



In the Victorian era, the upper-class men's daily life style was very important for maintaining his social status. These men were often referred to as the "working class" due to the large number of impoverished on the streets. Among the things he needed to care about were his fashion, how he spent his wages and earnings, and how he chose a wife and how said wife would play a part in his logical thinking (ranging from how he spends his money, to where he spends his time) from day-to-day. We will also, look at if he spent his money on the poor of his day or focused on his own lifestyle.

The upper-class man needed to focus on his clothing style. This consisted of dark and plain colors: a hat (main display of social status), ascot, trousers, jackets, and white collared shirts. (Mitchell 134) This dress style showed not only the man's wealth and integrity, but his actual masculinity during this time period. Due to the many poor during the Victorian era, the "working man" had to display that they were comfortable in the clothes that they were wearing otherwise it would not show that they had a joy in wealth. Although the men did not always get the chance to wear bright colors, "Checks and stripes were 'un-serious'-and regarded as the mark of a loafer or con-man" (Mitchell 134) they were certainly able to be taken seriously due to the moderately bland attire. This allowed the man to take the more dominate role in the home as well as the stronger lead in a relationship.



The men of this time period that were "well off" spent their money on gambling, women, coffee, clothes, and clubs. (Ward) These were slowly becoming adapted to the new type of civilization. Coffee, as it happens, was a very important commodity that allowed for conversations about politics and business to take place very much as it does today in our local coffee shops (Starbucks, for example). These houses were so numerous that "so universally was it found to lend itself to social gatherings, to promote conversation, and alas to afford opportunities for gambling, that by the middle of Queen Anne's reign the number of Coffee Houses in London and Westminster had grown to several hundreds, some imaginative estimates putting the figure at 2,000." (Ward) This fact shows how important the coffee house (maybe not so much the drink itself) was to the men of the era, allowing their opinions and habits to be voiced with other men of like-minded thinking for daily social activities. For the wealthy, as the era progressed, the social coffee houses (and taverns) gave way to clubs that focused on fashion and meant for certain groups of people, such as the military. As for men spending money on women, "prostitution in Victorian society served mostly the needs of unmarried men of all classes, including confirmed bachelors or those postponing marriage until their income could provide for it." (Malheiro) Therefore, it was not an uncommon commodity among men in the society who felt that they needed companionship. Although, the upper-class of the Victorian era seemed to be all about upholding themselves and their morals, there were definitely points where those ideals faltered for some men, of all types.

Wealthy Victorian men chose a wife by how she acted, his feelings for her, and how wealthy her family was. (Malheiro) The concept behind a man choosing a wife for the upper-class must also mean that the man had to court her and that the female accepted. Courting was done by, the basic ways of poems, sonnets, playing music, dancing, gifts, or simply spending

time with the woman (close to how it is still done today). In the marriage after courtship, the idea “was that husband and wife would be spending a great deal of time in each other's company - lingering meal times, music-making, reading aloud, the afternoon tea.” Doing these simple tasks together as a couple helped them bond and enjoy one another's company. If he had a lot of money, it was common for her family to have wealth as well. However, for a woman, marriage was more than just an important commitment to the man, her assets (once her dad's assets) became his and she would have to share them with her husband, never getting them back to be fully her own, even if she wanted divorce, they would remain his. Especially because the man was the dominant role in the marriage, love, had to be a mutual consensus or the two would uncommonly be marrying for the wrong reasons. Due to the nature of holding moralities high in the upper-class family, the couple had to work together to keep up appearances although, “the message was still clear, the husband's duty was to provide for the family and govern it, the management of the family belonged to the wife.” (Henry) Allowing, the understanding that there was still a mutual agreement on running the household and that both figures had significance within it, the man, still as the head, relied on his wife significantly to help take care of the rest of the family when he was working. The man and the wife, even in this era had an understanding of the other, however, ultimately, it was the man who led the family and chose how he wanted it to run.

The life style of the upper-class Victorian man allowed for social activities, a family, and of course the well-dressed dandy images we see all over the internet and movies today. He had many obligations as a husband, worker, and a high-status holding citizen of the society. He spent his earnings and time on either his family and/or mainly personal indulgences, focused on his own life and not the poor. Focusing on how the basic fancy-man of the era lived his life, it seems self-centered, yet well rounded between social aspects and family. Truly, it was not an easy life to live.

Works Cited

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