

A Tale of Two Cities

Charles Dickens has been acclaimed as one of the foremost satirists of the nineteenth century. In his novel A Tale of Two Cities Dickens finds fault with the social structure of the society. A few of these social problems are the difference between the classes, the lunacy of the revolution, and the judicial system in effect as this time.

The first of the faults in the social structure of the society is the difference between the classes. It is not just the difference between the poor and rich but also between the rich and the royalty. While Monsieur the Marquis is driving through St. Antoine, he runs over a child. All he does is toss a few gold coins out to the father and drives away. This is showing that all the aristocracy cares about is money. Another place in the novel where Dickens shows the difference between the classes is when the Monseigneur is having his chocolate while everyone is waiting to speak with him. When he is done with his chocolate all he does is walk out and brushes past everyone else as if they are not there. This shows that all the higher aristocracy cares about is themselves.

Another fault the Dickens points out about the social structure in the society is the lunacy associated with the revolution. The way the people of St. Antoine get crazy from being in such a violent situation is the fault that is being described here. When the wood-sawyer starts talking about his saw as "his little guillotine" it shows that he is affected and is a "typical revolutionary", with a cruel regard for life. Another place where Dickens describes this revolution lunacy is when the crowd of "five thousand demons" come around the corner "dancing" to the Carmagnole, the song of the revolution. This shows that everyone who has a part in the revolution has become like one, a large mass of mindless people who only have death on their minds.

The third fault that Dickens wants to point out in the novel is the way the judicial system is corrupt. Throughout the novel Dickens mentions that any of the aristocracy could have put any person in prison just by "making a call." This shows that there was no system of balances to keep order in the courts. Another way Dickens shows the faults in the judicial system is when Madame Defarge wants to kill not just Charles Darnay, but his entire family. This shows that during the revolution the judicial system was changed, to suit the common people, but the mentality remained the same.

Because of these faults, Dickens shows that nothing is perfect, not even after the revolution does anything really change. These are not the only faults of the social structure of the society, but there are many more that show Dickens' ridicule for this society.

