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1994
தினடக் கப்பெற்றது

STUDY AIDS
TO
OLIVER TWIST

TO "O" LEVEL STUDENTS

BY
T. N. PUNJAKSHARAM

STUDY AIDS

1994

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கிடைக்கப்பெற்றது

GCE "O" LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE

OLIVER TWIST

- ★ CHAPTER SUMMARIES
- ★ MODEL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
- ★ CHARACTER SKETCHES

BY

T. N. PUNJAKSHARAM

Price: 65/ =

ALL ABOUT THE AUTHOR IN BRIEF:

DICKENS full name was CHARLES JOHN HUFFAM DICKENS. He was born at Portsea on the 7th February, 1812. He was the second child of John Dickens, a minor clerk in the Navy Pay Office. His Mother was Elizabeth, nee Barrow.

Dickens father was not very prosperous. Soon, he fell into debts and was put into the debtor's prison. He was able to get out of prison when he got some timely legacy. This was his rescue.

Dicken's education or schooling was nothing much to boast of. He had to leave school very early.

When his father was in prison, he went to work at a blacking factory and was paid six shillings a week for sticking lables on pots of paste-blackening. He worked for a few months and later left it as a miserable job. This job gave him a bitter experience in life.

In 1827, at the age of fifteen, he became a junior clerk in a solicitor's office. Even here, he was not very happy. He studied shorthand and later became a Parliamentary reporter. He also served as a Newspaper reporter.

From 1833, he began to write short sketches to magazines. He wrote under the pen name of 'BOZ'.

Very soon readers began to admire his writings for their wit, style and accuracy.

Dicken's married in 1836 a lady named Catherine Hogarth. He had a very big family of ten children. His married life, however, ended in separation in 1858.

Dickens had also toured the U. S. A. and Canada with his wife and on his return to England wrote his 'American Notes'.

Little by little, he reached the height of literary fame. He was called the 'King of English humour' as all his novels were full of wit and humour.

Oliver Twist (or THE PARISH BOY'S PROGRESS) came out in 1838. He had written many novels. All of them are still read and re-read by many all over the world.

He reached the height of his literary fame with 'David Copperfield'. Some of his other novels are: Nicholas Nickleby; A Tale of Two Cities; Hard Times; Great Expectations; Bleak House; Old Curiosity Shop; Christmas Carol; etc.

He died on June 9th 1870 at Gad's Hill following a cerebral stroke he had in 1869. Everyone mourned his death. He was buried in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey.

CHARACTERS AS APPEARING IN YOUR RE-TOLD EDITION

| | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| Agnes Fleming | : | Mother of Oliver Twist |
| Brownlow (Mr.) | : | A kind-hearted elderly gentleman |
| Bumble (Mr) | : | Workhouse petty official |
| & | | |
| Bumble (Mrs) | : | Workhouse Matron |
| Jack Dawkins | : | The Artful Dodger; a seasoned pick-pocket under Fagin |
| Charley Bates | } | Boys and girls under Fagin's evil gang |
| Toby Crackit | | |
| Bet | | |
| Nancy | | |
| Fagin | : | A cunning, old Jew |
| Sowerberry (Mr) | : | The Undertaker |
| & | | |
| Sowerberry (Mrs) | : | His bad-natured wife |
| Noah Claypole | : | Servants under the Sowerberries |
| & | | |
| Charlotte | | |
| Brittles | : | Servants under Mrs. Maylie & Miss Rose |
| & | | |
| Giles | | |
| Fang (Mr) | : | A Police Magistrate |
| Dr Losberne | : | A Physician and a friend of the Maylies |
| Bill Sikes | : | A Notorious thief and House breaker under Fagin |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Grimwig | : A friend of Mr Brownlow |
| Harry | : Son of Mrs Maylie |
| Rose | } Adopted daughter of Mrs. Maylie (Later comes to light as Oliver's aunt-mother's sister) |
| Old Sally | |
| | : A servant at the workhouse who was with Oliver's mother at the time of her death |
| Monks | : Half-brother to Oliver Twist |
| Oliver Twist | : The Hero in the story |
| Mann (Mrs) | : Matron of the Poorhouse where Oliver was born |

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1

Oliver Twist was born in a poor house in the year 1837. A poor house was a place where those let down by God and man, the poor and the helpless, found refuge.

Oliver's mother was one such woman, young and beautiful but was helpless. She was found by the roadside in a very weak state of health and was taken to the poor house. Who she was, where she lived, from where she had come, who her husband or parents were, no one knew.

Soon after her admission to the poor house, she delivered a baby boy who was Oliver. Soon after delivering the baby, she gave it a kiss, fell back and died.

Like many young mothers, she was not married. There was no wedding ring on her finger.

Children born in such circumstances get a surname given by the poor house. The names were given in alphabetical order. When Oliver was born, he had to be given a name beginning with the letter 'T'. So he got the surname 'Twist'. He was given this name by the parish official, Mr. Bumble.

The poor house was in charge of a lady called Mrs. Mann. She was a very unkindly lady. She was not at all interested in looking after the babies and children under her care. Her only concern was to make money out of the poor grant paid to her by the parish Council.

Poor Oliver, like many of his kind, was an orphan with no parents. No one claimed him. When he was nine, he was removed to another poor house which was really a work house. Here orphans like Oliver were made to work or trained to do a trade.

The work house was worse than the poor house of Mrs. Mann. Here the children were not fed well; so they had to starve. They were given a cup of porridge daily which was not enough.

One day, all the bigger boys forced Oliver to ask for more porridge. Oliver was quite innocent and so when the porridge was being served as usual, he asked for more. The man who served the porridge became angry, hit him and reported him to Mr. Bumble. Mr. Bumble in turn brought the matter to the notice of the Chairman of the Work house Board. The Board thought that Oliver was a threat to all. They locked him up in a room, hit him off and on, so that, the other boys in the Workhouse did not dare ask for more as Oliver did.

Soon the Workhouse decided to give away Oliver to anyone who needed a servant.

Mr. Sowerberry, an Undertaker, took Oliver to work for him. Oliver found life at the undertaker's shop a miserable one. Besides, the undertaker's wife, her servant maid Charlotte and Noah Claypole, an apprentice in the shop, were nasty to Oliver. They got together and ill-treated him. Noah Claypole always teased Oliver and called his mother a bad woman. Oliver could not bear to hear Noah claypole belittling his mother.

One day, he hit Noah Claypole and the latter cried out for help. Mrs. Sowerberry and the servant maid took the side of Noah Claypole. They got together, hit Oliver and locked him up in a room. Mr. Sowerberry was out; when he returned home, they told him that Oliver was unruly.

Mr. Bumble was called in. Both Mr. Sowerberry and Mr. Bumble hit Oliver and locked him up in a room. During the night and just before dawn, Oliver ran away from the undertaker's shop—unknown and unnoticed by anyone.

Chapter 2

For a week he wandered about. At last he reached a little town - Barnet - near London. He was now well away from his wicked masters, Mr. Bumble and Mr. Sowerberry. He was very tired and hungry. While in Barnet he met a boy like him, Jack Dawkins, nick-named 'the Artful Dodger'. He befriended Oliver, gave him a good meal and took him to his master, a Jew, called Fagin. Fagin was a villain who had a number of boys under him whom he used to rob or pick-pocket others. Fagin was now happy that he had got one more boy to his evil gang. Poor Oliver was now in his grip.

Chapter 3

Oliver stayed with Fagin and his wicked gang of boys. There were also two girls in the gang named Bet and Nancy. Oliver saw the boys and the girls talking in a very friendly manner with Fagin. He, in fact, did not know or suspect what they were all up to. They walked in and out of the house bringing all kinds of things like pocket books, handkerchiefs, etc. Fagin praised the boys for bringing such beautiful little things. He wanted Oliver too, to do like wise. He told Oliver that he would teach him how he could find such articles. Fagin and his boys played a game which was really a kind of training in picking the pockets of people. Oliver was watching it. Fagin walked about the room like any gentleman about town with all kinds of things in his pockets. His boys followed him and quietly removed all the valuables from Fagin's pocket in a manner that Fagin was unaware of his things being taken from his pockets. Oliver too was drawn into the game. He too succeeded in picking out a handkerchief from Fagin's pocket.

Fagin was very pleased that Oliver too could pick things from a person unseen and unnoticed. He gave him a shilling

as a present for his excellent act. But, poor Oliver did not really know what all that had meant.

One day, the Dodger and Charley Bates took Oliver to town. There was an old gentleman at the busy shopping stalls. He was at a book shop turning over the pages of a book. Dodger put his hand into the old gentleman's pocket, pulled out his handkerchief and ran off at full speed. Oliver stood and stared and realised for the first time who Fagin and his boys were and how all those valuable things like handkerchiefs, wrist watches and snuff boxes came into Fagin's house.

Oliver had been upset; he too ran away. The old gentleman became aware of his loss and mistaking Oliver to be the culprit gave chase to him. The crowd too joined in the chase. It was a wonder of wonders that even the Dodger and Bates, the real culprits who had hidden for a few minutes somewhere, joined the crowd.

Poor Oliver was now tired and scared; he stumbled and fell down. A policeman arrived on the scene, caught him and dragged him along to the courts. Oliver now found him before a Magistrate, a Mr. Fangs, a rough and crude man whose only aim was to convict anyone brought before him. He little cared for truth. He believed what the policeman had said. He was about to send him to prison much against the wish of even Mr. Brownlow, a very respectable-looking elderly gentleman. Just then, the Bookshop keeper ran into the courtroom and swore that it was not Oliver but another boy who had picked the old gentleman's pocket. The Magistrate, therefore, released Oliver. Mr. Brownlow took pity on the boy's plight and took him with him in a coach to his house.

Chapter 4

Without Oliver, the Dodger and Charley Bates went back to Fagin and told him what had happened. Fagin was furious; he was frightened too. He thought that Oliver might expose them all and their doings.

Hence Fagin and another notorious person, Bill Sikes jointly made a plan to get back Oliver. They got at Nancy, a girl in their group and sent her in search of Oliver and to bring him back. She was made to play the role of a sister to Oliver, to track him down and to bring him back. Fagin gave her some money and proper clothing to wear, an umbrella and a basket to carry with so that she might appear to all like a respectable lady.

Chapter 5

Now Oliver found life at Mr. Brownlow's quite comfortable. He was ill for a few days but soon recovered. Mr. Brownlow's House-Maid, Mrs. Badwin, fed and nursed him well. Mr. Brownlow felt very sorry for the boy and wanted to help him in every way. There was a portrait of a beautiful lady in the room where Oliver was. It resembled exactly like that of Oliver. The likeness of the portrait with Oliver surprised Mr. Brownlow. Even Oliver found that the portrait resembled him. Thinking that the portrait might disturb Oliver it was removed from where it was hanging.

Oliver felt his life at Mr. Brownlow's a great blessing. Mr. Brownlow gave him a new suit to wear with a cap and shoes and all. Oliver had a fear that Mr. Brownlow would send him away; he did not want to leave him and so begged him to keep him with him. Mr. Brownlow assured him that he could be with him for ever. In the meanwhile, he was trying to get all details about him. One day while he was talking to Oliver, a friend of Mr. Brownlow, a Mr. Grimwig arrived. Mr. Grimwig was a very different person. He always disagreed with others. He never trusted anyone. In his presence, Mr. Brownlow sent out Oliver to return some books and to pay some cash to the book-shop where Oliver first saw Mr. Brownlow. When Oliver had left the place with the books and cash promising to get back soon, Mr. Grimwig found fault with Mr. Brownlow for showing a lot of love and affection

to Oliver. Mr. Grimwig thought that boys like Oliver were dishonest, disloyal and undependable. He went on to say that Oliver might not return and that he would run away with his books and money. But, Mr. Brownlow did not agree at all with Mr. Grimwig.

Now both waited for the return of Oliver. But Oliver did not return. Mr. Brownlow was sad while Mr. Grimwig won the day and was very emphatic that Oliver with his new suit, valuable books, and a five-pound note would have gone back to his wicked friends. Mr. Brownlow, however, could not believe all what Mr. Grimwig had said of Oliver.

While Oliver was on his way to the Bookshop, the young woman, Nancy, whom Fagin had set to track down Oliver, saw him. She came screaming, embraced Oliver, claiming him as her brother. She made such pretensions to make all believe that she was Oliver's sister; that she was searching for him for many days and that their mother was in tears. Just then Bill Sikes too appeared on the scene with a white dog and began to drag Oliver. Oliver cried aloud; he shouted for help; he protested; but to no avail. He was forcibly taken to a room in a dirty small back-yard.

Chapter 6

Oliver was in Fagin's hand once more. Fagin and his group were very happy to see Oliver. The Artful Dodger searched Oliver's pocket and found the five pound note that Mr. Brownlow had given him. Sikes and Nancy claimed the note for them. Oliver pleaded with them to keep him but to send back the books and the money to Mr. Brownlow who had been very kind to him. But his pleas fell on deaf ears. Master Bates undressed Oliver and removed his new clothes. Oliver now grew bitter. He tried to run away but he could not. The Jew took a big stick and gave Oliver a few beatings to scare the boy. But Nancy took pity on the boy and stopped Fagin from being so nasty to him.

Oliver now found himself a prisoner in that miserable house.

Fagin now planned a robbery of a house at Chertsey. He met Sikes to plan the robbery; Sikes agreed if he was given fifty pounds if the job was safely done. He also wanted the help of a little boy like Oliver who could enter the house easily. Fagin agreed to send Oliver and wanted Nancy to go and bring the boy. Fagin then returned to his gloomy house.

Chapter 7

When Oliver woke up the next morning, the Jew told him that he had to go to the house of Bill Sikes. He also warned him that if he disobeyed Bill Sikes, he would kill him. Oliver was now very much frightened. Nancy arrived the next day in a horse carriage and took him to join Bill Sikes. Bill Sikes too threatened Oliver with death if he refused to act as he was told. The following day Bill Sikes took Oliver with him to stage the planned robbery. Another member of Fagin's evil gang, one Toby Crackit too joined Bill Sikes. For the first time Oliver became aware that he was being taken to do a house-breaking and robbery. He was very much horrified; his limbs failed him but he could not do anything. He was under the "Do or Die" threat of Bill Sikes.

Now all of them reached the house that was to be robbed. Oliver was put through a window into the house. He was given a lantern. He was ordered to go through the hall and to unfasten the street door. Oliver was now desperate; his mind refused to work. In fact he thought why he should not make a noise himself and alert the inmates. Just then Sikes suddenly cried out to him to come back. In a fright, he dropped the lantern. Just then there was a cry. Two terrified half-dressed men appeared at the top of the stairs with a lamp. There was a loud noise and some crashing sound. Sikes fired his pistol at the men and pulled out Oliver through the window. Poor Oliver had been bleeding; he had been hit. There was

a lot of noise all over like the ringing of bells and the firing of pistols. Oliver now became unconscious. He felt he was being carried away.

Chapter 8

In the miserable house, Fagin remained with his boys, the Dodger and Charley Bates playing cards. Fagin was ill-at-ease. His thoughts were all about the robbery and what would come of it. Just then, Toby Crackit came in very much tired and hungry. As soon as he arrived, he asked for some food saying that he had no meals for three days. The food was served and now Fagin and Toby began to talk. They were both alone. Toby reported that the robbery had failed and that he did not know what had happened to Sikes and Oliver. The Jew was now upset and immediately rushed out of the house to where Sikes and Nancy stayed. Sikes was not there and Nancy herself did not know what had happened to Sikes or Oliver. But she was happy that Oliver was no longer in Fagin's grip; in fact, she was very sorry for having brought back Oliver to Fagin. Nancy thought that Oliver would be better off anywhere than with Fagin and his gang.

Fagin returned home all the more upset; and at his doorstep was waiting one Mr. Monks. It was he who was using Fagin to get Oliver into the underworld of thieves and pickpockets. Monks had come to get news of Oliver and the planned robbery. When he heard that it had failed and that Oliver was missing, he began to find fault with Fagin, Fagin, however, assured Monks that he would make Oliver a thief if he was alive and came back to him.

Just then Monks saw a shadow like that of a lady. He was scared. But Fagin did not see any such person or shadow. But Monks swore that he saw it. But the room was bare and empty. Monks at last agreed that it might have been his imagination and left the place.

Chapter 9

Bill Sikes who had been carrying Oliver dropped him halfway in a ditch and disappeared. As the day dawned, Oliver exposed to the chill and rain woke up. He was feeling very weak and had lost much blood. Trembling and shivering, he feared that he might die. So he got up and came up to the road. There was a house closeby. As he neared the house, he became aware that it was the very house that Sikes and he had tried to break in the previous night. Even then he reached the door step of the house, knocked at the door and fell down.

The servants of the house opened the door and saw Oliver. Seeing Oliver, they raised an alarm thinking that he was one of the thieves who had come to rob them the previous night. One of the inmates of the house, a Miss Rose was moved to pity at the sight of Oliver and begged the servants Giles and Brittles to take him upstairs to a bed and then asked Brittles to bring in a doctor quickly to attend on Oliver. The other inmate of the house was a Mrs Maylie, aunt of Miss Rose. While both the ladies were at breakfast, the doctor arrived. He was Dr Losberne. The doctor was taken upstairs where Oliver was. The ladies too went up to see Oliver in the presence of the doctor. The doctor pronounced the boy out of danger. To Miss Rose and Mrs Maylie the boy did not have the looks of a typical criminal or a robber. They took pity on him and decided to have him with them. The doctor remained with them until evening and when Oliver had sufficiently revived, he was asked to say who he was. Oliver, with all his physical pain and tiredness, told them who he was and how he had come to such a sorry plight much against his wish.

His story was so very touching; he remained in the house for many weeks. He felt very grateful to the ladies and told them of Mr Brownlow and his maid Mrs Bedwin who had also been very nice to him. He expressed a wish that both Mr Brownlow and Mrs Bedwin must be told of his present plight. Miss Rose assured him that they would take him to see Mr Brownlow.

As soon as Oliver recovered Dr Losberne took him in Mrs Maylie's carriage to see Mr Brownlow. On the way as they passed through Chertsey Bridge, Oliver pointed with fright to a house where the thieves had took him to. The doctor, therefore, stopped the coach, got down and went up to the house but could find no proof that it was ever used by Bill Sikes. They continued their journey and reached the street and the very house where Mr Brownlow resided. It was vacant; a servant next door told them that Mr Brownlow with Mrs Bedwin and Mr Grimwig had gone to West-Indies six weeks earlier. Hence they came back disappointed.

Chapter 10

A fortnight later Mrs Maylie and Miss Rose left with Oliver for a change to the country side. They stayed there in a cottage. Oliver found life in the cottage pleasing and pleasant. An old gentleman who lived near them, closeby a church taught Oliver to read and write. Three months passed happily. The good doctor Losberne and Harry Maylie, a son of Mrs Maylie too joined the family in the country cottage.

When Oliver was there, a minor incident happened. One day while Oliver went to the small town on some business, he ran into a man. The man who had a distinct red mark on his face threatened Oliver. Oliver was much frightened and the event haunted him.

One day he was at his study when he felt that he had seen the very same man who threatened him earlier in town and Fagin peeping through the window. Oliver screamed. The doctor and Harry heard his screams. When they asked him what had happened, Oliver told them what he had seen. Harry immediately, left in search of the two but they could not be seen. Soon this event was forgotten.

Chapter 11

Now a word about that mysterious character who had a red mark on his cheek who had twice before threatened or scared

Oliver. He was known as Monks. Monks ran into Mr Bumble, the work house official who had now married the matron of the poor house. Mr. Bumble was, however, not happy in his married life. He often quarrelled with his wife. One day after a quarrel with his wife, he left home and went to a public-house. There he met Monks. He did not know Monks but Monks knew who Mr Bumble was. Both began to talk in the course of which Monks gave Mr Bumble two sovereigns as a token to help him in his misery. But it was only a bait. Monks wanted some information about the woman who had nursed Oliver's mother at the poor house of which Mr Bumble was the master.

Mr Bumble said that the woman who had nursed Oliver's mother was dead, but his wife knew everything about the woman as she was with her right up to the time of her death.

Monks, therefore, wanted to see Mrs Bumble. Mr Bumble agreed to bring his wife to the very place Monks resided.

The following evening both Mr and Mrs Bumble came to see Monks who resided in an area noted for thieves. The house of Monks was near a river.

Here Monks met Mr Bumble and Mrs Bumble demanded twenty-five pounds in gold if he wanted any details of the lady called Sally who had nursed Oliver's mother. The gold was readily given and Mrs Bumble told Monks that she had got a locket with two locks of hair and a ring with a name 'Agnes' engraved inside it. She said that she had got them from Sally who had stolen it from Oliver's mother. Mrs Bumble gave both the ring and the locket to Monks and Monks in the presence of both Mr and Mrs Bumble threw them into the river that was flowing under their house; and soon after it, they got away from the dreaded house of Monks.

Chapter 12

Mrs Maylie with Miss Rose, Oliver and Dr Losberne had come to London for a change. They were staying at a quiet hotel in London. While they were there Nancy went to see Miss Rose. Miss Rose was told by her servant that a girl had come to see her. Hence Miss Rose came down to see her. The moment Nancy saw her she felt that she was face to face with a kind, gentle lady and wished that there were many like her. In fact she burst into tears and said that if there were many ladies like Miss Rose there would be fewer like her. Then she began to tell her the purpose of her visit; how a brother of Oliver was trying to harm Oliver through the Jew, Fagin. She gave Miss Rose a confession of all that she had heard and known.

Miss Rose was startled. She had never heard of Monks. Nancy wanted to get back and begged Miss Rose to keep all that she had said a secret. Miss Rose asked Nancy why she wanted to get back to her wicked friends and wished she had stayed with her. But Nancy replied that she could not desert her companions although she knew they were wicked. She said that it was too late for her to get back to a good life.

When Miss Rose asked her where she could meet her again she said that she could meet her any Sunday between eleven and twelve midnight on the London Bridge. So saying she left the place quickly.

Throughout the night Miss Rose was much disturbed. Her stay in London was short but she wanted to act on the information she had got.

While she was thus disturbed she had another news from Oliver. Oliver and Mr. Giles were out walking in the morning when he saw Mr Brownlow getting out of a coach and going into a house. Giles, however, had noted his address.

As soon as Oliver returned home, he told Miss Rose that he had seen the good old man Mr Brownlow and that Giles had got his address.

When Miss Rose heard this good news, she wanted to go and see him at once with Oliver.

So they went to the place where Mr. Brownlow stayed. Mr Brownlow and Mrs Bedwin were too pleased to see Oliver. Mr Grimwig too was there. Miss Rose told Mr Brownlow all that she had heard from Nancy.

It was now decided that they all meet at the Hotel where Miss Rose stayed with Mrs Maylie and Dr Losberne.

At the hotel it was agreed that everything possible must be done to track down Monks and to restore to Oliver his rightful place and a share of all his wealth that would be his from his parents. Mrs Maylie was now prepared to stay in London as long as necessary to help Oliver and sort out his problems.

Chapter 13

It was a Sunday night. Fagin and Sikes were much worried for they have no evil designs to undertake. Fagin was also upset that the Dodger was caught the previous day while attempting to pick-pocket someone. Nancy who was with them was seen getting ready to go out somewhere. Bill did not like her going out at night. He tried to find out where she was going but she just evaded him and only said she was going out to get some fresh air. But, Bill did not allow her. He forcibly stopped her from going. The clock had struck twelve. Nancy was helpless. She could not go out as she had planned. Fagin was worried why Nancy was so keen to go out at dead of night. He was wondering whether Nancy had got a new friend to meet and whether she was tired of life with Bill.

He, therefore, made a plan. He made a secret arrangement with Charley Bates to spy on the strange

doings of Nancy during the mid-night hours. Charley was promised a pound as a reward for this job. Night after night Charley waited on his mission. But nothing had happened. But on the seventh night, a Sunday, Nancy was getting out; Bill was away. Fagin alerted Charley; and Charley started off at once. Fagin was waiting in suspense for news from Charley.

Chapter 14

As planned earlier with Miss Rose, Nancy met her and Mr Brownlow at the London Bridge. She explained to them the reasons that prevented her from meeting them the previous Sunday. She told them all she knew of Monks, a description of the man and the public house he visited. She, however, was not willing to help them to get at Fagin. Although she said that Fagin was an evil genius, she was not prepared to betray him. Satisfied with the information they have got from Nancy, Miss Rose and Mr Brownlow thanked her and left the place.

All the while Charley was hiding thereabout unseen and unnoticed by anyone. Nancy too left the place and reached her home.

Charley in the meantime went back to Fagin and told him what he had seen and heard. Fagin in turn told Sikes the strange doings of Nancy. Sikes was furious. He came home, pulled out Nancy from her bed and began to attack her. Nancy pleaded but to no avail. Sikes shot her and killed her for her betrayal.

Chapter 15

Mr Brownlow was quick to act on the information of Nancy, now dead. Soon after, Mr Brownlow tracked down Monks and took him to his home. He threatened him so much to make him speak the truth. Mr Brownlow came out with all details

how Monks's father, Mr Edwin Leeford fell out with his mother, married again a lady named Agnes, daughter of a Navy Officer, why his father went to Rome, how he seriously fell ill and died there. Mr Brownlow also pointed out that Oliver born by his father's second marriage had a right to claim a part of his wealth. He told Monks that he was very well aware of all his secret activities to destroy all identities of Oliver, to deprive him of his share in his father's wealth and to make him a notorious thief with the help of Fagin, the Jew. He also charged Monks that he too had a share in Nancy's cruel murder. Monks was filled with terror. He thought he had no way of escape now. He promised Mr Brownlow to submit a confession of all he had known before witnesses and begged for his safety. Mr Brownlow promised him that he would be taken care of if he acted as he wanted and honoured his father's will made for his brother.

Just then the door of the room was opened. Dr Losberne entered with the news that the murderer of Nancy would be caught that night. Mr Brownlow then left the room with Dr Losberne in all eagerness to see that the murderer of Nancy was punished.

Chapter 16

Toby Crackit with his two friends were now hiding in an old ruined house. They were much upset when one of them broke the news that Fagin had been arrested!

Just then, there was a knock at the door and it was Bill Sikes with his dog. Sikes too was much upset. Charley Bates too came there. When he saw Bill Sikes, he cursed him for murdering Nancy. Both began to fight with each other. Bates was not equal to Sikes and so raised an alarm that the murderer was in. Down below the house, was a very big crowd, very eager to get into the house to catch the murderer but the door was locked. Sikes wanted to get away from there. He was frightened of the crowd. There was a ditch at the back of

the house and there he wanted to plunge in and escape that way. He rushed up to the house-top with a rope. He tied one end to the chimney stack. He put the other end in a running noose over his head and was about to jump down when he lost his balance and fell down with the noose tightening round his neck; he hung there dead!

Chapter 17

Two days Later, Mr Brownlow took Oliver, Miss Rose Mrs Maylie and Dr Losberne to a small town. It was in this town Oliver was born; where he spent his early years before running away to London.

Mr Brownlow had sent Mr Grimwig ahead of them all to arrange a nice hotel for their stay. Mr Brownlow had brought Monks too with him. Oliver was stunned and surprised to see Monks as he was the man who had scared him twice when he stayed at the Country cottage with the Maylies.

Mr Brownlow now got down to business. He summoned all to his room. In the presence of all he made Monks to confess who he was; who Olivewr was. why his father married Oliver's mother; where Oliver's father died and how he and his mother had tried to destroy the will made by his father giving a share of all his wealth to Oliver and to his mother Agnes Fleming whom he had married after separating himself from Monk's mother. He also made Monks to say who Miss Rose was and how she came to be the adopted daughter of Mrs Maylie.

When Oliver heard Miss Rose was after all his mother's sister, he cried in joy and threw his arms around her neck.

Apart from this, Mr Brownlow also called in Mr and Mrs Bumble and revealed to all how Monks had destroyed the vital identities of Oliver's mother which Mrs Bumble had. He told both of them that he would see that they held no position of trust thereafter in any public institution.

Monks was thus exposed of all his evil intentions and practices. He was defeated; he left the room in great misery.

Chapter 18

Fagin too had his date with destiny. He was tried for his many crimes and was sentenced to die by public hanging. While he was awaiting death, Mr Brownlow visited him with Oliver. He wanted Oliver to see for himself how Fagin had to pay for all his wickedness; and Fagin in his state of despair told them of a letter that Monks had given him for safe-keeping which proved Oliver's identity. He told them where he had hid the letter so that they could take it from there. The next day, Fagin was hanged.

Monks left the country. He went to America; wasted all his wealth; took to crime; was imprisoned and died in prison.

Three months later Miss Rose married Harry Maylie who became a parish priest. Mrs Maylie lived with them. Mr Brownlow adopted Oliver as his son and with Mrs Bedwin they lived close to where the Maylies resided. Dr Losberne and Mr Grimwig too stayed close to Mr Brownlow and the Maylies. In course of time, Rose was blessed with a son. Thus all of them lived close together in perfect joy and harmony.

PROBABLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Describe the circumstances in which Oliver was born.

Oliver was born about the year 1837 in a poor house in a small town in England. He was born to a poor lady who was very weak. Oliver himself was very feeble when he was born. Soon after his birth, the mother died. Just before she died, she desired to see her baby. She merely touched the baby, gave it a kiss, fell back and died. Poor Oliver did not know who his mother was or how she looked like. His very entry into the world began on a very unhappy note.

2. From what you have read, give a brief account of Oliver's mother.

Her name was Agnes Fleming. She was a beautiful lady and was the eldest daughter of a retired naval officer. She was married to Mr Edwin Leeford who had earlier married a lady with whom he did not have a happy married life. Unfortunately, Mr. Edwin Leeford died; so were her parents. Misfortune fell on her. She had nothing and no one to care for her. Thus she had a very miserable life; she was expecting a baby who was Oliver. At last, she found herself in a poor house where she delivered the baby and died soon after.

3. Say how Oliver was brought up by Mrs. Mann.

Mrs. Mann was in charge of all the parentless babies. Oliver was one. Mrs. Mann was a heartless lady. She was only keen on making money and little cared for the children under her charge. Oliver, like all the others was ill-fed; under-fed; was growing very thin, pale and weak. He was also beaten now and then for no reason. Having spent

nine long years under the cruel care of Mrs Mann, Oliver was sent to the Workhouse to learn a trade. Oliver was glad to leave the poor house and Mrs Mann but the Workhouse where he was sent to was a more miserable place.

4. Describe Oliver's life in the Workhouse.

In the Workhouse, Oliver came under the care of Mr Bumble, a hard nut, very cruel and inhumane. Here he had to work long hours under very severe conditions. Like all other inmates in the Workhouse, Oliver too was under-fed. He was always hungry. All he had was a small cup of porridge once daily. One day all the boys in the workhouse decided to ask for more; it fell to Oliver to make the request. When Oliver asked for more, the man who served the porridge became angry and gave him a blow 'for asking for more'. To the workhouse people, Oliver's appeal 'for more' porridge was a big crime – unpardonable. He was reported to the Workhouse board by Mr Bunble. He was beaten and locked up in a room for a week. At the end of the week he was found an employer. Mr Sowerberry, an undertaker took him with him to help him in his shop. Thus came to a bitter end his stay at the Workhouse.

5. How did Oliver find life and work at the undertaker's shop? or Briefly state the circumstances that made Oliver run away from the undertaker's shop.

To Oliver life at the Undertaker's shop was one from the frying-pan into the fire. The undertaker, his wife, his servant boy and servant girl were all his bosses. All of them treated him most inhumanly. He was cursed, beaten and fed on food that even dogs refused to eat. Above all, the undertaker's other apprentice, a boy of rather dirty ways, teased Oliver now and then. He called him a poor house boy and uttered many bad tales of

Oliver's mother. Oliver could not bear to hear his mother being abused that way. One day he became very angry and hit the other apprentice who was Noah Claypole. Noah raised such cries and shouted for help that Mrs Sowerberry and the servant girl got together and made Mr Sowerberry take stern action against Oliver; Mr Sowerberry reported the matter to Mr Bumble; both got together, beat Oliver and locked him up in a room. That night, Oliver quietly unbolted the door and ran away from that miserable place unseen and unnoticed by anyone.

6. How did Oliver get under Fagin's gang?

Running away from the undertaker's shop, Oliver walked on for nearly a week and came to a small town. He was now weak, tired and hungry and was resting on a cold door step. His plan was to go to London. Just then, one of Fagin's notorious boys, Jack Dawkins, saw him, found him rather weak and hungry, took him to shop and gave him a good feed. Finding that Oliver was a wayward boy, he offered to take him to a respectable old man in London with whom he could stay. Poor, helpless innocent Oliver agreed. Jack Dawkins, the artful dodger, took him and introduced him to Fagin, the so-called respectable man. Fagin was happy to have one more boy to his gang. But for Oliver, it was the beginning of another period of miserable life.

7. Who taught whom the art of pick-pocketing? How was it taught.

The master-crook that Fagin was taught his gang of boys and girls the art of picking pockets. Oliver was his latest pupil. Fagin would fill his pockets with all sorts of things like snuff-boxes, watches and handkerchiefs and like an old gentleman he would walk about the house or stop at a point as if he was looking at something. The gang would follow him. One boy would stumble on the other. Just then the pockets of Fagin would be picked in a way that Fagin was not

aware of his pocket being picked. This game was repeated. Oliver too joined in that funny game not knowing what it meant. Oliver himself succeeded in picking the pocket of Fagin. Fagin was so pleased that he gave him a shilling as a prize for his wonderful feat. It was many weeks later that Oliver understood the true significance of the game and what Fagin and his gang were up to.

8. Describe why Oliver was arrested and why he was released. (See summary of Chapter 3 para)

Oliver was arrested on a charge of pick-pocketing the handkerchief of an old gentleman who was at a book-shop. The actual deed was done by the Dodger. As soon as he picked the pocket, he began to run away at full speed followed by Bates. There was a stir. The crowd began to shout. Oliver himself began to run when he saw the Dodger and Bates running away. Soon a crowd began to chase after them. But, it was innocent Oliver who was caught and handed over to the policeman. The policeman produced him at Mr Fangs Court; Oliver was in a daze. He was speechless and fainted. The policeman said that he had searched him but found nothing in his possession. There were no witnesses too. Mr Brownlow felt very sorry for Oliver and pleaded with the magistrate to be kind to him. But, the bad tempered Mr Fang was all-out to impose on him three months of hard labour. Just then the book-shop keeper ran into Mr Fangs Court and swore that it was not Oliver but another boy who had pick-pocketed the old gentleman. And so, Oliver was released. If not for the evidence of the book-shop keeper, poor Oliver would have gone to prison.

9. Say what happened to Oliver soon after his acquittal. Where did he go? With whom did he go? How was he treated in his new home? OR Give an account of Oliver's stay with Mr Brownlow?

Soon after Oliver was released, Mr Brownlow took him to his house. He was very ill. Mr Brownlow provided him with all comforts. His house-keeper, Mrs Bedwin nursed him well with love and care. Within a few days, Oliver became quite well. He was given new clothes to wear and a pair of shoes to put on. Oliver had never before enjoyed such care, comfort and hospitality. To him it was a real home. He begged Mr Brownlow to keep him with him for ever. Mr Brownlow promised him that he need have no fears and that he could be with him for ever if he behaved well.

10. Describe briefly how Oliver was captured and taken into Fagin's gang.

Mr Brownlow had to return some books and pay some cash to the Bookshop. It was the very same bookshop where his handkerchief was pick-pocketed. Hence Oliver knew where the book-shop was and he agreed to take the books and the money to the book-shop. Mr Brownlow, therefore, sent Oliver on this mission. Before leaving, Oliver promised to get back as early as he could.

While he was thus on his way, Bill Sikes and Nancy saw him. Fagin had wanted them to track down Oliver. So seeing Oliver both of them seized him in spite of his protests and took him back to Fagin.

11. Why was Fagin very keen to capture Oliver?

Fagin had two reasons. He feared that Oliver might expose him and his evil doings to others which would help his arrest and punishment. Secondly, Fagin wanted to help Monks and earn money by making Oliver become a thief and a pick-pocket. Monks was keen to destroy Oliver through Fagin in every possible way.

12. Describe how Oliver once again got out of Fagin's grip.

Oliver was used as a handy boy in the attempted robbery at Chertsey by Bill Sikes.

The attempt robbery failed ; Oliver was wounded.

The robbers, Bill Sikes and Toby Crackit ran for their lives deserting wounded Oliver. They dropped him down and ran away. Oliver who was now wounded and was in great pain. He had laid down where he was throughout the night and got exposed to the rain and cold. As the day dawned, he got up and walked slowly to the very house where the robbery was attempted. When Giles, the servant boy, opened the front door, he saw Oliver. He was quick to recognise him as one of the thieves who had tried to break open the house and it was he whom he had shot at. The police were summoned but the evidence of Giles was not satisfactory to charge Oliver; besides Mrs Maylie and Miss Rose were deeply moved at the sight of Oliver in pain. To both of them Oliver did not have the slightest look of a thief. Instead of harming him in anyway, they began to shower their kindness on him. They called in Dr Losberne to treat him.

Very soon, Oliver regained his health and continued to stay with the Maylies. Thus, he got out of Fagin's grip for ever.

13. Where did Monks meet Mr Bumble? Say how this meeting helped Monks.

Refer summary of Chapter 11 beginning from sentence 3 to the very end of it.

14. Give an account of Oliver's life with the Maylies.

Oliver recovered from his injury and got back to his normal health. He was very grateful to the Maylies for the love and care they had shown him. The Maylies too became very fond of him. To Oliver, it was a new life. He became a member of the family.

The Maylies left their house in Chertsey and went for a change to the country side. They took Oliver too with them. He was able to enjoy the life in the country as much as the Maylies did. To Oliver, the life in the country home proved a new experience. It was calm and peaceful. He accompanied the ladies to Church and whenever they went for a walk. He was taught to read and write with the help of an old gentleman who lived close by their country home and near a Church. In short, his life with the Maylies was a turning point in Oliver's career; it was pleasant and happy.

15. Describe the attempted robbery at Chertsey.

Bill Sikes and Toby Crackit took Oliver to a house at Chertsey to carry out the robbery planned by Fagin, the Jew.

Poor Oliver did not know where or why he was being taken. It was only when all three had reached a house at Chertsey, Oliver became aware of their mission. Sikes lifted up Oliver, put him through a window, gave him a lantern and ordered him to go into the hall and to open the front door so that they could go into the house. Oliver was much upset; he did not like to be a tool in the hand of the robber for an evil purpose. Oliver, therefore, wanted to alert the family even if it meant his death. Suddenly, there was a noise and Sikes cried out to Oliver to come back. Oliver was confused; he dropped the lantern and retreated. Just then two men, who were inmates of the house appeared; there was a crash and a loud noise about the place; Sikes fired the his pistol at the men; pulled out Oliver; and carrying Oliver, both Sikes and Toby ran away for their lives.

As they could not carry Oliver with them, they dropped him on the way and ran away. The attempted robbery ended in failure.

16. Describe the brief meeting of Fagin and Monks after the failure of the attempted robbery.

Monks was upset that the planned robbery had failed. He did not know exactly what had happened to Oliver. He therefore went to see Fagin. When he went to the place where Fagin stayed, Fagin was not in. So he waited for two hours for Fagin to come back; and then Fagin returned. Fagin took him in and told Monks of what had happened.

Monks was upset. He found fault with Fagin for not planning well. He made it clear that he had only wanted Oliver to be used as a pick-pocket and a thief and that would have led to his arrest and sent him to prison.

Fagin for his part said how his efforts to make him a pick-pocket failed and the problems he had to get him back. Fagin said that it was very difficult to train him as a pick-pocket. He told Monks that even Nancy who helped him to bring back Oliver was now feeling sorry for him.

He, however, promised Monks that he would do his best to make Oliver a thief if he was alive and if he were dead, he could not do anything. Monks for his part was quick to tell him that if Oliver were dead, the blame was not his. So saying, he went away.

17. Describe the conversation between Monks and Mr Bumble at the public-house.

One day Mr. Bumble met Monks at a public-house. Monks knew that Mr Bumble was master of the poor house and used this chanced meeting to get some useful information about Oliver and his mother. In order to induce Mr Bumble to suit his purpose, he gave him two sovereigns. Thereupon, Mr Bumble told Monks that Oliver was a devil of a boy who was sent out to work for an undertaker and that his mother was long dead. When Monks wanted to know details of the woman who had nursed Oliver's mother at

the time of her death, he replied that she too had died the previous winter but his wife Mrs Bumble might know some details of the woman.

Monks, therefore, wanted to meet Mrs Bumble the next day at the place where he stayed and promised Mr Bumble to reward Mrs Bumble if she could provide any useful information he needed of Oliver's mother which she could have got from the woman who had nursed her just before she died.

18. Describe briefly the place where the Bumbles met Monks and say what happened at the meeting between them.

Mr and Mrs Bumble met Monks at the address where Monks stayed. It was in an area of ruined houses. It was a place noted for thieves and shady characters. Monks lived in one such house near a river.

When Monks saw the Bumbles, he took them to the second floor.

Mrs Bumble now began to talk. Before she could reveal anything she demanded twenty five pounds promising to give him some vital proof and information that would satisfy Monks relating to Oliver's mother. She told that Monks could get back his pounds if he was not satisfied with the information provided by her.

Monks promptly gave her the twenty-five pounds demanded and Mrs Bumble passed on a locket with two locks of hair and a ring with the name "Agnes" engraved inside it. Both the items were in the possession of the old lady, Sally, who had nursed Oliver's mother at the time of her death. When Sally died, she had passed them on to Mrs Bumble.

Mrs Bumble told Monks that she had nothing to do with those articles and that they should not be held against her at any time in the future.

Monks for his part said that the articles could neither be held against him. So saying, in the very presence of the Bumbles, he tied a weight to a parcel containing the things and throw it into the river that was flowing by.

Once this was done, the Bumbles, left the place quickly.

19. Who was a greater villain Fagin or Monks?

It is not easy to say who was a greater villain; both were equally criminal and wicked. Both had nothing good in them. Both cared for wealth and wealth only. To both of them the means of gaining wealth did not matter. Both had the same qualities like the two sides of a coin. Birds of a feather flock together; so both got together and carried out their evil designs. The only difference was that while Fagin harmed many, and presided over many crimes with the help of an evil gang, Monks was only bent on ruining Oliver with Fagin's aid. To me, both are vulgar, mean, wicked, criminal and worse in every way.

20. Who was the most dangerous character in Fagin's gang?

It was Bill Sikes. He was the villain in this novel. He was a seasoned scoundrel; a dare-devil. It was he who caught and took Oliver back to Fagin, it was he who planned the robbery; it was he who brought a lot of suffering and pain to poor Oliver; again it was he who without any mercy killed Nancy, his mistress.

In the end, he died most miserably in the running noose he himself had put not knowing that it was to end his miserable life in earth!

21. Whom do you like better—Fagin or Nancy?

Give reasons for your answer.

There is no question of liking Fagin. He had not even an ounce of humanity in him. Even lower creatures like

animals are better. Fagin was a picture of all that was cruel and wicked in human nature. He was no comparison to Nancy.

Fagin's only interest in life was to make money and more money by making use of wayward youth. He was a social and moral cancer that paved the way to evils of all sorts.

Nancy was entirely a different person. She got into his gang by force of circumstances. She was one like Oliver without love, a home, friends or well-wishers. A time came in her life when she felt sorry for all her acts of sin. She was full of sorrow for having taken back poor, innocent Oliver to Fagin. When she came to know the evil designs of Fagin and Monks, she went to tell Miss Rose all about it. Again at the risk of her life, she met Miss Rose and Mr Brownlow at midnight at the London Bridge.

In her meeting with Miss Rose for the first time she said that society would have been a better place if there were more persons like Miss Rose who cared for the good of others. This only reveals how and why girls like her took to a life of crime.

By every standard, Nancy was a million times a better character, more human and more loveable than Fagin or other shady or evil characters in the novel like Monks or Sikes or the Bumbles and others.

If not for Nancy, Oliver would have ended miserably. If not for her, Miss Rose or Mr Brownlow could not have rescued Oliver or restored him to his rightful place.

Nancy was definitely great. Her death moves us to tears but not the end of Fagin. We rejoice at it.

22. Describe how Monks was made to confess? By whom? Where?

(Read Chap. 15 — Para One)

THE CHARACTERS IN THE NOVEL

OLIVER TWIST :

Oliver Twist is the hero or the main character of the novel. He attracts our interest throughout the story. Our total sympathy go to him. We have a share in all his misery. All his sufferings are due to the inhumanity of men and women who are still found in plenty in our society. He was the son of Edwin Leeford by his second marriage to Agnes Fleming, the daughter of a retired naval officer. The untimely death of his father in Rome and the greed of Monks, his half-brother, by his father's first marriage were the prime causes of all his sufferings. Oliver had seen neither his father nor his mother. After her husband Edwin Leeford's death, she had none to support her. She became helpless and found herself in a poor house where she gave birth to Oliver. Soon after delivering Oliver, she died. Thus began the misery of Oliver who from the poor house went to live and work in a work house. From the work house, he went to work in an undertaker's shop. From there he ran away to London where he fell into an evil gang under a Jew. His half-brother Monks tried all his best to make him a thief and to hide all his identities. Luckily for Oliver, his chance meeting of Mr Brownlow, Mrs Maylie and Miss Rose helped to rescue him from all evils and from the dirty designs of his half-brother Monks and cruel Jew Fagin. Oliver owed everything to Mr Brownlow for getting back to a happy life after years of suffering and became an adopted son of Mr Brownlow.

Oliver's Mother

As the story begins, we know little of this lady. We think of her as one more poor lady born to suffer and die. We think that she had no good character. She dies after giving birth to Oliver. But as the story of Oliver begins to unfold, we find that she is a lady of quality; that her name is Agnes Fleming; that

she is the daughter of a retired naval officer; that she is beautiful and is the second wife of Oliver's father, Mr Edwin Leeford.

She had all the details with her which she passed on to her nurse at the poor house before her death. Monks had got all the records of her from the work house with the help of Mr and Mrs Bumble and had them destroyed or gave them to Fagin for safe-keeping. Truths cannot be suppressed for long.

Mr Brownlow had got at them so very tactfully. Even what secret records Fagin had, he passed them all to Mr Brownlow just before his death.

Mr Brownlow

He was the embodiment of a perfect English gentleman. If not for Mr Brownlow, we fear, Oliver would have ended up miserably. (Infact, the original edition has it that Mr Brownlow was to marry Oliver's father's sister but he could not marry her as she had died before marriage). It was Oliver's good luck that took him with the Artful Dodger on a pick-pocketing mission. Although it was the Artful Dodger who stole Mr. Brownlow's handkerchief it was Oliver who had been caught, taken to courts and released later on the evidence of the Book-seller. Mr Brownlow then took him with him to his home. Thus began Oliver's association with Mr Brownlow. Although Oliver got kidnapped again by Bill Sikes and Nancy, he got back to him after the attempted robbery of the home of Mrs Maylie.

If was Mr Brownlow who with information got from Nancy traced Monks and restored Oliver to his rightful place. He, then, adopted him as his son. Mr Brownlow was an example of a perfect man, honest, truthful and went through many hurdles to restore Oliver to his rightful place and made Monks to confess all his guilt and evil designs. To Oliver, therefore, Mr Brownlow was a guardian-angel.

Mr Bumble

He was an official in the workhouse. He was very cruel and unsympathetic by nature. He belonged to that class of

people who lived and enjoyed on the misery of others. He had no feelings for the poor or the unfortunate. He had a wife who was exactly like him. He often quarrelled with his wife. His domestic life was bitter and sad; Oliver was sent out of the workshop to work for an undertaker because of Mr Bumble. Mr Bumble could do anything for money. Hence Monks used him well to get at all the secrets of Oliver. In the end he lost his jobs at the workhouse. He himself became a pauper and an inmate of workhouse where he was once its master.

Mrs Bumble

She was in every sense like Mr Bumble ; perhaps worse. She was equally cruel as Mr Bumble. She could be made to do anything for money. After she quarrelled with Mr Bumble their married life was a miserable one. She knew all the secrets of Oliver. She got from the woman who had nursed Oliver's mother a ring and a locket with a lock of hair. Both the ring and the locket helped to identify Oliver and his mother. Monks had got both from Mrs Bumble by giving her some gold and he threw them into the river. Like her husband, she had an unhappy end in life and spent her last days as a pauper in the workhouse where she was once a mistress.

Mrs Mann

She was the lady-in-charge of the poor house where Oliver was born. She was a heartless woman. She little cared for the children in her charge. She did not spend the money given to her by the parish board to run the poorhouse. She took much of the money for herself. She ill-treated and under-fed the children. Outwardly she put on a show as if she was quite fond of her charges. She was as cruel and unkind as Mr and Mrs Bumble.

Mr Sowerberry

He was an undertaker. He took Oliver as an apprentice under him. He to had no feeling. He treated Oliver unkindly

He believed what his wife had said and hit Oliver. He was a wicked employer.

Mrs Sowerberry

She was the wife of the undertaker. She was more inhuman than her husband. Her actions caused Oliver a lot of misery. She had got her husband and Mr Bumble to hit Oliver unreasonably. This made Oliver to run away from the undertaker's shop.

Noah Claypole

He was a minor character in the story. He had no character. He was a worker in the undertaker's shop. He had a passion for teasing Oliver. He called him names. He abused him as a poor house lad. He teased Oliver and his mother. He called Oliver's mother an Immoral lady. Oliver could not bear him call his mother that way. Hence one day Oliver gave him a few blows and that resulted in Oliver having been punished and locked up in a room by Mr Sowerberry.

Noah Claypole was no match to Oliver in any way.

Charlotte

She was a servant to Mrs Sowerberry. She was a dirty girl. She was friendly with Noah Claypole. Both together made Oliver's life very miserable at the undertaker's shop. She always took the side of Noah Claypole in any quarrels with Oliver.

The Artful Dodger

His real name was Jack Dawkins. He was a key member of Fagin's gang. He was a clever pick-pocket. It was he who took Oliver to Fagin and his evil gang. He had done a lot of crime. Every time he committed a theft or crime, he went Scot-free. As with all criminals, he was arrested in the end and was sent to jail.

Fagin

He was a Jew.

He was a master-cook. He was a picture of all that was unhuman and wicked. He had a gang of notorious boys and girls. He trained and used them to pick the pockets of people. His house provided shelter for all the thieves. They were paid regularly for their acts of thieving, stealing or pick-pocketing. All the shady characters like Jack Dawkins, Bill Sikes, Toby Crackit, Charlie Bates and Nancy were under his grip and he got them to do anything he wanted. Ever poor Oliver was taken to him by the Artful Dodger where Oliver had many bitter experiences.

Monks, half brother of Oliver had used Fagin to turn Oliver into a thief.

Towards the end Fagin was arrested for his many crimes and was sentenced to death. Such was the end of a very wicked man.

Bill Sikes

He was a scoundrel ; the villain in the story ; a hardened criminal ; a dare devil. He kept Nancy as his mistress, treated her most cruelly and at last killed her for what she did to reveal to Miss Rose and Mr Brownlow about the unfortunate plight of Oliver and the evil designs of Monks.

It was Bill Sikes who tracked down Oliver from Brownlow's home and took him back to Fagin.

It was also Bill Sikes who planned the robbery of the home of Mrs Maylie which failed.

With the failure of his robbery, the life and fortunes of Bill Sikes began to topple down.

With his murder of Nancy, her ghost began to haunt him.

Bill Sikes was now wanted by the Police. He was trying to get away from the arm of the Law. So, he went to a house of his friends to seek refuge. But all his efforts failed and he met his death in a noose that he himself had made in his attempt to jump off from the house where he was hiding. He sowed the wind and reaped the whirl wind.

Nancy

Her life was the story of a good girl who got spoilt by getting into a bad company. Perhaps, society was the cause for her plight. This was clear from what she had told Miss Rose that girls like her would not have taken to evil ways if there had been persons like Miss Rose!

Nancy was a member of Fagin's gang and a mistress of Bill Sikes. She had another girl companion too by the name Bet,

Nancy was not treated well by Sikes. Still, she did not want to desert him.

She regretted within herself for having brought back Oliver. Hence she met Miss Rose and told her all she knew of Oliver's plight and how a person like Monks was out to harm him.

Thereafter she met both Miss Rose Maylie and Mr Brownlow on the London Bridge and gave full details of Monks and Fagin. If not for her Mr Brownlow could not have got all the details of Monks and his sinister schemes. Poor girl Nancy paid dearly losing her life for her efforts to save Oliver. Nancy was indeed a very excellent character. Our sympathies are with her.

Charlie Bates

He too belonged to Fagin's gang. But he was not that skilful as the Dodger or Bill Sikes. It was he who acted as the spy. He was used by Fagin to spy on Nancy on her strange midnight visits. He followed Nancy, unseen and un-

noticed, hid himself close to Nancy, Miss Rose and Mr Brownlow, heard all that she had told them and reported back to Fagin. It was his spying that brought about Nancy's murder by Bill Sikes.

Charlie Bates was deeply grieved when he came to know of Nancy's murder. When he met Sikes for the last time, he hated his very sight and said that if only he had known he would kill her, he would not have told all that he had seen of and heard from Nancy.

He revealed his anger by crying out to the crowd that had gathered out that Bill Sikes was in the house. It was this cry from Bates that made Sikes to jump out of the house and caused his death.

Charlie Bates was after all not that bad as the Dodger or Sikes. The circumstances in which he was placed made him take to that bad way of life and living.

In the end, he gave up his past life and became a farm labourer and ended up well as a farmer in Northamptonshire.

Mr Fang

He was a Magistrate. He was of a convicting type. No one who went before him on any charge rarely escaped punishment. He was about to convict Oliver when the bookshop owner ran into the courts and swore that it was not Oliver but another boy who had stolen the gentleman's handkerchief. This is to the credit of British Justice that it acted on evidence.

Mr Grimwig

He was a trusted friend of Mr Brownlow. But unlike Mr Brownlow he had a biased or prejudiced outlook. He always discredited the beliefs of others. To him, Oliver was a bad boy, dishonest, shy, cunning and not trustworthy. But Mr

Brownlow always disagreed with him on such matters although he was his friend.

In short Mr Grimwig was a peculiar man. He always believed that it was not Oliver who had come back !

Monks

Like Bill Sikes,, Monks was a wicked man. The only good thing about him was that he was the son of Mr Edwin Leeford by his first marriage. Hence, he is a half brother of Oliver. He did not like Oliver at all. He was all out to make Oliver a bad boy. His only reason was his greed to take all his father's wealth to him. Hence he went all out to remove, erase or destroy all signs, proofs or records that showed Oliver was in fact, his half - brother. He used his wealth and influence on Fagin to turn Oliver into a thief or a pick-pocket or something worse. Thanks to Nancy, all his evil designs were brought to the notice of Mr Brownlow and Miss Rose Maylie. Mr Brownlow did everything possible in his power, made Monks confess and declare everything before witnesses and got Oliver's full share from him.

Besides, Mr Brownlow also made Monks leave the country. He went to America. There he ran through all his wealth, took to a life of crime, ended up in prison and died there.

His life is an example of the saying "You reap what you sow"

Miss Rose Maylie

She was a beautiful girl, very kind and warm - hearted. She was introduced to the reader as a niece of Mrs Maylie.

Both aunt and niece led a quiet and happy life with their servants.

It was in their home that Bill Sikes attempted a robbery during the night taking with him Oliver and Toby Crackit. During the attempted robbery, Oliver got wounded ; the others ran leaving Oliver behind in a ditch. The following morning Oliver limped to the door - step of the very house where the robbery was attempted the previous night.

Miss Rose and Mrs Maylie took pity on him and did everything possible with the help of a doctor to bring him back to normal health.

The meeting of Miss Rose with Mr Brownlow regarding Oliver's future revealed that Miss Rose, was after all, Oliver's mother's younger sister. Miss Rose was adopted like a daughter after her parent's death by Mrs Maylie.

Thus Rose was in fact Oliver's aunt. This discovery made all very happy and brought about a wonderful reunion. Miss Rose married Mrs Maylie's son, Mr Harry Maylie, a Clergyman and lived happily ever after.

Mrs Maylie

She was the aunt of Miss Rose. She was a kind lady who took in wounded Oliver into her house and nursed him back to health. She was so keen that Oliver must regain his health that she got down Dr Losberne to treat him well. She was indeed a great lady who found a lot of pleasure in serving others.

Miss Rose too was an orphan whom she adopted with good care and love as her own child. Mrs Maylie was an exceptional lady of excellent qualities.

Dr Losberne

Like all else, he was a great man. He was not only a friend but a family doctor of the Maylies. He treated Oliver who was seriously ill and later became a well wisher of Oliver

too. Like Mr Brownlow, Dr Losberne too, in his own way tried to make Oliver live happily away from all dangers.

Mrs Bedwin

She was an old lady. She was Mr Brownlow's House-keeper. She had taken great care to nurse Oliver when Mr Brownlow first took him to his house. She was one of those who felt very happy when Oliver's identity was established and began to live well as Mr Brownlow's adopted son.

Giles and Brittles

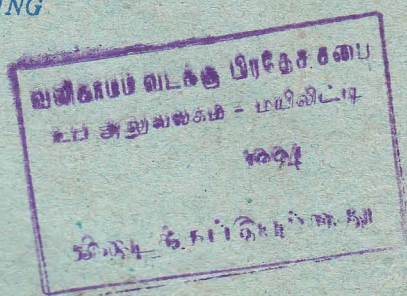
Giles was the head- servant and Brittles was his assistant in the Maylie household.

It was Giles who found out that Oliver was one among those who attempted to rob their house. But both of them were the loyal servants of the Maylies.

Toby Crackit

He was a friend of Bill Sikes. He joined him on the attempted robbery. When the attempt failed, he ran away and informed Fagin of the failure of the mission. We meet him again in the house where Sikes ran for help just before he died.

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