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Social and cultural formations in the Victorian literature

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Abstract

Queen Victoria ascended throne in 1837 and this marked the beginning of Victorian Age. It was the time when Industrial revolution was going on in England (1760-1840), and this revolution created a deep impact on the history of England. Industrial revolution had many positive effects but along with this it had many negative impact also like poor working and living condition of labor, low wages etc. this created a division among society and led to the development of social class. After very long period of struggle, bargaining reform bill and trade union acts were passed. All these difference among society brought Victorian value and Victorian compromise.

Keywords: Social, cultural formations, Victorian literature

Introduction

Victorian compromise focused mainly on duty, proper behavior, modesty etc. on the other hand Victorian compromise is all about creating a balance between thought and action, religion and science, Enlightenment and wealth. David Ceil was the first to use this term. This period had a great quest for moral earnestness, cared much about social class, status and believed British people to superior over everything, their is a famous quote regarding this 'sun never set in British Empire' by they britishers had colonized almost one-third of the world. Also in this period women were supposed to stay at home and they were expected to show certain kind of manerism, it was a sort of petriarchal society. This part is depicted nicely in the works of Jane Austen while the other part had been depicted by Charles British working class movement for parliamentary reform was a national movement which grew out of injustice by industrialist, it continued for almost eleven years and main demands by workers were as follows: the very first thing they asked was Universal manhood suffrage, secondly they asked for equal electoral district, third was to vote by ballat, fourth was to annually elect parliament, fifth thing they asked was regarding payment of members of parliament and sixth was to abolish the property given to members.

Thomas Carlyle published a pamphlet in 1839 called Charletism and in this he talked about Condition of England Novel. It raised the question of common people, talked about the condition of people and how people were suffering. Writers like Charles Dickens were associated with it.

Social and Cultural problems of this period had been depicted by two great novelist one is Jane Austen and other we have is Charles Dickens. Though Jane Austen wrote majorly during romantic period but the kind picture she present in her novel is very similar to that of Victorian life style of women especially her concept about the economic position of women. Gilbert and Gulber explain "Austen examines the female powerlessness that underline monetary pressure to marry, the injustice of inheritance laws, the ignorance of women denied formal education, the psychological vulnerability of the heiress or widow, the exploited dependency of the spinster, the boredom of the lady provided with no vocation".

In Victorian period women were dressed up in order to showcase their bodily feature. Throughout the Victorian Era women were treated as secondary citizen to men in society, they had to live very restricted lifestyle.

Entire society was divided in three parts Lower, middle and upper class. The lower class included people who did physical labor and in return paid on daily basis, the middle class people include comparatively sophisticated work and we're paid on monthly basis while the upper class were the one who didn't work and their income came from investment. It consisted mainly Kings and queens, aristocrats, nobles, dukes etc.

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Middle class was powerful in this period but it was dominated mainly by men, this society was much patriarchal.

Conclusion

The condition of lower class had clearly been shown in Charles Dickens Novel. In his novel he had dealt with the difference between poor and rich where rich is using entire worldly facility while poor left to die from starving. Though the condition had not changed much in present time and we still need to learn a lot of things from history to make our future better.

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