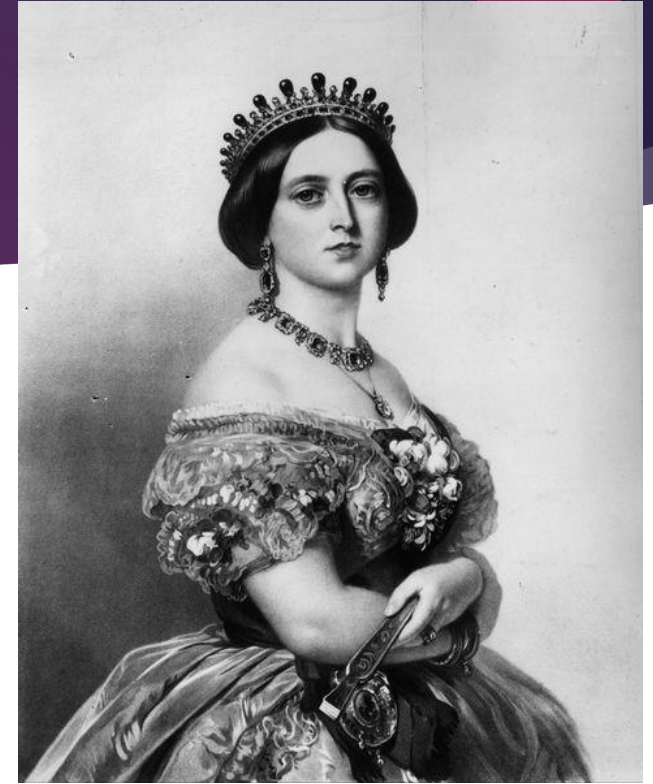


# The Victorian Age

# The Victorian Age or Era

- From 1837 ( the year in which Victoria became Queen) to 1901 ( year of her death)
- Industrial revolution ( great exposition and the construction of the Christal Palace), and Imperialism
- England experienced a time of growth, expansion and reform



# Power and Empire

- Richest nation (first industrialized nation)
- Most powerful nation
  - unchallenged military supremacy
  - empire covers  $\frac{1}{4}$  of earth's surface
    - 18 major territories added including India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, most of East Africa and the Caribbean.

This power was also displayed in the tendency of Victorian to show the superiority of white race, in particular British people over other races.

# Victorian social classes



Upper- classes people established a clear division between different socio-economic classes.

- The rise of the middle class, so of new kinds of wealth (people are getting rich in new ways, through production, manufacture, trading maney and articles)
- New worry about where do this people fit?
- Social norms that dictated what place you had in society, who you was going to be friend with.

## Upper class

Aristocracy members, nobles.

Upper class values were history and heritage.

Noblesse oblige – they considered it their duty to take care of society

Importance given to rich and respectable families

## Middle class

Or Bourgeoisie - people who had skilled jobs to support themselves and their families. Merchants, shops or factories owners, bankers...

Middle class values were:

Money

Production

Self-reliance

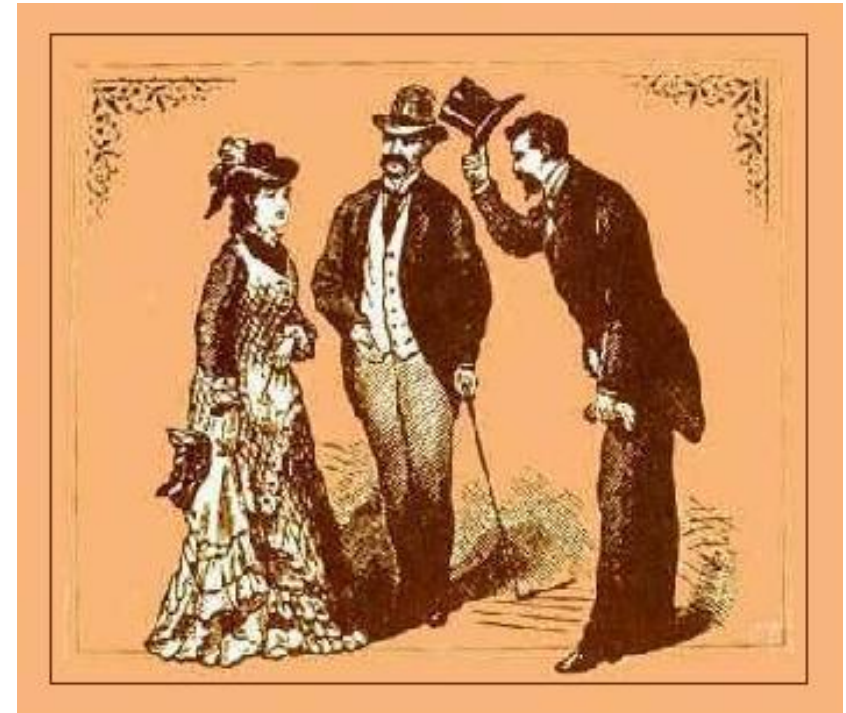
## Working classes

Unskilled laborers who worked in brutal and unsanitary conditions who mainly lived on the streets in suburbs of industrialized cities, often called «slums». They hadn't access to clean water or food, education for children, or proper clothing.

Sometimes, the poor were offered an accommodation in those workhouses, where they shared a living space with orphaned and abandoned children, the physically and mentally sick, the disabled, the elderly and unmarried mothers.

# Victorian Values

- Strict code of values made of respectability, reputation, appearance (Dandy), conventional morality (Single women couldn't spend some time alone with a man at home, no physical contact until marriage...)
- Strict code of behaviour especially for women who were considered pure and innocent creatures (angel of the house, purity, devotion) not eligible for most employments, higher education, vote (only in 1890 women experience greater access to education, employment, political and legal rights, and civic visibility that's what we call the fear of "new woman")
- Good manners were extremely important (can't stop to chat in a crowded street, avoid animated speech and loud talking...)



# Moral decay and fears

- Fear of anything morally corrupt, criminal or perverse
- Fear of increased levels of crime especially in London «slums» that became notorious for overcrowding, unsanitary and squalid living conditions, inhabited not only by the working classes but also by immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, mostly poor Russian, Polish and German Jews ( Aliens act 1905 placed a restriction on Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe – need to purify British society)
- Homosexuality was illegal and punishable by death or imprisonment

# Conclusion

There were many restrictions. They tried to create a moral society. The Victorians wanted to mask the reality and promote this code of values. However, these restrictions didn't give them what they wanted

Moreover, it created corruption like prostitution, alcoholism, child labouring, poverty and consequently increased levels of crimes.

This silent pact between the progresses and its consequences, the richness and the poverty, wealth and its price in a very contradictory Era, is what we define as the Victorian compromise.



# Victorian Compromise

- ▶ Progress
- ▶ Stability
- ▶ Social reforms
- ▶ Ethical morality
- ▶ Sexual repression
- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Unjustice
- ▶ Social unrest
- ▶ Corruption, money –making ( even if part of England's wealth came from child labour)
- ▶ Prostitution