated at one of the poles; which would account for it.

As we drew a little nearer, and saw the whole adjacent prospect lying a straight low line under the sky, I hinted to Peggotty that a mound or so might have improved it; and also that if the land had been a little more separated from the sea, and the town and the tide had not been quite so much mixed up, like toast and water, it would have been nicer. But Peggotty said, with greater emphasis than
usual, that we must take things as we found them, and that, for her part, she was proud to call herself a Yarmouth Bloater. (27)

He enjoys great liberty in the presence of water as water gives buoyancy and spiritual elevation for David. Similarly in Ernest Hemingway’s work *The Sun Also Rises* when Jake leaves Pamplona for San Sebastian, he wants nothing more than to swim in the ocean. The water revives and strengthens him, and he feels buoyant and supported.

David is a person living internally. He is not being taken away by external attractions. People who live internally live a life of thinking and meditation. The image of meditative David talks about the travel into the inner psyche. The Prominent image associated with David is water, which appears in the form of river and sea. The image of water is highly symbolic of the narrator’s travel into the psyche. Water is always wedded to meditation. The Hindu *Matsya Purana* narrates an event in the life of the hoary immortal sage Markandeya, who moves in the dream-body of Vishnu. Vishnu unfolded a new consciousness in him—a vision of a toe-biting child floating on the oceans. The child calls him by his first name without the respect due to a hoary sage. The offended Markandeya asks who he is. The child says:

> I am the Primeval cosmic Man, Narayana. He is the waters; he is the first of beings, the source of the Universe. The magical deception of Cosmic Yogi and the Yogas, the ages of the world. This display of the mirage of the Universe is the world of my creative aspect. But at the same time I am whirlpool, that destructive Vortex that sucks back whatever has been displayed and puts an end to everything that exists. My name is the death of the Universe. (*Zimmer* 44-45)

The aquatic realm is the realm of initiation where even the greater sage Naradha gets initiated to higher knowledge. When Naradha requests Vishnu to show the elusive and illusionary nature of the world, Vishnu bids Naradha to fetch water from a nearby river.
On the way to the river Naradha forgets his bidding and eventually becomes a *Grahasta* (a family man). There is a great deluge, and his house, wife and children are washed away. While Naradha is shouting for help, Vishnu appears before him saying, “This is what is meant by *Maya* or life or illusion.” David feels happy in the presence of water. His meditation upon certain things is beyond the dreams of ordinary men. His presence is both physical and spiritual whenever he is at the river side. At that moment he is withdrawn from the outside world. He is away from the world of reality. His detached way of looking at things makes him feel aloof from the other scenes around him. For those people like David, sea or water space is a place of transformation. The river Lethe is the river of forgetfulness where the memory is completely erased for the dead person. The conscious mind is surrounded by a fluid energy and this is unconscious.

The boat-house gives David the idea of travelling in the far away sea safely with no danger and the sense of security that David lacks at his own home. The very sight of the boat elevates the soul of David and it looks like Aladdin’s Wonderful magic lamp.

There was a delightful door cut in the side, and it was roofed in, and there were little windows in it; but the wonderful charm of it was, that it was a real boat which had no doubt been upon the water hundreds of times, and which had never been intended to be lived in, on dry land. That was the captivation of it to me. If it had ever been meant to be lived in, I might have thought it small, or inconvenient, or lonely; but never having been designed for any such use, it became a perfect abode. (28)

Cast out of the rookery, having lost his family, he seeks to re-establish his identity by finding a new family and a new rookery. The boat-house becomes his fundamental emblem of the domestic idyll, ‘the perfect abode’. Peggotty’s life in a boat which lies on the sands close by the sea makes this place a part of nature. The smallness of the boat
makes it a child’s paradise. The image of the boat always stands for the safe travel amidst
the chaotic forces of nature. The boat house of Mr. Peggotty is like Noah’s ark carrying
the life principle to future. Here as David lives in his mental orientation the threatening
chaotic forces which endangers life is conquered by his creativity which is yet to take
shape. But the artist in David gets his first glimpse of hopefulness about the future at the
very sight of the house in the form of boat. The sight of the paintings hanging upon the
walls of the house reveals to him many vistas of the mythological past. The Biblical
imagery hanging on the walls shows to David’s young mind a new way to be explored in
the future, and he does it through his artistic creation. David is enchanted not only by
these visual feasts, but also by the satisfaction of his olfactory sensations. Similarly in
Dickens’s *Bleak House* Esther’s room in old fashioned Bleak House represents its own
idyllic nature in pastoral scenes of ladies in short waists and large hats tied under the chin
making hay. David says:

> It was beautifully clean inside, and as tidy as possible. There was a table, and a
Dutch clock, and a chest of drawers, and on the chest of drawers there was a tea-
tray with a painting on it of a lady with a parasol, taking a walk with a military-
looking child who was trundling a hoop. The tray was kept from tumbling down
by a Bible; and the tray, if it had tumbled down, would have smashed a quantity of
cups and saucers and a teapot, that were grouped around the book. On the walls
there were some common coloured pictures, framed and glazed, of Scripture
subjects; such as I have never seen since in the hands of pedlars, without seeing
the whole interior of Peggotty’s brother’s house again, at one view. Abraham in
red going to sacrifice Isaac in blue, and Daniel in yellow cast into a den of green
lions, were the most prominent of these. Over the little mantelshelf, was a picture
of the *Sarah Jane* lugger, built at Sunderland, with a real little wooden stern stuck
on to it; a work of art, combining composition with carpentry, which I considered to be one of the most enviable possessions that the world could afford. There were some hooks in the beams of the ceiling, the use of which I did not divine then; and some lockers and boxes and conveniences of that sort, which served for seats and eked out the chairs. (29)

David is impressed by the name of Ham and asks Mr. Peggotty, Clara Peggotty’s brother, whether the name is given to him in association with an ark. Surprisingly he comes to know that Ham’s father is dead and rather drowned and the name indeed is in association with an ark. Then a reference is made to Emily and he gets the knowledge that Emily’s father is also dead and drowned. Mrs. Gummidge, a widow, is another orphaned lady. The boat being the home is rather exactly like Noah’s ark giving haven to so many destitute and helpless people. The boat house symbolises the preservation of life in the chaotic world of death and decay. Here the boat is a creative force or vehicular force. In *The Bible*, Genesis recounts how God determines to destroy the world with flood for its evil. Only the good Noah is to be saved (Genesis 6:14) by building an ark. When the flood recedes the Ark settles safely on the top of the Mount Ararat (Genesis 8:4). Dickens views Mr. Peggotty as a man of Noah’s stamp rescuing the orphans like Emily, Ham and Mrs. Gummidge from the destructive element of water. This reveals Mr. Peggotty’s quality of strength, stability and endurance. Similarly Hardy’s *Far From the Madding Crowd* describes Gabriel Oak’s hut as a small Noah’s ark, where the shepherd takes the new lambs into his tiny “ark” from winter’s chilly grasp. Sleep steels David but he is disturbed within due to the wind howling out at the sea which is the premonition the unconscious gives him about the troubles he will face in the future. “As slumber gradually stole upon me, I heard the wind howling out at sea and coming on across the flat so fiercely, that I had a lazy apprehension of the great deep rising in the night. But I
bethought myself that I was in a boat, after all; and that a man like Mr. Peggotty was not a bad person to have on board if anything did happen” (32).

In the morning, when David opens his eyes he sees the sun rise in the oyster shell frame of his mirror. He feels as if he is born from the depth of the sea. Mirrors manifest the psyche of the characters i.e. one’s feelings and desires. The rays of the sun symbolise happy and bright atmosphere. Thus the sunrays on the mirror reflect David’s joy and hope in getting a new family. He plays with Emily picking the stones in the sand. His playing with Emily reveals certain aspects of her character. “We went on again, picking up shells and pebbles” (23). The stone symbolises Emily’s selfish and narrow mind in becoming a lady on the land without caring her lovable uncle and the family. Similarly in Tagore’s *Mukthadhara* the stones in the dam represent a narrow minded Uttara Kuttian. They are dark, mundane shells of the scattered human beings, each imprisoned in its own narrowness. There is no promise of future for David and he is also not ambitious about life. He takes life as it is as he lives internally in his mind. But Emily is a girl who wants to go away from the dangerous sea life and become a lady in the future. “She started from my side, and ran along a jagged timber which protruded from the place we stood upon, and overhung the deep water at some height, without the least defence” (33). Here the wood symbolises the destructive nature, where Emily is going to destroy her life by joining hands with Steerforth. Another aspect of Emily’s character is revealed through her blue Eyes. David says, “I was running on, very fast indeed, when my eyes rested on little Emily's face, which was bent forward over the table, listening with the deepest attention, her breath held, her blue eyes sparkling like jewels, and the colour mantling in her cheeks” (123). Here the blue colour stands for her life at sea. Lord Krishna’s eyes which are blue in colour indicate his pervasive nature. Blue is the colour of the infinite space as well as the infinite ocean in which he resides. On the other hand the motif of the blue eyes
in the case of Emily acts as a background explanation for the subconscious desire of
Emily to lead a standard life on land. Similarly in Tony Morrison’s *The Bluest Eyes*
Pecola wants to exchange her physical eyes for the bluest eyes, believing that her life will
be better and that she will be attractive to others if she receives them. Like Emily her
desire does not come true and she finally becomes mad. The fortnight passes very soon
and David feels sad on parting from little Emily and the other people of the boat.

After returning from Yarmouth David is shocked to see many changes in his
house. His bed room is totally changed. He finds the room with the bundle of odd things.
David says,

I thought of the oddest things. Of the shape of the room, of the cracks in the
ceiling, of the paper on the walls, of the flaws in the window-glass making ripples
and dimples on the prospect, of the washing-stand being rickety on its three legs,
and having a discontented something about it, which reminded me of
Mrs. Gummidge under the influence of the old one. I was crying all the time, but,
except that I was conscious of being cold and dejected, I am sure I never thought
why I cried. (40)

David’s desperate position in the hands of Murdstones is symbolised through the cracks
in the ceiling, the flaws in the window-glass and the washing-stand which is likely to
collapse. This reflects the indescribable trauma of suffering of David. Imagery is used in
literature to refer to the descriptive language that evokes sensory experience. Here the
description of the room reflects the loneliness and an unfriendly atmosphere for David.
Thus the room symbolises his alienation. The similar situation is found in *Jane Eyre*,
where Jane’s red room symbolises the alienation of Jane. David is beaten regularly by
Murdstones for various reasons. While being beaten, David bites the hand of
Mr. Murdstone. As a punishment, he is imprisoned in his room for five days. One night
Miss Peggotty whispers to David through the key hole which is the medium of communication for them. She tells him that he is going to be sent to school next day. She says, “Be as soft as a mouse, or the cat’ll hear us” (54). Here the evil and the cunning nature of Murdstone is symbolised by the cat. In Indian mythology cat is the symbol of ill omen. God Indra takes the form of a cat after seducing Agaligai, the wife of a saint. Cats are often viewed as the serpents of the underworld and they also symbolise cunningness, fore thought and ingenuity. Thus Murdstone’s cunningness in sending David to the school called Salem House is revealed.

David’s next stage of life is in London away from his home. During his journey he feels very lonely and he is like a stranger to each and every place. This loneliness suppresses his worries. But he is temporarily kept away from his worries by the music of the flute, from the alms house, which is near his school. Here the music is like the painkiller to David and it takes him somewhere to the blissful heaven. “I don’t know what the tunes were—if there were such things in the performance at all, which I doubt—but the influence of the strain upon me was, first, to make me think of all my sorrows until I could hardly keep my tears back; then to take away my appetite; and lastly, to make me so sleepy that I couldn't keep my eyes open” (67). The music fills entirely the depths of our consciousness. This signifies a movement from attachment to complete detachment.

Lord Krishna in The Mahabharatha casts a spell over the animals and humans and makes them feel the flux by playing the flute. The same alienation chases David away after the death of Dora, and in the separation of Emily, Miss Peggotty, Dannel Peggotty and Micawber’s family when they migrate to Australia. Here also he is soothed by music which is not earthly. David says,

In the quiet air, there was a sound of distant singing-shepherd voices; but, as one bright evening cloud floated midway along the mountain's-side, I could almost
have believed it came from there, and was not earthly music. All at once, in this serenity, great Nature spoke to me; and soothed me to lay down my weary head upon the grass, and weep as I had not wept yet, since Dora died!. (685)

The musical flow is like the flow of water which is a mode of escape to David from the miserable land life. Music is used as a metaphor in Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*. The characters get a sense of consolation when they listen to the music or when they sing songs. The break in one’s consciousness is soothed by music. Claudia narrates that her mother sings whenever she wants to get relieved from the pain of the past. Once when Claudia falls ill, her sister feels for her sickness and expresses her sorrow through her song.”When the deep purple falls over sleep garden walls, someone thinks of me…” (9).

Poland, the whore gets a sense of relief through singing songs. In all these cases the break in consciousness is soothed by music. Thus London is a haven for David, the city being the antithesis of the pastoral idyll. On the other hand, he frees himself from the clutches of Murdstones by moving towards London, where Salem House offers a house, a sanctuary. Similarly in E.M. Foster’s *The Longest Journey*, Cambridge offers a haven for Rickie where he feels liberated from his father’s house. David reaches Salem House, where the condition of the school is focused by David by using animal imagery.

Some silkworms' houses, made of the same materials, are scattered over the desks. Two miserable little white mice, left behind by their owner, are running up and down in a dusty castle made of pasteboard and wire, looking in all the corners with their red eyes for anything to eat. A bird, in a cage very little bigger than himself, makes a mournful rattle now and then in hopping on his perch, two inches high, or dropping from it; but neither sings nor chirps.(68)

The image of the bird in a cage reminds David of his own miserable condition. The heap of decay is seen in the form of unwholesome smell in the room, the rotten
books, dirty floors reflect the miserable condition of the boys in the school. The birds that
neither sing nor chirp symbolise the lack of freedom of the boys inside the school, where
the birds symbolise the freedom of thoughts and actions. In the beginning David is very
much ill treated and neglected by the boys and the school masters. As a punishment for
his misbehavior with Murdstones i.e. biting his hands, a placard is placed on his back
with the statement ‘Take care of him. He bites’. David finds the total absence of human
recognition in the eyes of the boys. This incident makes David feel ashamed of himself.
He becomes the scape goat of their own humiliation and pain. David is relieved of this
shameful writing by Steerforth and for this kindness David is indebted to him forever. He
always protects David from the mockery of other boy’s. He says, “I thought of him very
much after I went to bed, and raised myself, I recollect, to look at him where he lay in the
moonlight, with his handsome face turned up, and his head reclining easily on his arm”
(77). The moon acts as a motherly figure for David in the form of Steerforth from whom
he derives strength and to whom he resorts for guidance whenever he is in a dilemma.
Tommy Traddles is another boon companion to David in Salem House. Dickens explains
the theme of mortality through the character of Traddles. For the other boy’s offence of
breaking the school windows, Traddles is blamed and he is imprisoned in the churchyard
and despised by the congregation where he is not the real offender. He loses his control
and draws the skeleton figure symbolising that caning could not last forever. In another
incident when he hears the death of David’s mother he draws the skeletons in a sheet of
paper and gives to David. “I don't know what good he thought it would do me, for I had
one of my own: but it was all he had to lend, poor fellow, except a sheet of letter-paper
full of skeletons; and that he gave me at parting, as a soother of my sorrows and a
contribution to my peace of mind” (107). The above symbolism stresses the theme of
mortality that nothing is permanent in the world. Everyone has to face his or her end at
one stage. In Hindu mythology Lord Shiva wears the garland of skulls which reminds man that death comes to all.

David is brought home after the death of his mother. He gets a strange feeling in going home, when it is not at all a home. The drowning of David’s happy home is brought out by using the rooks in the nest. “…soon I was at our house, where the bare old elm-trees wrung their many hands in the bleak wintry air, and shreds of the old rooks’-nests drifted away upon the wind” (94). David’s mother, Peggotty and David are compared to the rooks in their nests. The happiness of these birds in their nests is shattered by the cruel wind, Murdstones. David’s association with the nest and birds carries him away from being an earth-bound person. It reveals his wish to fly away from the harsh realities of life. It is reminiscent of James Joyce’s hero Stephen Dedalus who will like to have wings like his mythical counterpart and fly. David’s sorrow reaches its peak, when he hears his mother’s death. This makes him float in another orientation, where “I thought of the little baby, who, Mrs. Creakle said, had been pining away for some time, and who, they believed, would die too. I thought of my father's grave in the churchyard, by our house, and of my mother lying there beneath the tree I knew so well” (106). “Events of later date have floated from me to the shore where all forgotten things will reappear, but this stands like a high rock in the ocean” (113). David’s mind is here visualized like a sea shore where different waves will come and go. But the thought of his father and mother is like a constant rock amidst the changing scenario of the waves. This mental orientation to the parental figures, though they are dead, strengthens David. David’s situation as an orphan is aptly brought out by Dickens by using sea and wind imagery, where David recollects the days of his visit to Yarmouth. The reader is reminded of W.B.Yeats’, A Prayer for My daughter where the father imagines that unimagined
troubles will trouble his daughter, when he hears the roaring wind outside his house, when he is rocking the cradle of his daughter. David says,

I lay down in the old little bed in the stern of the boat, and the wind came moaning on across the flat as it had done before. But I could not help fancying, now, that it moaned of those who were gone; and instead of thinking that the sea might rise in the night and float the boat away, I thought of the sea that had risen, since I last heard those sounds, and drowned my happy home. I recollect, as the wind and water began to sound fainter in my ears, putting a short clause into my prayers, petitioning that I might grow up to marry little Em'ly, and so dropping lovingly asleep. (123)

The sea spoils the happiness of Emily and Ham by drowning their fathers, and making them orphans. On hearing the roaring sound of the sea David is reminded of his orphanhood. The wind moans for his orphanage. In Hindu mythology wind is considered to be one of the five bhuthas, giant forms of nature, by which our body and universe are made up of. The divine is converted into human through the agencies of bhuthas, the elements. A song from Kamba Ramayana elucidates this. It is about Hanuman, the son of the wind who crosses the sea through air to save Sita, an earthborn goddess. He sets fire to Lanka, where she is imprisoned by her abductor. The Holy Spirit is associated with dove, wind and lightning. In the spiritualized mythical world wind is the mediator between Heaven and Earth. It acts as nature’s messenger. In David Copperfield the mournful wind predicts the death of David’s mother. Thus Dickens uses the wind to predict the misfortune in David’s life. Similarly in Hardy’s Far From the Madding Crowd the novelist uses the wind to predict the troubles in Gabriel Oak’s life. First Bathsheba rejects his love and he is also ruined financially. Since David looses all his dear ones he feels very much alienated in the large world. He falls into a state of neglect and a solitary
condition apart from all friendly notice, apart from the society of all other boys of his own age and apart from all companionship.

Mr. Quinion, Murdstone’s friend, comes to his house. Murdstone tells David that Mr. Quinion is in charge of the business of Murdstone and Grinby in the wine trade and that he is ready to employ David where he would get a chance to earn money. The next day, Murdstone in spite of David’s disinterestedness sends him to London accompanied by Mr. Quinion. Here he faces many difficulties and he leads the same secret unhappy life in the same lonely, self-reliant manner. But he finds solace, when he spends time on the London Bridge. David says,

I forget, too, at what hour the gates were opened in the morning, admitting of my going in; but I know that I was often up at six o’clock, and that my favourite lounging-place in the interval was old London Bridge, where I was wont to sit in one of the stone recesses, watching the people going by, or to look over the balustrades at the sun shining in the water, and lighting up the golden flame on the top of the Monument. (143)

He meets too many unmerited degradations in his life. The only solace he gets is in sitting on the bridge and seeing the river. Though David is on land, he associates himself with the water to find peace. The Indian mythological hero, Beeshma is born to river Ganga and the king of Hastinapur. Soon after his birth he is taken into the river by her and in his non-age he is taught by his mother. Later, when he is in charge of the kingdom of Hastinapur, he often retreats to the river i.e. his mother for counsel, consolation and spiritual strength. This Indian mythological story provides a metaphorical key to understand the symbolic retreat of the hero to the river. In Rabindranath Tagore’s *Mukthadhara* Abhijit makes frequent visits to the river, where he is fed by her breasts of tenderness. His nocturnal visits to the water fall can be compared to Thoreau’s retreat to
the Walden Pond. Like the above said heroes David also gets his solace in the river. Not only David but her aunt Betsey finds the same solace in the river. When her properties are ruined, David makes her stay in his house which is on the river side. “She made a great point of being so near the river, in the case of a conflagration; and I suppose really did find some satisfaction in that circumstance” (421). According to the south Indian myth of Kauveri, the maiden sacrifices her love for sage Agasthya and leaps into a pond to liberate it into a river so as the grievance of the famine-stricken people would be redressed. Like Kauveri, the river Thames gives solace and consolation to Betsey who is mentally disturbed. Like David, Betsey too gets solace from the floating water unlike a firm earthbound person.

Everyman in the world has some quest in his life, in order to make his life meaningful. David, with such a quest, longs to become a good artist which could be achieved only with the help of his aunt. His move towards his aunt is beautifully brought out by using quest imagery, in which he comes across many hurdles in his reach while escaping from the Grinby’s wine house. Moving from one stage of life to another is beautifully introduced by the author through the road imagery. David starts his journey to Dover, his aunt’s house, where the principal incident of David’s story starts. Similarly in Jane Eyre, the fourth phase of Jane’s life starts when she begins her career as a governess and travels to Thornfield. The road in literature is associated with journey and quest motif. David’s quest for his union with his aunt is symbolised through this Dover road. In Tagore’s Mukthadhara, Abhijit pulls down the block put on the road which connects the Shivatari with the rest of the world and establishes unity. After his long journey David is broken completely. He becomes physically weak. He feels the fanciful picture of his mother guiding him throughout his way. Similarly Heathcliff in Emily Bronte’s
Wuthering Heights, is trying to dig up the body of Catherine after her burial and feels the presence of her soul in the sky. David says,

But under this difficulty, as under all the other difficulties of my journey, I seemed to be sustained and led on by my fanciful picture of my mother in her youth, before I came into the world. It always kept me company. It was there, among the hops, when I lay down to sleep; it was with me on my waking in the morning; it went before me all day. I have associated it, ever since, with the sunny street of Canterbury, dozing as it were in the hot light; and with the sight of its old houses and gateways, and the stately, grey Cathedral, with the rooks sailing round the towers. When I came, at last, upon the bare, wide downs near Dover, it relieved the solitary aspect of the scene with hope; and not until I reached that first great aim of my journey, and actually set foot in the town itself, on the sixth day of my flight, did it desert me. But then, strange to say, when I stood with my ragged shoes, and my dusty, sunburnt, half-clothed figure, in the place so long desired, it seemed to vanish like a dream, and to leave me helpless and dispirited. (160-161)

David associates his mother’s fanciful picture with the sunny street of Canterbury. The solar energy gives him full hope in life. The image of the sun symbolises the hope of resurrection. Here the sun stands for the hope of resurrection on the mental plane, where in David is psychologically destroyed by his step father. Thus the solar energy stands for hope and new life for David. On the other hand David associates his fanciful mother’s picture with the cathedral. The cathedral symbolises the second birth for David, from the clutches of Murdstone. The inner most holy place, the sanctum-sanctorum of a Hindu temple is called garbhagraha-the house of the womb. The aim of the person, who enters the sanctum, is to rehearse the universal pattern as a means of evoking within himself the recollection of the life centering and the life-renewing form. In Tagore’s Chitra Arjuna’s
entry into the inner sanctum of the Shiva temple, which is the regular place of worship for Chitra is similar to entry into the womb, where he himself is reborn and is created anew. The ascetic Arjuna delves deep into the esoteric mystery of the womb and emerges out as a re-born one, that is, the lover Arjuna. In D.H. Lawrance’s, *The Rainbow*, Will Brangwen gets the similar experience of going into the womb while entering the Lincoln’s Cathedral, the author says, “His soul leapt up into the gloom, into possession, it revealed, it swooned with a great escape, it quivered in the womb, in rush and the gloom of fecundity like the seed of procreation in ecstasy” (201). Thus David’s mother’s spirit guides him till he reaches his aunt’s house and it disappears.

On seeing his aunt David explains his miserable position. After hearing his story, he is given a bath and new clothes and his old clothes are burnt.

The only circumstance which gave me any new hope, was my aunt’s stopping on the stairs to inquire about a smell of fire that was prevalent there; and Janet’s replying that she had been making tinder down in the kitchen, of my old shirt. But there were no other clothes in my room than the odd heap of things I wore; and when I was left there, with a little taper which my aunt forewarned me would burn exactly five minutes, I heard them lock my door on the outside. (169)

The Hindus celebrate a festival called ‘Pongal’. On this day the inmates of the house collect all the unwanted items like old broom sticks, wooden pieces, papers and clothes and throw them into fire. It symbolises the destruction of the evil and departure of poverty. Then everyone takes bath and wears new clothes. Thus burning of old clothes in the case of David symbolises a great end of evil i.e. the control of Murdstones and entering into a new life. After the bath, he is taken to a pleasant bedroom. David says,

The room was a pleasant one, at the top of the house, overlooking the sea, on which the moon was shining brilliantly. After I had said my prayers, and the
candle had burnt out, I remember how I still sat looking at the moonlight on the water, as if I could hope to read my fortune in it, as in a bright book; or to see my mother with her child, coming from Heaven, along that shining path, to look upon me as she had looked when I last saw her sweet face. I remember how the solemn feeling with which at length I turned my eyes away, yielded to the sensation of gratitude and rest which the sight of the white- curtained bed—and how much more the lying softly down upon it, nestling in the snow-white sheets!-inspired. (170)

The white colour curtains and the bed sheets symbolise the pure love of Betsey for David. He feels as if his mother with her child is coming through the path of the moonlight. Though the sun is absent the moon reflects its light. In the same way though his mother is dead, she lives by the light of love i.e. moon. Similarly in *The Woodlanders*, Marty places flowers on the grave of Giles in the light of the moon on a full moon night. Here though the lover is dead and gone, the girl who loves him is living by the light of love. In this situation the moon symbolises various happiness in David’s life. It symbolises his getting good education and his meeting with his life partner Agnes Wickfiled. Similarly in *Jane Eyre* the presence of the moon is felt whenever Jane crosses the important stages of her life. Thus David’s journey from London to Dover is a journey from darkness to light and from imprisonment to freedom. David seems to regain the lost paradise.

Mr. Dick is more a secretary, than an old and intimate friend of Miss Betsey Trotwood. He is thrown ‘into a fever’ by cruelty and unkindness of his relatives long back. But he has managed as Aunt Betsey explains to transmute his pain into art, not into Memorial which he will never complete, but into a small poetic token of his ordeal in the repeated symbolism of King Charles the First, who quite literally has lost his head. Dick’s flying the seven feet huge kite with King Charles the First’s face in the kite symbolises
his floating thoughts. The kite represents his thoughts which are floating in the air without any disturbance. David says,

I used to fancy, as I sat by him of an evening, on a green slope, and saw him watch the kite high in the quiet air, that it lifted his mind out of its confusion, and bore it (such was my boyish thought) into the skies. As he wound the string in and it came lower and lower down out of the beautiful light, until it fluttered to the ground, and lay there like a dead thing, he seemed to wake gradually out of a dream; and I remember to have seen him take it up, and look about him in a lost way, as if they had both come down together, so that I pitied him with all my heart. (184)

The kite when reaches the ground is like a dead thing, where his confusion in the earth once again begins. The kite reflects Dick’s psychology. When he is informed that David’s arrival is on Saturdays and he could see him on Wednesdays he feels happy and decides to make another kite for that occasion. In another incident when he hears the reunion between Dr. Strong and his wife after some confusion, he writes Dr. Strong’s name on the strings of the kite and flies it in the air. “Humble, humble-condescending even to poor Dick, who is simple and knows nothing. I have sent his name up, on a scrap of paper, to the kite, along the string, when it has been in the sky, among the larks. The kite has been glad to receive it, sir, and the sky has been brighter with it” (549). Thus Dick is more comfortable while flying the kite than while playing the games like matching the marbles or Peg top which is played on ground. The air gives him more consolation for his floating thoughts without any confusion. Here the game gives him an unutterable pleasure. Thus Mr. Dick is totally a sky-bound person.
Miss Betsey decides to take David to the school in Canterbury with the help of Mr. Wickfield. The purity, the softness and the truth in the character of Wickfield and Agnes, the daughter of Wickfield are revealed through their house. David says,

At length we stopped before a very old house bulging out over the road; a house with long low lattice-windows bulging out still farther, and beams with carved heads on the ends bulging out too, so that I fancied the whole house was leaning forward, trying to see who was passing on the narrow pavement below. It was quite spotless in its cleanliness. The old-fashioned brass knocker on the low arched door, ornamented with carved garlands of fruit and flowers, twinkled like a star; the two stone steps descending to the door were as white as if they had been covered with fair linen; and all the angles and corners, and carvings and mouldings, and quaint little panes of glass, and quaintier little windows, though as old as the hills, were as pure as any snow that ever fell upon the hills. (185)

Here the words ‘spotless in his cleanliness’, ‘fair linen’, ‘old as the hills’, ‘pure as any snow’ indicate the angelic qualities of the father and the daughter. Though he describes the purity of the house, he is taken to the mountainous atmosphere mentally at last. The white stones of the steps reaching the house remind him of the snow covered hills.

Archetypally mountain is associated with spiritual elevation. In Biblical typology the Promised Land is thought of being ‘above’ the wilderness. The capital of the land is Jerusalem, the centre of the world and the city on the mountain. In Hindu mythology, Kailas is a sacred mountain which is considered to be the abode of Shiva where Indian holy men climb in pursuit of union with God. Milton’s Eden is on the mountain top protected by a ‘verdurous wall’. The ‘Pisgah’ vision as it is called by Northrop Frye in his Anatomy of criticism is felt by David in David Copperfield. On the mount Moses gets the vision of the Promised Land or Pisgah and he gets the revelation upon the Mount Sinai.
and is shown the “back parts” of God (Exodus XXX III: 23). The mountain top
epiphanies appear in many modern works like Ibsen’s *When we dead Awaken*; in the later
poetry of Yeats; in the central imagery of *To the light house*, and also in Eliot’s *Ash
Wednesday* where the ascending souls go in a spiral movement up a purgatorial staircase.
In *A Farewell to Arms*, the lovers escape from the blood thirsty war and seek haven in the
snow covered Swiss mountains. Thoreau acknowledges mountains as Olympus seen
outside the earth. The mountain top vision or Pisgah elevates man up to the level of
contemplation and man beholds the far-off vision of Paradise. He also recognises the
stumbling block on the way to it. The chief conceptions related to the ascent are
remembrance, discovery of one’s real identity and growing freedom. Here David who
remains mundane under the control of Murdstones comes to the conscious world by
joining in Dr. Strong’s school, getting his own identity as an author in the future with the
help of Agnes. Thus entering Wickfield’s house leads him from the darkness to light.

Dr. Strong’s school is an excellent school with a good name, a contrast to the
Salem House, a kind of dark and sultry school. The school infuses in David the qualities
of head and heart. David’s happy and joyful life in the company of Dick, Agnes and
Wickfield which is going to be marred by Steerforth is beautifully predicted to the readers
by Dickens through the play *Julius Caesar*. David says,

I resolved to go to the play. It was Covent Garden Theatre that I chose; and there,
from the back of a centre box, I saw *Julius Caesar* and the new Pantomime. To
have all those noble Romans alive before me, and walking in and out for my
entertainment, instead of being the stern taskmasters they had been at school, was
a most novel and delightful effect. But the mingled reality and mystery of the
whole show, the influence upon me of the poetry, the lights, the music, the
company, the smooth stupendous changes of glittering and brilliant scenery, were
so dazzling, and opened up such illimitable regions of delight, that when I came out into the rainy street, at twelve o'clock at night, I felt as if I had come from the clouds, where I had been leading a romantic life for ages, to a bawling, splashing, link-lighted, umbrella-struggling, hackney-coach-jostling, patten-clinking, muddy, miserable world. (242)

The play *Julius Ceaser* symbolises the betraying nature of Steerforth towards David. Like Brutus, Steerforth elopes with Emily and betrays his friend David. The words ‘muddy’ and ‘miserable’ reflect the chaos to be faced by Emily due to her friendship with Steerforth. After their meeting Steerforth takes David to his house. David is welcomed by Steerforth’s mother and his cousin Miss Rosa Dartle. Mrs. Steerforth is deeply attached to her son. Sitting before the fire she shows the things used by Steerforth in his childhood days. David says,

It was no matter of wonder to me to find Mrs. Steerforth devoted to her son. She seemed to be able to speak or think about nothing else. She showed me his picture as an infant, in a locket, with some of his baby-hair in it; she showed me his picture as he had been when I first knew him; and she wore at her breast his picture as he was now. All the letters he had ever written to her, she kept in a cabinet near her own chair by the fire; and she would have read me some of them, and I should have been very glad to hear them too, if he had not interposed, and coaxed her out of the design. (250)

Here fire symbolises the memories of Mrs. Steerforth. Similarly in Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* Emily Bronte has used the candle light imagery to uncover the mystery of both Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff by reading the book, *An old Testament of Catheirne* by Lockwood. To Gaston Bachelard, fire holds the central place in the experience of mankind. In *Psycho Analysis of Fire* he writes that fire has been an
element for unforgettable memories. On another occasion Steerforth narrates the history of Rosa Dartle’s scar on her face to David and about their school days sitting before the fire. Similarly in Dickens’s Our Mutual Friend Lizzie and her brother Charley Hexam sit before the fire and talks about their childhood days. On the other hand fire also symbolises the sexual passion in the case of Rosa Dartle who loves Steerforth. Her thinness seems to be the effect of some wasting fire within her, which finds a vent in her gaunt, eager eyes. She is inwardly consumed with a burning and hopeless love for Steerforth. In Buddha’s fire sermon in T.S. Eliot’s The Waste Land, fire symbolises the fire of sensuous pleasures which burns mankind from the beginning of creation. There is a hidden sense of repentance in being burnt by sensual fire.

After a week’s stay David and Steerforth move to Yarmouth. Death of Steerforth in the hands of sea, the cruel hungry master is revealed through the words of Steerforth uttered on seeing the roaring sound of sea. He says “The Sea roars as if it is hungry for us” (262). When David and Steerforth enter the boat house, the engagement between Emily and Ham is decided by Mr. Peggotty. The boat actually stands for Noah’s Ark containing all male and female species, which carried to their future. The happy marital life of Emily and Ham is going to be spoiled by Steerforth’s entry where David says, “The little picture was so instantaneously dissolved by our going in, that one might have doubted whether it had ever been” (263). The title of the book, Book of Martyrs which David studies in Peggotty’s room symbolizes Emily’s elopement and the dire consequences going to be faced by the family. In another instance Steerforth brings a boat and christens it as ‘Little Emily’ where the boat drowns in the tempest. The boat is a symbol of vehicular energy and the movement from one stage to another. Emily’s life with Steerforth will not move to the next stage of marriage. This is symbolised by the
drowning of the ship. David, Steerforth and the other family members of Peggotty are sitting around the fire and spend their time in merry making.

Mr. Peggotty,' he said, 'you are a thoroughly good fellow, and deserve to be as happy as you are tonight. My hand upon it! Ham, I give you joy, my boy. My hand upon that, too! Daisy, stirs the fire, and makes it a brisk one! and

Mr. Peggotty, unless you can induce your gentle niece to come back (for whom I vacate this seat in the corner), I shall go. Any gap at your fireside on such a night-such a gap least of all-I wouldn't make, for the wealth of the Indies! (267)

Some novelists uses fire as an agent of destruction. But Dickens portrays fire as a bright and glowing one which gives warmth and happiness for David. David is very much happy with his mother and Peggotty, when they are at the fire side, “We sat round the fire, and talked delightfully” (96). Similarly in Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* Emily Bronte has uses the fire and candle light imagery to show the warmth and revival of Catherine and Heathcliff’s affection for one another, where Heathcliff reappears six months after Catherine’s marriage. “Now, fully revealed by the fire and candle light, I was amazed, more than ever, to behold the transformation of Heathcliff” (81). In *Jane Eyre*, a relief for Jane comes with the visit of apothecary who could offer a few words of solace to her. Before the arrival of the apothecary a streak of light, a terrible red glare is noticed by Jane. It is the nursery fire—the symbol of warmth. In contrast to the coldness referred to before, there is a welcoming fire which is associated with friendliness, warmth and security. The same fire acts as a fire of death in case of Steerforth. The fire is used for the meditative atmosphere as Steerforth ponders over the thoughts of Emily. In Indian literature fire is used for Yagnas-offerings, where the people offer many things to gods through fire. Bachelard says that fire is precisely the first object, the first phenomenon, on
which the human mind reflects. The fire gazing reaches deeper into the psychic life.

David says:

I found him alone in Mr. Peggotty's house, sitting thoughtfully before the fire. He was so intent upon his own reflections that he was quite unconscious of my approach. This, indeed, he might easily have been if he had been less absorbed, for footsteps fell noiselessly on the sandy ground outside; but even my entrance failed to rouse him. I was standing close to him, looking at him; and still, with a heavy brow, he was lost in his meditations. (271)

After arriving in London Agnes has a conversation with David. She tells him about Uriah Heep’s power over Mr. Wickfield. The cunningness of Uriah is symbolised by his red hair, which is the traditional symbol of fiery evil. Dickens associates Uriah with darkness. David says, “When I saw him going downstairs early in the morning (for, thank Heaven! he would not stay to breakfast), it appeared to me as if the night was going away in his person” (323). Here the darkness indicates the darkness in the mind of Uriah. He is made to seem like the personification of evil. David makes frequent comparison of his disagreeable appearance to fish, snakes, snails, etc….Whenever David meets Uriah he feels an aversion and repulsion towards him. David says, “. But oh, what a clammy hand his was! as ghostly to the touch as to the sight! I rubbed mine afterwards, to warm it, and to rub his off” (191). Not only his physical aversion, but also his psychological attitude of dominance over Wickfield and Agnes make his total appearance a thing of aversion for David. When David meets Mr. Wickfield, he finds the power of Uriah Heep on him. He finds the reversal of the two natures, in their relative positions, power of Uriah’s and dependence of Mr. Wickfield’s. David says, “. If I had seen an Ape taking command of a Man, I should hardly have thought it a more degrading spectacle” (434). In The Wordsworth Dictionary of Symbolism the author uses, ‘Ape’ as a symbol of malice and
physical ugliness. In Christian symbology the ape is seen as a caricature of human and as an emblem for the vices of vanity, greed and lechery. Here the novelist shows the animal nature in man’s inner self. Similarly in *Great Expectations* Pip being under the control of his sister Mrs. Joe is reflected through the animal imagery. Pip says, “…she pounced on me, like an eagle on a lamb…” (59). The presence of Mr. and Mrs. Heep, mother of Uriah in Agnes’s house reveals the lack of affinity between Agnes and her father. The purity of the house is darkened by their presence. David says “To have seen the mother and son, like two great bats hanging over the whole house, and darkening it with their ugly forms, made me so uncomfortable…” (481). Bats usually take their residence in dilapidated and wretched places. Thus Agnes suffers a great deal of internal trouble because of Uriah’s evil designs upon her. The devil as a fallen angel is portrayed in art with bat’s wings and the same is true for demonic creatures of every sort. Agnes being trapped by him is symbolised by his mother’s knitting. David says, “What the knitting was, I don’t know, not being learned in that art; but it looked like a net; and as she worked away with those Chinese chopsticks of knitting-needles, she showed in the firelight like an ill-looking enchantress, baulked as yet by the radiant goodness opposite, but getting ready for a cast of her net by and by” (480). Similarly in *Great Expectations*, Drummle is called as a spider by Mr. Jaggers. The spider here symbolises his trapping of Estella. In Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities* Madam Defarge knits the names of the aristocracies to kill them in the guillotine.

When David returns to Yarmouth he finds Barkis, husband of Clara Peggotty, on his death bed. The death of the body helping in releasing the soul is symbolised through the sea imagery. Clara Peggotty says,

‘He’s a going out with the tide,’ said Mr. Peggotty to me, behind his hand.
My eyes were dim and so were Mr. Peggotty’s; but I repeated in a whisper, ’With the tide?’

’People can’t die, along the coast,’ said Mr. Peggotty, ’except when the tide’s pretty nigh out. They can’t be born, unless it’s pretty nigh in-not properly born, till flood. He’s a going out with the tide. It’s ebb at half-arter three, slack water half an hour. If he lives till it turns, he’ll hold his own till past the flood, and go out with the next tide.’(374)

David, after the burial of Mr. Barkis, faces the heavy rain. “Rain was falling heavily by that time and it was a wild night; but there was a moon behind the clouds, and it was not dark” (377). Here rain is portrayed as a destructive agent. Rain, another form of water acts as a water of death in this context. The rain reflects sadness as it is interpreted as tears of sky. Hence it is a symbol of sorrow, suffering and frustration. In David Copperfield the suffering and sorrow to be faced by Mr. Peggotty’s family because of Emily’s elopement is symbolised through the heavy rain. Similarly in Hardy’s Far From the Madding Crowd Hardy has used the rain imagery to predict the gloomy future of Boldwood, where his farm is ruined by the rain. The gloomy life of Emily is thus symbolised by the heavy rain. In Dickens Bleak House the rain in Linconshire symbolises the endless grief of Lady Dedlock. The rain also acts as a premonition for the ill events soon to occur i.e. the loss, death of Barkis’s which is going to be followed by the great loss, Emily’s elopement. After these two losses David is totally dejected. But his thought about Dora, his lady love is his refuge in distress. He seeks the consolation in the image of Dora. She stands as a star in the dark situation. The position of David reflects the position of Pip in Great Expectations wherein he is guided by Estella like a star in the dark passage of Miss Havisham’s house.
The greater the accumulation of deceit and trouble in the world, the brighter and the purer shone the star of Dora high above the world. I don't think I had any definite idea where Dora came from, or in what degree she was related to a higher order of beings; but I am quite sure I should have scouted the notion of her being simply human, like any other young lady, with indignation and contempt. (398)

Mr. Peggotty decides to get the help of David to find Emily. So he moves to London with David. One night David comes across Mr. Peggotty in front of St. Martin’s church. “It had been a bitter day, and a cutting north-east wind had blown for some time. The wind had gone down with the light, and so the snow had come on. It was a heavy, settled fall, I recollect, in great flakes; and it lay thick. The noise of wheels and tread of people were as hushed, as if the streets had been strewn that depth with feathers” (489).

Mr. Peggotty’s face is burnt dark by the sun, due to his constant search for Emily but he fails in his attempt. His unsafe and critical position is symbolised by the winter season. The winter season and the heavy snow also connote the forthcoming danger i.e. the message of the collapsed life of Emily by Martha to Peggotty. In Hardy’s *Far From the Madding Crowd* the snowy night when Fanny runs from her place to her lover’s residence symbolizes her critical and insecure life. The wind from the north-east in the snowy night is another symbolism to this situation. The wind always acts as a vehicular energy. Here the north-east winds drives Martha to meet David. David sees Martha Endell standing by the door, listening to the conversation between David and Mr. Peggotty. But she disappears immediately. The northern direction always represents light and corresponds to the positive principle. Thus the light i.e. the hope in case of Emily’s presence is shown through the arrival of Martha. It also represents refuge under the roof of Mr. Peggotty. In Tony Morrison’s *Beloved*, a Cherokee Indian group tells Paul D to travel by north after escaping from prison in Georgia. The phrase “Where you want to go” refers to the north
that Paul D calls as “Free North, Magical North, Welcoming, benevolent North” (112). Thus north is the place where Paul D finds refuge from the life of slavery. The Eastern direction always symbolises the revelation of the truth. Here the truth about Emily and her residence will be revealed by Martha in future to David and Mr. Peggotty. In *Great Expectations*, Magwitch’s arrival from the East in the storm symbolises the revelation of secrecy to Pip about his benefactor.

David’s marriage with Dora, his lady love, is going to be short-lived. It is shown by Dickens through the seasons.

Weeks, months, seasons, pass along. They seem little more than a summer day and a winter evening. Now, the Common where I walk with Dora is all in bloom, a field of bright gold; and now the unseen heather lies in mounds and bunches underneath a covering of snow. In a breath, the river that flows through our Sunday walks is sparkling in the summer sun, is ruffled by the winter wind, or thickened with drifting heaps of ice. Faster than ever river ran towards the sea, it flashes, darkens, and rolls away. (526)

The snow covering the heather, a shrub with small purple flower symbolises the lack of clarity or maturity in the case of Dora in her marriage life. The sun symbolises brightness and cheerfulness. But the happiness in their marriage life which is going to be tumbled down after Dora’s death is shown through the winter wind which ruffles the summer sun. Here winter symbolises the death of Dora. Similarly in *Far From the Madding Crowd* Bathsheba’s love for Troy is compared to the seasons. “Her love was entire as a child’s and though warm as summer it was fresh as spring” (215). Since Bathseba and Troy’s relationship grows in summer, their love assumes a summer quality, intense but short lived. John Keats in his poem, *The Human Seasons*, divides man’s life into four seasons, in which summer is described as, “he has his summer when luxuriously springs honeyed
cup of youthful thought he loves to ruminate, and by such dreaming high. His nearest unto Heaven: quiet cover” (107). River usually symbolises the linear flow of time. Here the river that flows towards the sea is darkened. The darkness thus symbolises the death of Dora. David also says, “We drive away together, and I awake from the dream. I believe it at last. It is my dear, dear, little wife beside me, whom I love so well!!” (532). Here Dickens tries to express his idea about the word dream i.e., their marriage life is going to vanish like a dream rather than stand strong as a rock.

David sometime finds some rapture in his love with Dora because of her lack of maturity. When David informs his love to Dora, aunt Betsey says, “’Oh, Trot!’ she said again; ’blind, blind!’ and without knowing why, I felt a vague unhappy loss or want of something overshadow me like a cloud” (424). Here the word ‘blind’ indicates the darkness in their love, which is not going to shine forever in their life, it is going to end soon and also Dora’s love is not going to give any brightness in his life, rather it will lead only to darkness i.e. misunderstandings in his life. After their marital life David and Dora have some misunderstandings in trivial matters like housekeeping, maintaining accounts, etc. Her lack of maturity is shown through her house keeping. The basket of keys is the sign of the house keeper’s house hold authority. The key is the symbolic scepters of their sovereignty. In her attempt to be domestic, Dora takes charge of the keys, but it does not work; although she goes jingling about the house with the keys the places to which the keys belong are left unlocked and the keys become, like the cookery book, a plaything for Jip, her dog. Mr. Murdstone has forced David’s mother, who is equally incompetent, to hand her keys to Miss Murdstone. On the other hand, Agnes like Esther Summerson in Bleak House wields the keys with confidence and skill after her mother’s death during her childhood. Thus the keys are the symbol of power and Dora lacks that power. Dora’s character is also symbolised through her blue eyes. “Her hands were clasped upon my
shoulder, and her chin rested on them, and her blue eyes looked quietly into mine” (541). Here the blue colour stands for the sky. Dora’s Blue eyes symbolise her as a sky bound person. In Tony Morrison’s *Sula* Hannah, Sula’s mother is dominated by the element of air, free spirited, and frivolous and child like. In *Sula*, Ajax’s blue hat denotes that he is a sky bound person. Like Dora he has a floating attitude and has no rootedness. Similarly in Tony Morrison’s *Sula*, Shadrack the mad person is related to sky, the nothingness.

Both David and Peggotty decide to search for Emily. During their search they find Martha near Balckfriars Bridge, and follow her in the narrow water side street by Millbank. The bridge of Balckfriars symbolises Martha as a bridge in connecting Mr. Peggotty and Emily on the opposite shores. David says,

> There were neither wharves nor houses on the melancholy waste of road near the great blank Prison. A sluggish ditch deposited its mud at the prison walls. Coarse grass and rank weeds straggled over all the marshy land in the vicinity. In one part, carcases of houses, inauspiciously begun and never finished, rotted away. In another, the ground was cumbered with rusty iron monsters of steam-boilers, wheels, cranks, pipes, furnaces, paddles, anchors, diving-bells, windmill-sails, and I know not what strange objects, accumulated by some speculator, and grovelling in the dust, underneath which- having sunk into the soil of their own weight in wet weather-they had the appearance of vainly trying to hide themselves. The clash and glare of sundry fiery Works upon the river-side, arose by night to disturb everything except the heavy and unbroken smoke that poured out of their chimneys. Slimy gaps and causeways, winding among old wooden piles, with a sickly substance clinging to the latter, like green hair, and the rags of last year’s handbills offering rewards for drowned men fluttering above high-water mark, led down through the ooze and slush to the ebb-tide. There was a story that one of the
pits dug for the dead in the time of the Great Plague was hereabout; and a blighting influence seemed to have proceeded from it over the whole place. Or else it looked as if it had gradually decomposed into that nightmare condition, out of the overflowings of the polluted stream. (571)

The sluggish ditch indicates the polluted life led by Martha in London. This can be also interpreted with her name ‘Martha Endell’. Endell suggests the end of life in the dell. Martha has left the rural idyll of Yarmouth to become an urban street-walker in London. The dead people lying in the pit symbolise Martha as a disease in shattering the life of Emily. The corruption and the dirty atmosphere of the river bank near the prison stand for the character of Marth. When Martha decides to drown herself in the river David saves her from drowning and carries her away from the water. She falls into the river in order to wash away her sin.

Here Dickens uses the river imagery as a cleanser which gives new life and hope for Martha. Here a miserable woman is compared to the running river which gathers the dirt on the way accumulating all impurities and sufferings many terms and turmoils before it reaches the destination. Similarly in E.M. Foster’s A Passage to India Ralph, Aziz, Fielding and Stella come to witness the celebration of Lord Krishna’s birthday. When they are in their boats, the boats suddenly collide and they are thrown into the water, where all of them are purified by their immersion in the water. In India, the water of Ganges is said to be capable of washing away all the sins. The Ganges is seen coming down from heaven to wash away every trace of sin, from both the ashes of the dead and the bodies of the living, once God Shiva takes hold of it and places it along the river side. Northrop Frye in The Great Code: The Bible and Literature says, “… Noah’s flood (I Peter 3: 21) and the Red Sea(I Corinthians 10:2) crossing are regarded in the New Testament as the types of the sacrament of baptism, where the one being baptized is
symbolically drowned in the old world and awakens to a new world on the opposite shore. Similarly, there is a dimension of the symbolism in which the redeemed, after the apocalypse are able to live in the water of life, as they live in the air” (147). The aspects of water related to birth, death and regression are given an important part in Baptism, one of the major rituals of religion. In the case of Martha finding and helping Emily to lead a new life gives her a rebirth. The contact with water always brings about regeneration. This aquatic cosmology has its counterpart on the human level in the belief that mankind is born of the waters. In the passage in which Dickens describes the drowning of Martha one can also find the image of a prison. Here the prison and the river are associated with the sites of social exclusion and despair. Thus Martha promises David to help him in their search. Emily is going to be found out with the help of Martha and she will be rescued by her uncle Mr. Peggotty. This is expressed through the words of David, when he returns home after meeting Martha.

It was midnight when I arrived at home. I had reached my own gate, and was standing listening for the deep bell of St. Paul's, the sound of which I thought had been borne towards me among the multitude of striking clocks, when I was rather surprised to see that the door of my aunt's cottage was open, and that a faint light in the entry was shining out across the road. (577)

Here light stands for hope, trust, and belief in utter disillusioned atmosphere. Similarly in Hardy’s novel, *A pair of Blue Eyes*, when Stephen leaves Mr. Swancourt and Elfride, she lights the candle after his departure. Here the candle symbolises her hope towards the arrival of Stephen.

Months pass after the meeting between David and Martha. David tries to believe that Emily is dead. But Mr. Peggotty’s conviction remains unchanged. His patience never
gets tired. Here Dickens uses the imagery of garden in foretelling the presence of Emily through the words of David.

There had been rain all day, and there was a damp feeling in the air. The leaves were thick upon the trees and heavy with wet; but the rain had ceased, though the sky was still dark; and the hopeful birds were singing cheerfully. As I walked to and fro in the garden, and the twilight began to close around me, their little voices were hushed; and that peculiar silence which belongs to such an evening in the country when the lightest trees are quite still, save for the occasional droppings from their boughs, prevailed. (601)

The peaceful atmosphere after the rain predicts the peace which Mr. Peggotty will enjoy after the arrival of Emily. There is going to be a dawn in the life of Emily because of the savior Mr. Peggotty. The rain stops and it symbolises the end of Emily’s suffering period, where rain symbolises destruction and separation.

With the help of Martha David finally reaches the place of Emily. The pitiable and the critical condition of Emily is described through her residence in Golden square lodging. David says,

Several of the back windows on the staircase had been darkened or wholly blocked up. In those that remained, there was scarcely any glass; and, through the crumbling frames by which the bad air seemed always to come in, and never to go out, I saw, through other glassless windows, into other houses in a similar condition, and looked giddily down into a wretched yard, which was the common dust-heap of the mansion. (602)

Here the words ‘darkened window’ and ‘wretched yard’ stress not only the worst condition of the house but also that of Emily. When David and Martha enter Emily’s room they see some common pictures of ships on the wall. Here these pictures indicate
Emily’s realization of her sin and her longing for peace and happiness which she can find only in the Yarmouth sands. Here the sea does not allow her to settle in the land. It drags her once again towards the sea life. The total house is decayed and looks like a dust heap. This destructive condition of the house reflects her life in the past. Similarly the destroyed condition of the Barnard’s Inn in *Great Expectations* symbolises the chaos Pip to face in the future. Here some windows are closed and some are totally darkened. They reflect the isolated life led by Emily similar to the life of Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations* where the blocked windows reflect her isolation from the outside world because of Compeyon’s betrayal. After seeing Mr. Peggotty in the house Emily rushes towards him with the loud cry and faints in his arms. After their reunion Mr. Peggotty decides to migrate to Australia with Emily.

The happy life of David and Dora is disturbed when Dora falls ill. David attends on her like a loving husband. Dickens symbolises her death through different imageries. During her illness David says, “I avoided the recognition of this feeling by any name, or by any communing with myself; until one night, when it was very strong upon me, and my aunt had left her with a parting cry of ‘Good night, Little Blossom,’ I sat down at my desk alone, and cried to think, Oh what a fatal name it was, and how the blossom withered in its bloom upon the tree! (588). Flower has been the symbol of all natural creations subject to mortality. Here the flower imagery denotes the short span of life. Similarly in Tagore’s *Chitra* the short life of flower is described by her. David says, “I felt like a flower, which has but a few fleeting hours to listen to all the humming flatteries and whispered murmurs of the wood lands and then must lower its eyes from the sky, bend its head at a breath gives itself up to the dust without a cry, thus ending the short story of a perfect moment, that has neither past nor future” (24). Dickens shows the gratitude of pet animals to their masters in many novels. In *David Copperfield*, Dora’s pet...
dog’s name is Jip, in short for Gypsy, the paragon of free soul. Jip dies at the same moment as Dora. Dora in her sick bed says to Agnes:

'Not tonight, Jip! Not tonight!'
He comes very slowly back to me, licks my hand, and lifts his dim eyes to my face.

'Oh, Jip! It may be, never again!'
He lies down at my feet, stretches himself out as if to sleep, and with a plaintive cry, is dead.

'Oh, Agnes! Look, look, here!'
That face, so full of pity, and of grief, that rain of tears, that awful mute appeal to me, that solemn hand upraised towards Heaven!

'Agnes?'
It is over. Darkness comes before my eyes; and, for a time, all things are blotted out of my remembrance. (646)

Here the death of Jip is more than a melodramatic coincidence, because Jip’s death symbolises the death of Dora’s free spirit as well as her body. Thus once again death of David’s closeness in the land, disconnects him from being an earth-bound person.

David writes a letter to Emily, conveying the message that Ham has given him for Emily. The next day Mr. Peggotty brings her the reply. So David decides to go to Yarmouth himself and takes the letter of farewell to Ham. On the way there appears a strange sign in the sky. The coachman says that a storm is blowing up. David says,

It was a murky confusion-here and there blotted with a colour like the colour of the smoke from damp fuel-of flying clouds, tossed up into most remarkable heaps, suggesting greater heights in the clouds than there were depths below them to the bottom of the deepest hollows in the earth, through which the wild moon seemed
to plunge headlong, as if, in a dread disturbance of the laws of nature, she had lost her way and were frightened. There had been a wind all day; and it was rising then, with an extraordinary great sound. In another hour it had much increased, and the sky was more overcast, and blew hard.

But, as the night advanced, the clouds closing in and densely over-spreading the whole sky, then very dark, it came on to blow, harder and harder. It still increased, until our horses could scarcely face the wind. Many times, in the dark part of the night (it was then late in September, when the nights were not short), the leaders turned about, or came to a dead stop; and we were often in serious apprehension that the coach would be blown over. Sweeping gusts of rain came up before this storm, like showers of steel; and, at those times, when there was any shelter of trees or lee walls to be got, we were fain to stop, in a sheer impossibility of continuing the struggle. (661-662)

The fear of the people on the shore is symbolised by the moon which is wandering in the sky with the highest fear. The sand and the sea weed blowing along the streets, the great waves, people struggling to walk about, the huge sheets of lead down off roofs all add up to give a thorough impression of the tremendous wind. Here the vigorous blow of the wind indicates the death of Steerforth and Ham.

Similarly in Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights*, the imagery of the blustery wind blowing across the moors indicates the death of Earnshaw. Thus the change in the wind predicts the change in the life of Heathcliff. “The hour came, at last, that ended Mr. Earnshaw’s troubles on earth. He died quietly in his chair one October evening, seated by the fire-side. A high wind lustered round the house, and roared in the chimney: it sounded wild and stormy near the table” (35). The force of the rain before the storm is shown by the words ‘like showers of steel’ (661). Dickens uses the description of wind
and rain to reflect the power of natural forces in the novel. Rain, here acts as water of
depth, in the case of Ham and Steerforth. The deluge of rain is the manifestation of
imminent danger. Destruction and pain are the outcome of the heavy rain. Thus the rain
acts as a signifier, signifying impending misery and misfortunes to be faced by Steerforth
and Ham. Here the gloomy cloud indicates the gloomy mood of Yarmouth people. Thus
the dark storm imagery on the whole predicts the horror that is to follow in the sands of
Yarmouth. Nature represents itself as the incarnation of a spirit that lives and moves
through all things. Nature has two aspects. In nature one can see the contrast between the
peaceful, innocent, natural world and the sin-stained life of man. It can be viewed in two
ways. The first thing is ‘glory’ in nature. The other one is the natural world characterized
by pain, harshness, decay, change and the brutal struggle for survival. Here in David
Copperfield nature in the form of storm comes in the form of cruelty, indifference and
caprice. Thus David sees the rending and upheaving of all nature in the storm. David sees
Steerforth in his ship named “Little Emily”. The ship rolls like a desperate creature driven
mad. Ham is a humane and a self-sacrificing person. He drowns while trying to save the
lone survivor on a wrecked ship, who turns out to be Steerforth. This further enhances the
nobility of Ham’s character. An old fisherman calls David aside and leads him to a body
that has reached the shore. It is none other than that of Steerforth. David says,

Some eddying fragments I saw in the sea, as if a mere cask had been broken, in
running to the spot where they were hauling in. Consternation was in every face.
They drew him to my very feet- insensible-dead. He was carried to the nearest
house; and, no one preventing me now, I remained near him, busy, while every
means of restoration were tried; but he had been beaten to death by the great
wave, and his generous heart was stilled forever.
As I sat beside the bed, when hope was abandoned and all was done, a fisherman, who had known me when Emily and I were children, and ever since, whispered my name at the door.

'Sir,' said he, with tears starting to his weather-beaten face, which, with his trembling lips, was ashy pale, 'will you come over yonder?'

The old remembrance that had been recalled to me, was in his look. I asked him, terror-stricken, leaning on the arm he held out to support me:

'Has a body come ashore?'

He said, 'Yes.'

'Do I know it?' I asked then.

He answered nothing.

But he led me to the shore. And on that part of it where she and I had looked for shells, two children-on that part of it where some lighter fragments of the old boat, blown down last night, had been scattered by the wind-among the ruins of the home he had wronged—I saw him lying with his head upon his arm, as I had often seen him lie at school. (669)

Like Jesus, as in the New Testament, Ham is depicted as a sacrificial figure. In Shakespear’s Hamlet, Hamlet after whom Ham is no doubt partly named, finds himself in a time, murderously out of joint, but at the climax of his drama he could say serenely, “If it be now, its not to come; if it be not now, yet it will come” (V, ii). Just before the sacrifice that will at last purge the guilt of Ham’s own family he says likewise to David, cheerily grasping his both hands 'Mas'r Davy,' he said, cheerily grasping me by both hands, 'if my time is come, 'tis come. If 'tan't, I'll bide it. Lord above bless you, and bless all! Mates, make me ready! I'm a-going off!'(668).
Abhijit, the high mimetic hero in *Mukthadhara*, is lifted to the mythical mode by his sacrifice. Ham is lifted up from low mimetic mode to romantic mode as he seems to know the secret of elevation by the sacrifice of one’s life. This circulating expansion in modes is done by the circulating water. Water, in the form of sea is used as a destroyer. Here sea stands as a chaotic force of nature which engulfs the life of Ham. The water closing the bodies of Ham and Steerforth indicates the subtle merging of good and evil. Dickens applies the analogies of the river and the sea to the judgment, salvation and immortality of the individual rather than of society as a whole. In the tempest scene Steerforth comes to the judgment when he is drowned in the shipwreck, and Ham attains his salvation in his death through sacrifice. Facing the death of all his relatives in the sea, where the sea water is cruel to the parents of Ham and Emily, it is also cruel to David in the end because his two friends die in the sea.

David returns to London to convey the news of Steerforth’s death to his mother. Here the pathetic situation of Steerforth’s mother is interpreted with the season of autumn, which is known for death and decay. “Upon a mellow autumn day, about noon, when the ground was perfumed by fallen leaves, and many more, in beautiful tints of yellow, red, and brown, yet hung upon the trees, through which the sun was shining, I arrived at Highgate” (670). The withered leaves symbolise the end of Steerforth’s life. Similarly in *Far From the Madding Crowd* the withering of leaves takes place when Bathsheba and Troy return from the market. Here the withering leaves symbolise the withering of love between the two. “They moved on without further speech. Some early-withered leaves from the trees which hooded the road at this spot occasionally spinning downward across their path to the earth” (299). Dickens employs symbolic meaning to the colours in his novels. Here the yellow leaves on the ground reflect the mood of sickness in the case of Mrs. Steerforth. In *Great Expectations* the similar symbolism is
used for the colour of Havisham’s dress which changes from white to yellow, reflecting her psychological sickness.

David’s alienation rises to its height due to Mr. Peggotty’s migration to Australia. Mr. Micawber after revealing the fraudulence of Uriah Heep, rescues his family from his rudeness and finally decides to migrate to Australia. David says:

We went over the side into our boat, and lay at a little distance, to see the ship wafted on her course. It was then calm, radiant sunset. She lay between us, and the red light; and every taper line and spar was visible against the glow. A sight at once so beautiful, so mournful, and so hopeful, as the glorious ship, lying, still, on the flushed water, with all the life on board her crowded at the bulwarks, and there clustering, for a moment, bare-headed and silent, I never saw. (683)

The image of the boat which is simply like a house recedes from our mind and we see the entire affected people move away from the motherland. The boat is another archetype which is often referred to by Dickens to express the idea of moving from one stage to another. All the people in the ship are moving from their past bitter life to the hopeful future. Here Mr. Peggotty is like the ark and he carries the offspring’s of Emily into the future. Similarly in Tony Morrison’s Beloved Sethe gives birth to Denver in the boat. Here Sethe carries the future life of Baby Sugg’s. Dickens in David Copperfield uses a literal ship in which Mr. Peggotty, the invisible metaphorical boat carries the generation into the future. Like Dickens many novelists used the boat imagery in various contexts. In Shakespeare’s The Winter’s Tale, the ship carries the girl child and it is left in the storm. In the same play, the prince of Bohemia and the princess of Sicilia escape from the death by travelling in a boat. In A Passage to India, the ship carries Mrs. Moore away from India, lest she will give good evidence to Dr. Aziz. But she dies in the ship and is thrown into water. She is given water burial and she becomes a symbol of universal motherhood.
In Marlowe’s *The Heart of Darkness*, the boat comes out from London to the sea and the narrator Marlowe boards a ship to Africa. From African shores, a boat travels upstream to the innermost part of Africa, revealing the darkness of the coloniser’s psyche. In *Half a Life* the ship carries Willie Chandran to many continents and it stands as a symbol of half a life. In the Old Testament Noah and his family pass through the flood and enter into the ark which pictures the water baptism and they are separated from the old life, and when they come out of the ark, they totally begin a new life. They have a new beginning and there is no possibility of returning to the old life. (I Peter 3: 18-22) In the case of Emily the ship acts as a Noah’s ark which takes her to a new life where Noah’s ark represents the preservation of the phallic energy. On the other hand, in *Matsya purana* of Hindu mythology during *Pralaya* the whole earth is filled with water. Lord Vishnu directs the sage Satyavartha to board a boat with selected creatures. They sail on the vast expanse of water throughout night to reach the next *Kalpa*. Thus the boat is the objective correlative of the next stage of life.

From the beginning the sea acts as a destructive agent in Emily’s life. It continuously aborts her attempt to lead a life on land and drags her to the same sea life. But in the final stage, Emily migrates to Australia only through the sea. A kind of restoration is achieved in her emigration to Australia. Here the sea acts as a constructive agent, in helping Emily to emerge like a phoenix in Australia. Thus the water acts as an image of life and procreation in Emily’s life. This is also seen in Woolf’s *The Waves*, where Woolf presents the ocean as a symbol of life giving energy. The sea in the last stage acts as a judge in Emily’s life. Dickens uses the potentiality of sea imagery in the case of Ham, Steerforth and Emily. This is the case in Sivasankaran Pillai’s novel *Chemmeen* where the sea imagery dominates the life of the hero and heroine, where love begins in the sea and nourished by the sea. Finally the lovers are reunited in the sea after
their long separation, and their union is immortalised by the sea by their death. As the ship sails away to Australia, David is left alone in the encircling gloom of guilt, loneliness and despair. The sea, the natural element for Peggotty’s family and of Steerforth, the skilful sailor, is the central symbol of the novel which destroys and restores but always takes people away from David.

David leaves England despondent and desolate. He travels to Switzerland, Italy and for many countries with lots of confusion. At last a letter from Agnes stirs him and he decides to concentrate on his writing. He begins to realise that in his wayward boyhood he has thrown away the treasures of her love. After an absence of three years he decides to return. His mental decline is symbolised through the wintry autumn season, where the season stands for both the physical and mental numbness. David says, “I LANDED in London on a wintry autumn evening. It was dark and raining, and I saw more fog and mud in a minute than I had seen in a year. I walked from the Custom House to the Monument before I found a coach; and although the very house-fronts, looking on the swollen gutters, were like old friends to me, I could not but admit that they were very dingy friends.” (689). In Wuthering Heights Emily Bronte has used the autumn season to symbolise Edgar’s physical decline. But in the case of David, the season stands for his mental decline. David rides to Canterbury to meet Agnes. David says:

How well I recollect the wintry ride! The frozen particles of ice, brushed from the blades of grass by the wind, and borne across my face; the hard clatter of the horse's hoofs, beating a tune upon the ground; the stiff-tilled soil; the snowdrift, lightly eddying in the chalk-pit as the breeze ruffled it; the smoking team with the wagon of old hay, stopping to breathe on the hill-top, and shaking their bells musically; the whitened slopes and sweeps of Down-land lying against the dark sky, as if they were drawn on a huge slate!. (722-723)
Everything is chill and icy. Here the chillness symbolises the emotional state of David. The frozen particles of ice symbolise the desolation of David’s loneliness. Similarly in Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* the cold winter day is related to the emotional state of a child, i.e., Jane who is hurt by the indifference of her aunt. In *Wuthering Heights* the dead Catherine’s ghost comes in the form of a child. Heathcliff goes yelling into the storm and cries for the ghost to return. “come in! come in! he sobbed. ‘Cassy do come oh, do once more! oh! my heart’s darling’ hear me this time, Catherine, at last the spectre showed a specter’s ordinary caprice: it gave no sign of being; but the snow and wind whirled wildly through, even reaching my station and blowing out the light” (23). Here the snow and wind serve to heighten the intensity of Heathcliff’s misery and feelings. Like Bronte, Dickens uses the wind and the snow to reveal the mental state of David, without Agnes.

At last David reaches Agnes’s house like a tired traveler. He feels the sense of rest and peace of having Agnes near him. He is consoled by her placid, sisterly manner with her beaming eyes, with her tender voice and the sweet composure. They share their love with each other and finally both of them confess their love and decide to marry. David and Agnes have been happily married for ten years. He has achieved much fame and fortune as an artist in these years. After a long time Mr. Peggotty comes to England to see David. “I had advanced in fame and fortune, my domestic joy was perfect, I had been married ten happy years. Agnes and I were sitting by the fire, in our house in London, one night in spring, and three of our children were playing in the room, when I was told that a stranger wished to see me”(728). The spring season always symbolises the season of birth and new beginnings. The new fortunes are found in the life of the emigrants. Mr. Peggotty talks about Mr. Micawber becoming a magistrate, and Martha has married a young farm laborer, and Mrs. Gummidge gets the proposal of marriage from a ship’s
cook. Thus spring season brings hope and happiness in every one’s life after hardships. Thus the situation makes one to remember the famous poet Shelley’s lines in his poem *Ode to the West Wind* in *Shelley: Poetical Works* “if winter comes can spring be far behind?” After their conversation David and Mr. Peggotty go to Yarmouth to visit the grave of Ham. Mr. Peggotty gathers a tuft of grass from the grave and a little earth to take back to Emily.

But before he left, he went with me to Yarmouth, to see a little tablet I had put up in the churchyard to the memory of Ham. While I was copying the plain inscription for him at his request, I saw him stoop, and gather a tuft of grass from the grave and a little earth.

‘For Em’ly,’ he said, as he put it in his breast. 'I promised, Mas'r Davy.' (734)

As Frye notes “… there was a general tendency to associate sky with a male principle and the earth with the female principle” (*The Great code*. 157). In many mythologies female and the earth are considered to be the same because of their procreative nature. In African culture, the earth is strongly associated with the feminine principle. Thus the earth stands for the birth, death and re-birth. Mr. Peggotty carrying the little earth with him symbolises the mortality i.e. death a definite event for all in the world. The earth from the grave of Ham shows Emily’s eternal and obsessive idealization of her love for Ham. Similarly in *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff’s desire to dissolve into the earth with the dead Catherine symbolises his deep love for Catherine. On the other hand the grass also connotes the mortality where Walter Fulghum in his work *A Dictionary of Biblical Allusions in English Literature* quotes the line from the Bible: “The voice that cried in the wilderness said, “Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass and all the goodliness there of is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ….. surely the people is grass”. (Isa 40: 6-7; I pet 1:24). In *Don Juan*,
Byron speaks of fame. Not a pinch of dust remains of king Cheops’s mummy but I, being fond of true philosophy, say very often to myself, “Alas! All things that have been born were born to And flesh (which Death mows down to hay) is grass”. Similarly in Shaw’s Back to Methuselah, Zoo reproves the Elderly Gentleman, who seems proud of his age: “yes Daddy, but it is not the number of years we have behind us, but the number we have before us that makes us careful… to find out the truth about everything is true or not? Your flesh is grass: you come up like a flower, and wither in your second childhood” (146). Thus Emily in the hands of fate gets her due punishment for betraying Ham and his sincere love towards her. But in the end she realises her sin and tries to redeem herself by having the tuft of grass from the grave of Ham, where the grass symbolises purity and redemption.

David lives blissfully in the company of Agnes. Dickens represents Agnes as an ideal model of womanhood. David always associates Agnes’s softened beauty with the stained glass window in the church. Here the colours and brightness in the stained glass reflect David’s colourful life in future with the support of Agnes. Agnes acts like an elevator in the life of David. “I cannot call to mind where or when, in my childhood, I had seen a stained glass window in a church. Nor do I recollect its subject. But I know that when I saw her turn round, in the grave light of the old staircase, and wait for us, above, I thought of that window; and I associated something of its tranquil brightness with Agnes Wickfield ever afterwards” (190). David who reaches a great height in his life as a novelist because of Agnes’s support, says, “O Agnes, O my soul, so may thy face be by me when I close my life indeed; so may I, when realities are melting from me, like the shadows which I now dismiss, still find thee near me, pointing upward!” (737).

David is a disoriented child from the beginning of the novel, longing for some anchoring somewhere. Though his mind is after the fluidity of water which in turn
symbolises his assimilative quality, his suffocation amidst the waters of destruction is very obvious. The rocks which would have supported him as his parents are washed away in the mighty ocean of time. For a time being his mind is fascinated with his first wife Dora, who gives no support to David. But Agnes is giving that anchoring to the restless soul of David and with her solid support David is able to achieve many laurels. His emergence as an artist is possible only through the strong support of the responsible Agnes.