

Dignity of Women in the Society portrayed in Jane Eyre

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Abstract : *Women in this society have a great responsibility. Equal rights had been demonstrated for the sake of women in the present era. The present society had got lot of challenges, attaining equality between women and men and eliminating all forms of discrimination against them are fundamental human rights and United Nation's values. Women around the world nevertheless regularly suffer violations of their human rights has not always been a priority. Achieving equality between women and men requires a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which women experience discrimination and are denied equality so as to develop appropriate strategies to eliminate such discrimination. In this paper the dignity of women is being compared according to the views of Jane Eyre. Here, in this novel the experiences of the character are being expressed in a vivid manner. The character in this novel indicates three important aspects human dignity, social status and challenges.*

Keywords: *Gender, Identity, Discrimination, Domestic Violence*

Introduction

Charlotte Bronte (1816 – 1855) is an English novelist, the eldest of the three Bronte sisters whose novel have become enduring classic of English literature. *Jane Eyre* is widely acclaimed as her masterpiece. Our heroine Jane Eyre is an orphan, and she is ill-treated in her young age. She strives for her life, and forms a tough character. She learns how to live from her childhood's environment. Also just for her growing experience, it creates her strong personality. She is a special image out of ordinary. She makes a life by herself, and dares to show her own voice. Under the pressure of life, she always maintains her self-respect by hard work, intelligence and though individualism. She never gives in on her way. Though she has little figure, she is huge in soul. She pursues true love and is loyal and steadfast to her beloved. Her kindness, intelligence, and independence attract the hero. At last she gets a perfect love.

Orphans in the Victorian era

The abandoned children were society scopes at a person without a past connection. States without orphans were also often treated with disdain and distrust due to their reputation as criminally prone individual the upper and middle classes often had a somewhat romantic perception of them due to their prevalence in Victorian literature. Children who were adopted by their own social class were usually treated fairly equally but if they were adopted by a family whose status was above and beyond their original class. They were frequently mistreated and neglected.

Many Philanthropists donated money to the orphan schools, for the purpose of boarding and educating orphans. Their education was rarely as good as those whose families paid for it. Most of the programmers were designed specifically to train children to a lower-middle class occupation such as becoming a governess food education and lodging were provided until the orphan turned. Then they were expected to begin working many were underfunded crowded and unsanitary disease spread rapidly in such close quarters, and poor nutrition and excess punishment did not help matter much.

Class divisions in the Victorian society

Working class-men and women, who performed physical labor, paid daily or weekly wages. Middle class-men performed mentor or clean work, paid monthly or annually upper class did not work income care from inherited land and investments.

Women in the Victorian society

Two hundred years ago, the barriers of the Victorian class system rigidly defined the role of a woman. It has been divided into distinct classes. Mobility and gentry's middle class, working class these women each had their own specific standards and roles. They were expected to adhere to these standards alone.

In *Jane Eyre*, feministic ideals of women in the Victorian society have been vividly explained. There is a proof of Jane's free spirit and a feminist ideal is her relation with Rochester. Even if she is a governess (less than a member of the family, but more than a servant given her education), she does not consider herself (Bronte) inferior to Rochester in terms of spiritual qualities. She insists that, she is much more than her social status, saying "Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! I have as much soul as you--and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you" (...) Do you think I am an automaton? a machine without feelings? Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong — I have as much soul as you, — and full as much heart...I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh; — it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal, — as we are, [vi]

She wants recognition that both sexes are equal in terms of "heart and spirit". She defines herself as a spiritual human being, refusing to be defined in terms of so-called "marriageability". She merely rejects the idea of being objectified, even if Rochester tries to objectify her, when he buys her all kinds of expensive jewels and garments. (The more he bought me, the more my cheek burned with a sense of annoyance and degradation") [vii]. Marriage as a sort of entrapment that will make her lose both her independence and her true self. That is the reason why she

cannot accept a marriage as a mere convention and why she refuses his cousin's proposal. His attitude towards her refusal is relevant for women's condition in the Victorian Age. St John is angry with her because he rejects the idea that a woman might not want to get married:

“And do not forget that if you reject it, it is not me you deny, but God. Through my means, He opens to you a noble career; as my wife only can you enter upon it. Refuse to be my wife, and you limit yourself forever to a track of selfish ease and barren obscurity. Tremble lest in that case you should be numbered with those who have denied faith, and are worse than infidels!”[viii]

Conclusion

Jane Eyre in the period of Victorian age, is being expressed as an iron women by the author. She is a strong lady. What made her to be strong at the same time very critical in her way of thinking? It's the experiences that made her to be bold and strong in the decisions. It is very difficult to be bold and courageous as a female. But at the same time it is also very challenging too. There are three main factors that explain about her figurativeness. First thing is the experience of dark room, the selfish motives of her lover, made her to be strong in her decisions? At the age of seven she behaved like a matured women her way of action and the words, didn't match with her ability of that status. She was courage enough to stand on her own decisions. She placed a great remark in the world of literature. It gave a great dignity for her.

Reference

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