The Representation of Social Classes in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes

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The Representation of Social Classes in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes

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List of abbreviations

"MTL" ..... "The Man with the Twisted Lip"

"BC" ..... "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle"

"VL" ..... "The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger"

"ET" ..... "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb"

"CI" ..... "A Case of Identity"

"TB" ..... "The Adventure of Thor Bridge"

"NB" ..... "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor"

"PS" ..... "The Adventure of the Priory School"

"DLFC" ..... "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax"

Introduction

In 1887, the public discovered the character Sherlock Holmes in *A Study in Scarlet*, a novel written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in which the detective and his associate Doctor John Watson appear for the first time (Rohner, 91). Although Doyle definitely stopped the publication of novels and short stories about Sherlock Holmes in 1930, the detective is still popular nowadays, as the recent movies and series on Netflix which are derived from the Sherlock Holmes' stories prove. A character who has been known worldwide for more than a century at least rings a bell in an enormous amount of people's mind, and Sherlock Holmes is instantaneously recognisable when this silhouette with a cap and a pipe is shown:

Illustration from *gettyimages.fr*.

Another element which confirms that Sherlock Holmes is still popular is the fact that many people still visit 221B Baker street, the address in London which Arthur Conan Doyle has decided to provide his character with (Stevens et al., 570). Andrew Glazzard affirms that not only members of the lower and middle class (the second being the class in which Doyle belonged) read the Sherlock Holmes' stories, but also members of the upper class and even the monarchy, as he explains that King Edward VII has read *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901-

1902) in 1902, during his convalescence from appendicitis, although he did not appreciate the novel (63). The fact that Doyle's stories ended up in the hands of the King of the United Kingdom shows the impact it had at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Sherlock Holmes is, undoubtedly, Doyle's most famous work, Diniejko argues. However, he asserts that the author was not satisfied with his detective fictions. He explains that Sherlock Holmes is introduced to the reader in *A Study in Scarlet*, the first novel, which was published in the *Beeton's Christmas Annual* and *The Sign of Four*, the second novel, followed in 1890 in the *Lippincott's Magazine*. Benjamin O'Dell claims that this publication allowed Doyle's work to be recognised not only in the United States where the first novel was already popular, but also in England (36). Diniejko writes that the next year, he started publishing his short stories in *The Strand Magazine* with "A Scandal in Bohemia", which brought success to the detective. He asserts that in the end, Doyle wrote four novels and fifty-six Sherlock Holmes' short stories between 1887 and 1927. He states that in 1893 Doyle wrote "The Final Problem", supposedly the last adventure of Sherlock Holmes in which he disappears at the end, but the public asked for more of his stories and he wrote many more after 1902. Vera Tobin, professor of Cognitive Science, explains that many people believed Sherlock Holmes was a real person, as it was common to talk about him not as a fictional character, but as an existing detective (73). This contributes to the popularity of the detective: if people believed he had existed, it probably seemed almost unnatural that somebody could solve so many enquiries with deduction. She also writes that there exists a group of people called the "Sherlockians", who know that Holmes never existed, but who pretend to believe he has lived (75). She claims that they still write books and articles in which they relate Holmes' and Watson's pretended life (75).

According to Diniejko, during his childhood, Arthur Conan Doyle discovered Edgar Allan Poe's writings, and the character C. Auguste Dupin was a great source of inspiration for

his detective. He adds that another inspiration is Dr Joseph Bell (1837-1911) an expert in deductive reasoning whom he met while studying in Edinburgh. Doyle did not create characters with a strong personality such as Holmes and Watson per chance. Diniejko explains that the character Sherlock Holmes represents Doyle's ideal of the rational and scientific Englishman, although he shows some weaknesses such as the use of drugs, which Watson tries to stop. He states that the stories also show the power of the British Empire during the late Victorian and the Edwardian era. According to archaeologist John McNabb, Doyle believed the Anglo-Saxons were superior to other races (745). To him, although Holmes and Watson are two opposite characters, they both represent loyal imperialists and have a great sense of justice, which was praised in this era (746). O'Dell adds that fiction was a means to express social questions which were not easily debated otherwise, and Doyle uses Holmes to show both positive and negative aspects of the English society (4). He also writes that these detective stories were meant to be read by a middle class public (like the author and the main characters were) and that Doyle tried to force the readers to think further about their environment (62).

With his four novels and fifty-six short stories about the adventures of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson, Doyle has covered a wide range of subject matters, such as politics, economics, love, science, and many more. But the subject that interests us the most in this analysis is social classes. Indeed, during his enquiries, Holmes and his friend meet hundreds of different people, from all social classes and who occupy all sorts of jobs at the time, and they do not hesitate to comment on people's status, as shown by this quote which can be read in a dialogue between the King of Bohemia and Sherlock Holmes in the short story "A Scandal in Bohemia":

> "What a woman—oh, what a woman!" cried the King of Bohemia, when we had all three read this epistle. "Did I not tell you how quick and resolute she was? Would she not have made an admirable queen? Is it not a pity that she was not on my level?"

> "From what I have seen of the lady she seems indeed to be on a very different level to your Majesty," said Holmes coldly, "I am sorry that I have not been able to bring your Majesty's business to a more successful conclusion." (175)

This piece of dialogue proves that social status is a significant subject matter in the Sherlock Holmes' narratives, as the King of Bohemia clearly asserts that he could not have married Irene Adler despite her numerous qualities because of her rank, to which Holmes responds that, in a sense, she is better than he is. Doyle thus provided the reader with an overview of the life of these people at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, which means during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. In this dissertation, the relation which Holmes and Watson maintain towards people from different social classes will be studied. The essay will also provide an overview of the life of people with different economic status at the time when the stories were written, through the characters (primary or secondary) who were created by Arthur Conan Doyle. This essay begins with a historical background, in which the lifestyles of average people who belong to the lower class, the middle class and the upper class at the time will be clarified in order to understand the behaviours and words of many characters which are going to be the subject of this study. It follows with a short biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, which helps understand his position in the English society and the connection he had with his characters, as well as a section about narration in the Sherlock Holmes' stories, which will clear up the importance of the character Doctor Watson, Holmes' acolyte, for the reception of the stories by the public. The centre of this dissertation consists of an analysis of nine short stories in regard to social class and narration. These nine short stories will be divided in three sub-categories: three stories about characters belonging to the lower class, another three about characters from the middle class, and the last ones about members of the upper class. These short stories have been chosen considering the subject matter which they treat;: and the social class to which the characters who Holmes and Watson meet during their enquiry belong. The essay ends up with a conclusion on the different analyses, in order to understand the relationship between Doyle, Holmes, Watson, and people from the different social classes that could be met

in Great Britain (especially London and its surroundings) at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.

Historical Background

According to historian David Cody, the term "class" is used since the end of the eighteenth century (Social). He writes that class has been an important feature in the construction of the British society as it is today, and classes are differentiated in terms of inequalities of power, wealth, living-conditions, etc. (Social). Cody explains that in the nineteenth century, three main social classes were to be distinguished: the upper class, the middle class, and the working class (Social). These terms are going to be clarified below, as well as a fourth category, what he calls the under class, which goes on the lower step of the social scale. He also affirms that these social categories were relatively stable until World War I, but there still are social classes nowadays, although not in the exact same form (Social).

Lower class

The lower class is the first social category which is going to be clarified in this dissertation. The working class people were defined because of the fact that they had to work manually. David Cody states that this category of people was left away from the political life and remained unfriendly to the upper and middle class (Social). According to historian Gareth Stedman Jones, there emerged a new culture of the working class around 1870-1900 which would later be called "traditional" (182). He writes that in the years 1880, unemployment and poverty brought working class people into London, which lead to an overcrowding of the city (190). Stedman Jones explains that at the time, streets were filled with beggars, leading to insecurity, epidemics and starvation, the gap between the poorer and richer people thus grew bigger (191-193). In the end of the Victorian era, he states, access to the pubs had been restricted, as well as other sources of amusement for the working class, because it did not correspond to the ideals of religion (194).

He claims that higher classes wanted to improve working class' attitudes by forbidding them this sort of distraction (195). However, Stedman Jones explains that this attempt to bring more morality to the impoverished was vain because the poorer people were, the less religious (196). He argues that many poor people attended church, but it was rather a means to benefit from charity than by conviction (196). Although people drank less than before, he writes, drinking became more widespread (198). He adds that the pub frequentation had changed: it was now a place for relaxation, which was not only frequented by men but also by women and couples (198).

Gareth Stedman Jones affirms that appearance was an important matter in the late nineteenth century (201). He explains that many of the working class people would rather spend less money in their everyday life, in order to afford a Sunday suit which would inspire respectability (201). Kirsten Guest even argues that the importance accorded to clothing sometimes makes it had to determine someone's social class (54). Stedman Jones claims that one of the greatest sources of amusement in the second half of the century was music-halls, especially in London, in which the public, as well as the performers of songs and sketches, were mostly composed of members of the working class (205-206). He asserts that music-halls were open to families, and were a great part of the working class culture, which is defined by Booth as that of "pleasure, amusement, hospitality and sport", although they wished to stay away from other classes (207-208). He explains that in the 1890's, members of the working class in central London were more interested in entertainment than in politics (209). Historian John Burnett adds that working class people tried in the nineteenth century to create a world of their own in London and its outskirts as a means to escape the brutality of their work and to be united with their fellows (Hidden). He explains that, in some way, they "perpetuated traditional values and patterns of behaviour, essentially of rural origin, into the new urban industrial society." (Hidden). Stedman Jones asserts that the great source of entertainment for the working class

(and later, even upper class) which represented the music-halls was forced to stop its activity in 1912, under the reign of Georges V (233). According to him, socialism was becoming more and more popular in the outskirts of the city, but inside London it did not reach many inhabitants, who tended to be more radical (210). He argues that this period was also a time of decline for the Trade Unions, especially in the capital city, as they remained passive in times of anxiety (212). He adds that the Conservatives thus gained success with the workers, who were afraid of poverty and unemployment (213).

Although the name of their social class comes from the fact that they work hard to earn a living, they had to find a balance between their job and free time, inside and outside the house. Stedman Jones explains that in the first half of the nineteenth century, work was the centre of their life as they usually had to work twelve hours a day, six days a week (217). He claims that this changed in the end of the century, during which the amount of working hours had been reduced to nine hours a day, five days a week, and a half day of work on Saturdays, which is one of the reasons why entertainment had taken such an important place in their habits (217). He writes that many workers lived in the suburbs of the city and came to work in the centre by tram, train or on foot (218). At the same time, Stedman Jones writes, spending power increased, which allowed many wives to stay home and take care of the household and children, and lead them to become the head of the house (218-219). He states that home thus became a very important place, as people spent more time there, but this also allowed men and women to go to the local pub and talk with other members of their social class about politics, but mainly about sport and entertainment (220). However, he affirms that life was not as easy for the people who lived in the centre of London, due to the high prices of rents (223).

Belonging to the working class did not mean that every member of this social class were equal in wealth. According to Cody, there was a great difference in status and income between skilled and unskilled workers (Social). There is a wide range of jobs which could be occupied

by the working class (Victorian Occupations). Skilled workers could be artisans working in pottery or iron and steel, others worked in mines, factories, as servants, or did agricultural labour in rural areas, whereas unskilled workers could be street pedlars, costermongers, rat catchers or work for the Navvy (Victorian Occupations). Some of the poorer women decided to prostitute themselves in order to survive (Victorian Women). Burnett explains that although many wives did not have to work, lots of men (especially unskilled workers) did not earn enough money to support their family, their wife thus also had a job (Victorian).

Stedman Jones also writes about marriage. He explains that it was really important for a girl's economic wealth to get married, and they often were the one who decides to join in marriage in the couple (226). But he adds that marriage can be a huge disadvantage for men: as it is often the result of pregnancy, or leads to pregnancy, it means that it will cost a lot of money to raise the children until they are able to work and bring money to the family (226). He thus states that marriage often rhymes with decrease of the standard of living, and this has been highly shown in songs that could be heard in music-halls. (226). Burnett affirms that, although the working class remained hidden in the English society, they became a relatively important part of it during the nineteenth century as the standards of living improved (Hidden).

Burnett argues that despite their condition, lower class people did not complain of their situation, although some of them lived in great poverty (Working-class). Indeed, Cody explains that although skilled workers could afford a relatively stable standard of living, there also existed an "under class", which nineteenth century people used to call "sunken people" (Social). He writes that those people were the unskilled workers and those who had to beg in order to earn a living. These people lived in great poverty, and the way members of higher social classes called them tells a lot about their condition. Historian Anthony Wohl explains that they were considered as inferior, on the same scale as Irish and black people, and seen as irrational, childlike, filthy, sexual, and sharing physical qualities which were different from other English

people. In George W. M. Reynolds' *The Mysteries of London* (1845), London's beggars are considered as criminals and people who rely on their condition in order to pity richer people who would give them money (Professional Beggars in London). However, other works prove that this is not the truth, although it may have existed. Most beggars had to live in terrible conditions and did not have the choice to beg, as the unemployment was a huge problem in nineteenth century London, and a great source of anxiety, as mentioned earlier.

Despite the fact that they are defined by their obligation to work in order to earn money, the working class during the Victorian and Edwardian eras is also well-known for its sense of entertainment. Indeed, the nineteenth century saw the rise of music-halls, which were highly frequented by working class people, as well as pubs which were a place of meeting opportune to discussion. On Sundays, they could exhibit their most stylish clothes, as appearance was of great importance. Many women of the working class stayed at home to take care of the household, the house thus became an important aspect of people's lives. However, some women had to work. Marriage was of uppermost importance to them, whereas for men it was often a synonym of financial difficulties. The lower class embraces not only the working class, but also what was familiarly called the "sunken people", unskilled people who had to occupy thankless jobs or to beg in order to survive. After this presentation of the lower class, I will continue my dissertation with an explanation about the middle class in the Victorian and Edwardian era.

Middle class

The second social class which is analysed in this essay is what is commonly known as the middle class. Historian Simon Gunn asserts that, similarly to the working class, middle class people are not only defined by their economic status, but also by their political opinions and the culture they share (30). He also writes that the middle class has the particularity not to be fixed,

as someone from the working class who can afford studies can become a member of the middle class if he also adopts its habits and behaviours (30, 44). He writes that the middle class arose during the industrial revolution (around 1780-1830), allowing businessmen to earn high sums of money with their industries in which they employed many working class people (31). He adds that in 1932, the Great Reform Act allowed middle class men to vote: it gave them a place in the political process, which used to be an upper class domain (31). These conditions allowed the middle class to gain power and recognition, it was better considered by the upper classes as it contrasted with the working class which had radical opinions and was thought to be excessive in many aspects, he affirms (31). According to Gunn, the middle class was linked to the town, as it is the centre of commerce, their main work field (32). He also affirms that town, as opposed to rural regions, is also considered to be a place of civilisation, partly because of its numerous associations which allow social contact with other members of the same class (32). The middle class thus represented a middle ground between the (considered) excessive and radical working class and the (considered) corrupt upper class, he claims (32).

Similarly to the working class, being a member of the middle class did not mean that you had the same status and income than other people from the same class. During the Victorian era, Gunn writes, the middle class was well established, although all its members did not earn the same amount of money, which divided them between “lower middle” and “upper middle class” (36). He explains that, as for the working class, housing was important for the middle class which lived in a “middle class dwelling”: a suburban terrace, villa or mansion (38). Contrarily to the poorer people, he states that they usually were believers and regularly attended church (38).

Women of the middle class also took an active part in the family life. Gunn explains that during the second half of the Victorian period, women became important in the middle class structure, whereas earlier they were often left aside as they did not work (38). He states

that wives had a central role in the middle class home (38). Indeed, historian Caroline Lieffers writes that home was important as it was the reflection of one's social status (448). She explains that many middle class families hired one servant, but some had more at their service (454). According to her, servants were often dehumanised in those houses because they were treated like machines who had to be efficient, and this was a consequence of the mentality in an industrial era (450). She claims that the wife was the head of the house, taking all the decisions and supervising the servants' work, their occupations were thus quite mechanical (450). Lieffers also asserts that middle class women had an active place in the house: besides being the decision taker, they often helped the maids in their work as many families could not afford enough servants to make everything which was necessary in the household (454). Gunn adds that women were not only the ones responsible for the upholding of the status inside the house, but also outside, where they were attentive to their conduct and use of language (39).

According to Simon Gunn, after 1900 the middle class started to leave towns progressively, and many of the successful families slowly disappeared (41). Indeed, their status in enterprises had changed because of corporate capitalism, which separated ownership and management, he writes (41). However, he explains, many middle class figures were still really important in the society, like the teacher, the clergyman, or the bank manager, but their influence was now more significant in the suburbs than in cities (42). He also states that church attendance had considerably reduced, and the people who were to be seen in churches were getting older (42). Gunn writes that suburbia expended and many middle class people moved there, allowing them to afford a better standard of living, with a modern detached or semi-detached home, often with a garden (43). Although they moved, he explains that they kept their "urban" mentality (43). He also states that the amount of house owners increased during this period, which became an important aspect of the middle class culture: ownership was at that time more important than "urbanism" (43). He adds that the town slowly started to be more

associated with the working class than with the middle class, in opposition to the *fin de siècle* (43). Gunn explains that starting from World War I onwards, the middle class culture spread through the whole country, shaping a national identity (44). He affirms that, at that time, belonging to the middle class was linked to a good education, which also lead to middle class people speaking the same variation of English and sharing the same accent (44). He also explains that, from 1911 onwards, landowners and businessmen families were attached to the "upper middle class", whereas "lower middle class" people were financial workers and leaders of smaller businesses (45). This change in status over time and space renders it difficult, Gunn writes, to precisely define the middle class (46).

Belonging to the middle class was not only a matter of status, but it was also determined by the occupation. Andrew Glazzard, professor of National Security Policy and Practice, writes that middle class people were not only businessmen but that many people attained this status because of their education (43). He explains that people in the medical domain, as well as police detectives were part of what was called "the professionals", a category of people within the middle class (43). Although many middle class women stayed home, some chose to, or had to work: they could have occupations such as writer, tradeswoman, governess or teacher (Victorian Women).

The middle class is thus probably the hardest social class to define. Its members are recognised because they did not belong to lower or upper class. Middle class was often linked to urban areas, which was the centre of their occupation. Many of them were businessmen, but also educated men such as doctors, and men obtained the right to vote in the nineteenth century. Women also had an important position, as they were the head of the house. They often had a servant to help them in the household. At the beginning of the twentieth century, middle class people moved to the suburbs, although their mentality did not change. This allowed them to become owners of their house, which was an important feature of their social category. The

lower and middle class culture and habits have been clarified, I will continue my dissertation with a word about the upper class.

Upper class

The upper class is the last social category which is going to be discussed in this essay. It was, according to Cody, formed of the members of the traditional aristocracy and the new gentry (Social). He claims that they were at the head of the political system and frequented public schools and universities (Social). Glazzard affirms that these people, similarly to English people from other social origins, were not spared by the changes which took place during the Victorian era (24). Indeed, he asserts that many of them suffered from the great agricultural depression that occurred between 1875 and 1896 and which was due to several misfortunes (24). He adds that it was highly considered that this economical loss was partly due to the industrialisation of the land (25). Historian Martin J. Wiener writes that many English people "denied [the nation's] chief characteristics – the rise of industry" (41). He explains that the upper middle class and the upper class used to have great interest for the past (the Antiquity and rural traditions) (43). He affirms that whereas the upper class was well established in the cities, its members appreciated the peacefulness of the countryside, in contradiction with the industrial areas (48, 51). Wiener adds that this dream of a peaceful and traditional rurality expanded with World War I, and not only impacted the upper class, but also the middle class which "adopted the values of the class it replaced" (i.e. the upper class) (63, 72).

Historian Mark Rothery argues that another reason for the decline of wealth in the gentry was public schools (684). He writes that from 1840 onwards, many boys from the upper class were educated in public schools (684). Martin J. Wiener asserts that these schools created a uniformed elite through the country as young upper class males had all received the same

education and praised the same values (11). He affirms that many noblemen were at the head of companies and that sons of upper middle class businessmen were also admitted in public schools, which lead them to adopt the upper class culture (13, 16). Historian J.A. Mangan states that these schools did not focus their transmission on Christian values, but that it "was often a godless world of cold, hunger, competition and endurance", praising physical virtues (84). Wiener writes that, although public schools formed the political elite, few of its undergraduates attended universities (21-22). He adds that the prestigious universities of Oxford and Cambridge were shaped like public schools but were reserved for the children of the gentry, clergy, and more distinguished professions (22). Another factor in the defining of an upper class man's masculinity, according to Rothery, is the frequentation of a gentlemen's club (685). He states that "there was a growing belief that a man's formative years should be spent in the company of other men", which explained the importance of a social life outside the family (685). Historian Nancy W. Ellenberger affirms that there also were secret societies, such as the Apostles, which could be an opportunity to have profitable acquaintances in the upper society (24). She explains that it was well seen for a man to have male friends, however they had to be careful as, if they showed effeminate qualities, they could be considered as weak (25-26). She adds that the social life was especially important between February and July each year, which was called the "social season" (33). According to her, "wives of the wealthy regulated this realm of amusement, gossip and scrutiny through private entertainments that served the serious functions of matchmaking and patronage", which means that the season served for upper class people in age to marry to meet each other and eventually to find a wife or husband (33).

Wiener writes that public schools also served to educate men to being gentlemen, which was a new ideal in the Victorian era (13). He cites Bertrand Russell who writes: "the concept of the gentleman was invented by the aristocracy to keep the middle classes in order" as for middle class people to be considered gentlemen, they had to adopt upper classes' behaviour

(13). Whereas the gentleman was an ideal figure in the nineteenth century, Cody asserts that defining the concept of gentleman is not easy, and nineteenth century people could not precisely tell what it was (Gentleman). He claims that a male from the aristocracy was considered as a gentleman at birth, whereas other people could be called gentlemen because of their wealth and influence, or if they occupied certain positions such as clergyman, army officer, or member of the Parliament (Gentleman). However, the gentleman was not merely a concept of social class, as Cody states that they had to bear moral values which were those of an ideal medieval time, which reinforces the interest for tradition in the Victorian era (Gentleman). He concludes that in the end of the century, the English society admitted that males who had been educated in an elite public school (the most prestigious being Eton) would be considered as gentlemen, without considering their social origins (Gentleman). George P. Landow cites John Newman about the gentleman: "It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. […] He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him". This statement shows that the most important fact about being a gentleman is not related to class but to behaviour. It is thus quite complicated to define the gentleman and his function, as it is both reserved to members of the English elite, and praising moral values.

Rothery states that one of the consequences of the aristocracy's financial issues is the reduction of the number of children per family (675). He claims that in the first half of the twentieth century, upper class married couples had an average of 2.25 children, whereas they had an average of 4 children in the second half of the nineteenth century, and of 5.96 children in 1800 (674, 678). He also writes that by the end of the Victorian era, upper class people had more opportunities to control their fertility than previously, and many of them had a "very small family" (zero to one child), which was mostly seen in medical practitioner's families (680). Rothery explains that no gentry couples in the United Kingdom married after 1900 have had

more than eight children (682). He asserts that values of self-control were taught in public schools to gentry young males, which also lead to sexual abstinence and a belated age to marry, which is also partly responsible for the lower amount of births (687). Ellenberger nuances these statements as she explains that many couples in the Victorian era still had many children, even Queen Victoria has had nine children in seventeen years (52).

Other changes about the upper class during the Victorian era concern women. Indeed, Rothery affirms that the role of the landed woman changed during the nineteenth century, as well as the vision on motherhood (684). He adds that many women attended boarding schools and some were admitted to universities, which became even more widespread in the twentieth century when many women had an occupation before they got married (688). However, he argues that the freedom accorded to the "new women" was not accepted by many of the contemporaries (688). He writes that "40 percent of gentry women born after 1850 were educated in public schools and 21 percent went on to university" (690). Rothery also asserts that upper class women lived in the countryside longer than other English citizens, where they took part in charitable activities and maintained acquaintances (690). Ellenberger explains that women were recommended to have other female friends to teach them about the world outside the countryside (49). She also writes about the importance of marriage for a woman at the time: as divorce was rare, living in a happy marriage was fundamental (43). She adds that in order to be seen as a respectable woman and have the chance to marry a wealthy man, a girl's education was essential (43). She writes that upper class girls such as Laura Tennant were educated by governesses who taught them respect, often lacking affection (46). Ellenberg affirms that young women occupied their free time with different activities such as walks, tennis games or music (they often played an instrument or sang) (74). She explains that games were often played in the family circle, as it could potentially lead people to get nervous, not corresponding to

Victorian values anymore (76). She adds that young women were often religious, being concerned with sins (48).

The main figure of the English upper class was Queen Victoria (1819-1901), who reigned from 1837 until her death in January 1901 (Cody, Queen). Historian Mariana Bonnouvrier explains that the monarchy was a symbol, a personification of the nation, which was important to maintain unity and prosperity in the land (262-263). She argues that although many republicans stood against the monarchy during a long period of the reign, Victoria became more popular towards the end of the century, even for the republicans (265-271). However, she adds, the queen had to be a moral example for her people and every apparition she made was reported in the press (281). Bonnouvrier claims that Victoria was advised to visit the poorer areas of London and to not neglect contact with the working class (284). She asserts that England was remarkable for the fact that it combined monarchy and republic, which are two opposite terms (294). She writes that another factor which is important in the construction of the English monarchy as it exists in the Victorian era is the fact that most people did not believe in the monarchy of divine right anymore (280). Indeed, historian Glenn Burgess explains that James I (1566-1625) claimed to be the king by divine right, as proven by these words which he delivered in 1609: "The State of Monarchie is the supremest thing upon earth: For Kings are not onely Gods Lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon Gods throne, but even by God himselfe they are called Gods" (837). Burgess writes that the concept of divine right was a means to preserve the monarchy against other religious currents than Anglicanism (837). He also claims that it "made the theory of sovereignty concrete, thus facilitating its growth" (838). He argues that this theory was a means for the monarchy to prevent anarchy and resistance from the people (840). This concept is relevant for a study about social classes because it induces that the whole social system is divine. The idea was thus shared by the majority of people during James I's reign, but slowly weakened until most of the people did not adhere to it in the twentieth century.

The upper class during the Victorian and Edwardian eras is thus characterised by its education and wealth. Indeed, many young men frequented public schools and women started to receive a better education than it used to be, as some of them even went to university. This better education played a role in the decrease of births in upper class families at the time. Young people were encouraged to stay in the company of people of their sex, in order to strengthen the qualities which their gender were supposed to be linked to for the nineteenth century ideal. Males thus became gentlemen, and females could behave themselves in public. All of this partly served to find a partner who will offer a good union. Although they had a bond with the cities, many upper class people spend most of their time in rural areas, where they cultivated their interest for the Antiquity. Whereas monarchy, especially Queen Victoria, was an important figure in the British society, people tended to believe less in the divine right of kings which used to be of uppermost importance in the previous centuries.

Arthur Conan Doyle: a Short Biography[1]

In order to understand the literary work which is analysed further in this dissertation, it might be helpful to learn about the author's life. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was born on 22 May 1859 in Edinburgh. His father Charles was an artist who had to work as a clerk to earn little money and could hardly financially support his family, and his mother Mary Foley was an Irish woman. They raised their children in the catholic tradition, although Arthur later became agnostic. He studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh while working in various places and writing short stories to earn a living and help his family. He started working as a doctor in 1882 in Portsmouth but kept on writing short stories, articles and novels.

Doyle was married twice: his first wife, Louise 'Toulie' Hawkins gave him two children, Mary and Kingsley, but died in 1906 of Tuberculosis. He then met Jean Leckie whom he had three children with: Denis, Adrian and Jean. In 1890, Doyle decided to give up on his medical career to become a full-time writer. Next to Sherlock Holmes, he wrote many fiction and non-fiction works such as the Professor Challenger stories, historical romances, essays and pamphlets. Winston Churchill, Oscar Wilde and Theodore Roosevelt were acquaintances of Doyle whom he corresponded with by letters. In 1900, during the Boer War, he volunteered as a doctor in Bloemfontein. Later, he wrote *The Great Boer War* and the pamphlet *The War in South Africa: Its Causes and Conduct* in which he explains why he supports England in this conflict. His engagement allowed him to receive knighthood from the Crown in 1902. Next to his writings and the war, Doyle took interest in many other domains like sports, spirituality, science and justice.

[1] All the information contained in this section come from Diniejko, Andrzej. "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. A biographical Introduction." *The Victorian Web*, 22 March 2016, https://victorianweb.org/authors/doyle/bio.html.

After his studies, Doyle has travelled a lot, which lead him to contract an angina. He died at the age of 71 on 7 July 1930 in Crowborough, East Sussex, of a heart failure. He still rests with his second wife at the New Forest Church of All Saints, Minstead.

Narration

It is not always easy to differentiate the author and the narrator in a fictional work. In the Sherlock Holmes' stories, the narrator is Dr John Watson, Holmes' most loyal friend, although Holmes is himself the narrator in a few short stories from which Watson is absent. Vera Tobin argues that the relationship between Doyle and Watson can, in some ways, be compared to theatre (77). Indeed, she affirms that although the "I" in the stories stands for Watson, it is as if Doyle was an actor playing the role of Watson on stage (78). There are many similarities between Doyle and Watson, like the fact that they both are doctors and writers, members of the same social class (middle class) and that they share the same opinion on many subject matters. Benjamin O'Dell states that this theatrical dimension makes the reader feel as if he was in Watson's body, as spectator of the events which are narrated, without acting on the conduct of events (51). He adds that Doyle's writings have a strong physical dimension, in which character, setting and dialogue play an important role, which accentuates the stories' dynamics (50).

Watson is very different from his friend Holmes and this is one of the reasons why his narration is so appreciated by the public. Lauren Owen shares Doyle's statement "[h]e could not tell his own exploits", explaining the importance of having Watson to narrate the stories (29). She indeed explains that, to keep the surprise of the enquiries' solutions, the reader could not be aware of Holmes' thoughts (29). She writes that, when Holmes is the narrator, the readers are not satisfied as he has a really scientific and methodical mind, whereas Watson experiences the events as most people would (29-30). However, she states that Holmes is very critical upon Watson's narrative style and he has to give his consent before the story gets published (33). Knowing this, it can be argued that many of the reported events might not be true, or that some important points are missing or added in order to please the reader. Glazzard explains that when some stories deal with members of the nobility, some details are changed or untold on purpose,

because some events are too important to be told to the population (221). This implies that the reader is never sure of the veracity of the events narrated. He adds that Watson sometimes apologises because he might have forgotten some parts of the events, as he often writes a long time after they have happened (221). Owen writes that Holmes often complains about his friend's work which he considers to be too romantic and not scientific enough (30). She states that Watson does not write as Holmes does: he emphasises elements which Holmes believes to be details, and reduces the importance of some significant points, and this is appreciated by the readers (31). She explains that Holmes believes his companion writes in order to please the reader, not to provide an exact record of the investigations, however, she adds that Watson also tries to satisfy the detective (32-33).

Glazzard affirms that Doyle uses Watson to hide some elements to the reader (2). Indeed, he writes that Watson, although he is a good narrator, is a bad reader, which explains that he does not understand situations as Holmes does (2). He also states that Holmes lies and hides some important elements to his friend, or that the importance of some elements is reduced by Watson (2). He adds that Doyle's opinion on many social questions is expressed through the Sherlock Holme's stories, such as his point of view about war or divorce (7). Nathalie Jaëck explains that Watson often hides his true nature and pretends to be a worse narrator than he really is, in order to please Holmes but also to make the narrative more riveting and to allow the reader to identify to this naïve character (101-102). She also writes that this renders the story more absorbing, as the emphasis is not put on the narrator, but on the events (102). According to her, one of the reasons why Sherlock Holmes is so mystified is that the temporality of the stories is often unclear, Holmes thus never gets old and the reader does not represent clearly the chronology between the different novels and short stories (103). Jaëck also asserts that Watson does not respect the time inside the stories, narrating events in the wrong chronological order or making a point look longer or shorter than it was, which often widens the importance of

Sherlock Holmes in the stories, making him a hero in the reader's eyes (104). She also states that Watson often uses literary devices such as prolepsis or ellipsis, which makes it hard for the reader to guess the solution of the investigation before it is revealed (104, 107). She concludes by explaining that although Watson is considered to be naïve and to think like many of the readers, he is also an all-mighty narrator and has the power to conceal events or change their time, which influences the reader's opinion about him or the stories (113).

Another theory which can be relevant for an analysis on social classes in Sherlock Holmes is passing. Catherine Rottenberg states that this concept has been invoked since the second half of the nineteenth century by William Wells Brown and Frances Harper (435). As Pamela L. Caughie writes, passing is often linked with light-skinned African Americans who look and behave as if they were white, without other people knowing that they have African origins, but it can also occur in relation with gender or social class, for example (Audible, 92). Liora Moriel defines passing as such: "the movement from one identity group to another, usually from margin to mainstream", and adds that she sees passing as a "conscious choice, a quest for a transformation of oneself, one's identity, one's potential." (167). She claims that passing is often used for someone to survive in his or her environment, and to do so, one adopts the stereotypes of another category of people to pretend to be one of them (167). She affirms that it can occur at several levels of someone's identity, it is thus relevant for an analysis on passing to pay attention to "facial features, gestures, clothes, style, and body language (recognition); the environment in which the person lives or is situated, and in which the person interacts of fails to interact with others (categorization); and class and education c(l)ues, including speech and other aural signs (evaluation)" (171-172). She also cites Valerie Rohy's definition of passing: "a performance in which one presents oneself as what one is not, a performance commonly imagined along the axis of race, class, gender, or sexuality" which means that when someone is passing, he can be compared to an actor who performs, but in real

life (or in fictions) (198). Sherlock Holmes himself often passes in the stories, as he changes his appearance in order to be mistaken for someone else. Moriel asserts that performativity means that people are performing their identity as if it was scripted (199). Morison and Macleod distinguish performance and performativity explaining that "'performative' is derived from the word 'perform' in the sense of performing an *action* rather than performing as in *acting* a part": whereas performance suggests acting, performativity is about action (569). They argue that in narrative performances, the norm cannot precisely be replicated (571). Caughie provides another definition of passing as "those practices by which we try to refuse the identities that have been historically offered to us, and that continue to structure our responses even as we seek to disavow them" (Passing, 404). She affirms that passing is a process by which one learns about his or her identity in relation with other people, it serves to identify someone or yourself (Passing, 387). She states that identity is not fixed but rather dynamic, it does not have strict borders and can evolve (Audible, 93). She also argues that whereas passing is often depicted as a negative process, it often happens when people try to make things right (Let it Pass, 27-28). Rottenberg writes about passing that what is visible is not necessarily the entire truth (439).

In conclusion, Watson is not a character who can be entirely trusted. He indeed is an all-mighty narrator who chooses to write what he wants to reveal, sometimes playing with time or truth. The events which are related cannot be verified, the reader is forced to believe in Watson's words. Sherlock Holmes also provides his opinion about the narrative style and the elements which can be revealed in Watson's writings. Watson and Doyle are very similar, and we might suggest that Doyle created this character like him. He gave the narration a theatrical style, as if he was playing Watson's role. This behaviour reminds that of passing, which is also used by Holmes and secondary characters in the Sherlock Holmes' stories.

Lower Class

"The Man with the Twisted Lip"

"The Man with the Twisted Lip" is one of the fifty-six Sherlock Holmes' short stories. It was first published in *The Strand Magazine* in December 1891 (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*) and is part of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. This story is important to analyse the social classes in Doyle's work because it provides a comparison between two distinct classes: the lower class represented by the character Hugh Boone and the middle class represented by Neville St. Clair, who appear at the end of the story to be one and the same person. Holmes' and Watson's opinion about this man is meaningful because it radically changes when they talk about St. Clair, or about the man they believe to be Boone. The short story provides a lot of information about the beliefs and stereotypes about beggars, who were often believed to be ugly, dirty and unintelligent, and about opium smokers who are portrayed as being like animals and lacking human characteristics. In contrast, middle class men are presented as respectable and "refined-looking" ("MTL" 242). I will argue that in the short story as well as in the Victorian society, beggars and middle class men were almost considered as if they did not belong to the same race.

The story tells the disappearance of Neville St. Clair, a respectable bourgeois who goes to London every day for his business. One day, as his wife was walking through Swandam Lane, she saw him by accident behind the window of an opium den, he instantly waved his hand and went away from the window. Research has been made to find the man and a beggar with a twisted lip, Hugh Boone, was arrested and suspected for his murder. Desperate to find her husband, Mrs St. Clair has called Sherlock Holmes to discover what has happened to him. After investigations, Holmes found out that Boone was Neville St. Clair disguised as a beggar.

He had decided years before to wear makeup and clothes to look like a beggar so that no one could recognise him, to earn a living from being a professional beggar.

A an important subject matter in the Holmes' stories is drugs, which is also dealt with in this particular short story in which similarities between "sunken people" and drug addicts are presented. The story represents a character who at the same time is a bourgeois but sometimes pretends to be part of the lower class. When Watson and Holmes meet Hugh Boone they both believe that he is part of what David Cody explains to be "sunken people" or "under class", i.e. people who live in poverty (Social). Hugh Boone/Neville St. Clair begs in the eastern part of London, especially in Swandam Lane, which Watson describes as "a vile alley lurking behind the high wharves which line the north side of the river to the east of London Bridge." (230). This part of the town is introduced to the reader at the very beginning of the short story, while Watson is searching for Isa Whitney, a friend of his who has left his house and wife for two days in order to smoke opium in a den. Watson, who never takes drugs and explains in *The Sign of Four* that he believes it is harmful for one's health, writes a very negative account of the opium den and the people frequenting the place: "Through the gloom one could dimly catch a glimpse of bodies lying in strange fantastic poses, bowed shoulders, bent knees, heads thrown back, and chins pointing upward, with here and there a dark, lack-lustre eye turned upon the newcomer" ("MTL" 231). In this passage, Watson clearly shows to the readers the negative effects of the use of drugs. He does not even refer to people as human beings but rather as "bodies", dehumanising them because of their habit of smoking opium. According to Watson, opium is the only source of the fall of his friend Whitney: "for many years, he continued to be a slave to the drug, an object of mingled horror and pity to his friends and relatives. I can see him now, with yellow, pasty face, drooping lids, and pin-point pupils, all huddled in a chair, the wreck and ruin of a noble man." (229) However, we can argue that there are reasons for someone to start using drugs, but Watson never writes about it. When he finds his friend, he

tells him that he "should be ashamed of [him]self!" (231) because he has left his wife to spend time in that place, with people Watson considers as unworthy for consideration. Although the people in the den, who are called "ruffians" (230) by Watson, do not seem to be violent but rather lacking of energy because of the opium they smoke, he considers it is no place where a woman should go, therefore he offered to seek for Isa Whitney alone.

However, as Watson writes the stories after the enquiries are resolved, he cannot provide a precise record of his thoughts at every moment, which may thus be altered. Indeed, after finding his friend, Watson is hailed in the opium den by an "old man […], very thin, very wrinkled, bent with age, an opium pipe dangling down from between his knees, as though it had dropped in sheer lassitude from his fingers." (231). This man is in fact Sherlock Holmes, searching incognito for Neville St. Clair. When Watson describes Holmes as this old man, he humanises him, which he did not do with the other men in the place. His friend is not described just as a body taking drugs, but rather as a man who suffers from his old age. His perception of the people frequenting the den is thus biased by stereotypes, which explains why he does not describe them the same way as Holmes (although Holmes often uses drugs himself). Holmes is passing at that moment, as he takes the appearance of an old man in order to be considered like any other man in the opium den.

Physical appearance is one of the most striking elements in the analysis of this story and it provides the reader many information about Victorian's prejudices about different social classes. When Sherlock Holmes explains the affair to Watson, he describes Mr St. Clair as such:

> [T]here came to Lee a gentleman, Neville St. Clair by name, who appeared to have plenty of money. […] He had no occupation, but was interested in several companies and went into town as a rule in the morning, returning by the 5:14 from Cannon Street every night. Mr St. Clair is now thirty-seven years of age, is a man of temperate habits, a good husband, a very affectionate father, and a man who is popular with all who know him. (233)

On the contrary, when he talks about Hugh Boone, who in fact is St. Clair under a false identity, this is how he goes:

> Now for the sinister cripple who lives upon the second floor of the opium den, and who was certainly the last human being whose eyes rested upon Neville St. Clair. His name is Hugh Boone, and his hideous face is one which is familiar to every man who goes much to the City. He is a professional beggar […]. Here it is that this creature takes his daily seat, cross-legged, with his tiny stock of matches on his lap, and as he is a piteous spectacle […]. (235)

At that moment of the story, Holmes did not know that St. Clair and Boone were the same person. When he describes the first man, he only talks about his qualities and uses positively connoted terms such as "gentleman" or "affectionate father". One can wonder if he really used those words, or if Watson deliberately embellished his portrayal for the story's sake. However, when Watson shares Holmes' words about Boone, he does not refer to him as a man but as a "creature", once more dehumanising the people he perceives as members of a lower social rank than he is. According to Anthony Wohl, poor people in the Victorian era were considered by some people as belonging to another race, which explains why Holmes calls Boone a "creature" (Perceptions). Sidney Paget has drawn Hugh Boone at the time of the short story's publication:

"He is a professional beggar." Illustration by Sidney Paget, *The Strand Magazine*, December 1891.

This picture corresponds to the physical description made by Holmes and provides an account of the stereotypes concerning beggars at that time. Although some people thought it was possible to educate the poors, Doyle seems to share through this story a pessimistic point of

view. John McNabb explains in his article that Doyle believed in the superiority of the English people, who would always be just and defend the weaker. (745). With Boone, Doyle provides us an example of what a good Englishman should not represent.

The adjectives which are used to describe Boone are opposite to those which are associated with St. Clair. We do not know whether Watson faithfully transcribes what Holmes has told him about Hugh Boone or if he exaggerates his sayings in order to render the story more interesting for the reader. Nevertheless, when Sherlock Holmes talks about the beggar's appearance, he uses many negative adjectives:

> His appearance, you see, is so remarkable that no one can pass him without observing him. A shock of orange hair, a pale face disfigured by a horrible scar, which, by its contraction, has turned up the outer edge of his upper lip, a bulldog chin, and a pair of very penetrating dark eyes, which present a singular contrast to the colour of his hair, all mark him out from amid the common crowd of mendicants, and so, too, does his wit, for he is ready for a reply to any piece of chaff which may be thrown at him by the passers-by. (235)

Once again in this short story, Boone is dehumanised. This time, Holmes even refers to an animal to talk about his appearance ("a bulldog chin"). Reading this passage, the reader can only imagine a disgraceful man who does not look like most people. It is even written that he does not look or act like other beggars. Indeed, the detective has noticed that Boone is wittier than them, which makes him stand out. Knowing the end of the story, this is really meaningful because it shows that the only beggar who is intelligent, is the one who is not really a member of the lower class. It shows Doyle's negative opinion about poor people. When St. Clair's business is discovered, Watson is astonished by his new appearance while Holmes is washing him:

> Gone was the coarse brown tint! Gone, too, was the horrid scar which had seamed it across, and the twisted lip which had given the repulsive sneer to the face! A twitch brought away the tangled red hair, and there, sitting up in his bed, was a pale, sad-faced, refined-looking man, black-haired and smooth-skinned, rubbing his eyes and staring about him with sleepy bewilderment. (242)

This time, Watson seems to realise that there is a real man behind the makeup and dirt on Boone/St. Clair's face. He is not dehumanised anymore, although he seems tired and ashamed. Watson even uses positively connoted adjectives like "refined-looking" or "smooth-skinned" to refer to the same man as depicted earlier. These observations seem to be highly influenced by stereotypes. Indeed, if the man is now a member of the middle class, which is also Watson's social class, then he must be more attractive than a man of the lower class in the eyes of many English people. Wohl argues that the poor (as well as the Irish and blacks) are seen by other classes as filthy people, criminals, and people who share physical characteristics which are different from other people's (Race). This explains why Watson radically changes his mind about St. Clair when he discovers his identity. This can also explain why Boone was suspected to have killed the gentleman: as he was a beggar, he had to be a criminal in the policemen's eyes.

Not only physical appearance bears information in this analysis, but also the depiction of the characters' personality and their relation to religion. In George W. M. Reynolds' *The Mysteries of London* (1845), a representation of professional beggars is provided. They are described as liars, in the sense that they use tricks to look poor in order to pity richer people who would give them higher sums of money. He claims that they lie about their health, about their handicap, and sometimes hire young children to seem poorer than they actually are. This reflects what St. Clair does in the short story: he is a wealthy man who would rather lie and pretend to be poor to be given money, than go to work and earn a living in what was thought to be a more respectable manner: "It was a long fight between my pride and the money, but the dollars won at last, and I threw up reporting and sat day after day in the corner which I had first chosen, inspiring pity by my ghastly face and filling my pockets with coppers" (243). The fact that St. Clair affirms that he could earn more money with begging than with reporting implies that beggars earned a considerable amount of money without working, which I argue is wrong.

Doyle thus provides an erroneous point of view about beggars. This short story represents the failure of a man. Indeed, St. Clair seemed to be a gentleman and was respected and appreciated by his acquaintances. He himself knew that he was making a mistake while pretending to be Hugh Boone, as he was ashamed when Holmes discovered the trick: "'It was not the wife, it was the children,' groaned the prisoner. 'God help me, I would not have them ashamed of their father. My God! What an exposure! What can I do?'" (242) and later: "I would rather have endured imprisonment, ay, even execution, rather than have left my miserable secret as a family blot to my children" (242). The words he uses show the opinion he had about other beggars, which is extremely negative. Joseph Kestner argues that this feeling of shame comes from the fact that Boone and St. Clair represent two different kinds of masculinities. He explains that St. Clair's is legitimate (in the eyes of the society) whereas Boone's is not.

Neville St. Clair totally illustrates the concept of passing, as he is passes for a member of the lowest social class whereas he is a bourgeois. Nevertheless, he passes differently than what is usually described as he pretends to be a marginal person whereas he indeed is respected in his daily life as St. Clair. Passing is thus, in this case, not a means to be socially accepted, but rather a means to earn a living. The fact that he pretends to be rejected by the society contributes to be pitied by members of the middle class, contrarily to what passing usually is: a means to be accepted by members of a category which is not ours. In order to pass as a beggar, St. Clair adopts stereotypes which are often related to them, both physically and mentally, as has been mentioned above. However, he can slightly be differentiated from other beggars, which shows that his passing is not completely successful (although only Sherlock Holmes was capable of discovering the truth about his identity). St. Clair makes a conscious choice to pass as a beggar and performs the role of Hugh Boone as if he was an actor on stage. The difference between him and an actor is that, when acting on theatre, the public is conscious that the

character's identity is not the real one. Here, nobody knows that Hugh Boone is an alias and that another man hides behind the makeup and clothes of the beggar.

"The Man with the Twisted Lip" reflects the expectations about a middle class man in his thirties, but also the stereotypes surrounding lower class people. The different depictions of Hugh Boone and Neville St. Clair clearly show the prejudices Victorian people might have about poorer people when they did not know their background. This story of a wealthy man passing as a beggar seems unlikely to have happened in real life, but Doyle provides an account of the dehumanisation and injustice that could possibly happen in relation to the social class. I will show in analyses of other Sherlock Holmes' stories about working class people that not only beggars, but also workers are concerned by these stereotypical visions from the characters Holmes and Watson.

“The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”

“The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle” is the ninth short story of the Sherlock Holmes collection, first published in *The Strand Magazine* in January 1892, then collected in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). This short story shows similarities with “The Man with the Twisted Lip” in the way people from the lower class are represented, although some of them are respected by Holmes and Watson. This short story not only provides an account of social classes, but also allows the reader to follow a goose on its economical journey during Christmas time, which bears information about the economical process in London. My argument in the following section is that not only beggars but also working men are sometimes considered to be inferior to middle and upper class people in the Victorian society.

The story takes place two days after Christmas when Peterson, as commissionaire, goes to 221B Baker Street. He tells Sherlock Holmes that on Christmas day, he saw a fight between two men, one of whom has lost a hat and a goose, which he took. As his wife prepared the goose for the meal, she found a blue carbuncle inside its crop. Peterson brought it to Holmes, alongside with the hat. Holmes recognised the precious stone, which had been stolen to the Countess of Morcar in her hotel room. An innocent plumber had been accused of the theft. Holmes soon found the proprietor of the hat and goose, Mr Henry Baker, who had nothing to do with the crime. After an investigation in London to discover where the goose came from, Holmes found out that Mr James Ryder, head attendant at the hotel where the countess stayed, is the thief who hid the carbuncle inside a goose of his sister’s, who breeds geese, but lost it. The goose was sold to Breckinridge, a salesman of Covent Garden Market, then to Mr Baker who lost it.

The story shows how Sherlock Holmes proceeds to guess many information about someone only by looking at one object which belongs to that person. It begins as a theatre play,

Watson describing 221B Baker Street as if it was a set. Then Holmes analyses Mr Henry Baker's hat, which Watson fails to do. He learns many things about the man only by looking at his hat, which is in a bad state:

> That the man was highly intellectual is of course obvious upon the face of it, and also that he was fairly well-to-do within the last three years, although he has now fallen upon evil days. He had foresight, but has less now than formerly, pointing to a moral retrogression, which, when taken with the decline of his fortunes, seems to indicate some evil influence, probably drink, at work upon him. (246)

This passage is rich in information because it shows the amount of elements which Holmes can guess from a single object, and he explains later how he discovers some of this information. For example, he tells Watson that he knew the man was intelligent because of the size of the hat, which is quite large. John McNabb explains in his article that anthropometrics (the measurement of parts of the human body, which supposedly could identify individuals) was popular in the Victorian era, which explains why Holmes is right when assuming this, as he believed in the theory (742). He writes that this theory could also explain that a person's criminal actions were to be defined by his physical features, thus showing a hereditary aspect to criminality (742). Holmes is indeed convinced, without having seen Baker, that he is not a thief: "It is, I think, much more likely that Henry Baker is an absolutely innocent man." (250), and even calls him a gentleman. Baker's character contrasts with the others in this story, as he used to be a wealthy man who now has lost a lot of money. When Baker arrives, the description Watson makes corresponds to what Holmes had predicted:

> He was a large man with rounded shoulders, a massive head, and a broad, intelligent face, sloping down to a pointed beard of grizzled brown. A touch of red in nose and cheeks, with a slight tremor of his extended hand, recalled Holmes's surmise as to his habits. His rusty black frock-coat was buttoned right up in front, with the collar turned up, and his lank wrists protruded from his sleeves without a sign of cuff or shirt. He spoke in a slow staccato fashion, choosing his words with care, and gave the impression generally of a man of learning and letters who had had ill-usage at the hands of fortune. (250)

He is considered to be respectable and shows calmness and intelligence, as he even pronounces words in Latin to refer to the goose's rests. This description is that of a man who would be respected, although his clothing seems to be old and damaged.

However, the story also represents lower class people who are shown as unmoral by Holmes and Watson. Indeed, the other characters (except for Holmes and Watson), are members of the working class. Breckinridge, the man who sells geese in Covent Garden Market, is described by Watson as: "the proprietor, a horsy-looking man, with a sharp face and trim side-whiskers" (252). As in "The Man with the Twisted Lip", this character is compared to an animal, dehumanised. Doyle provided Breckinridge with the aspect of a man who gets easily angry, who shouts a lot, and has a menacing posture: "head cocked and his arms akimbo." ("BC" 252). This corresponds to Wohl's analysis of the way the lower class was seen: irrational and easily exited (Race). Although the salesman at first did not want to tell Holmes where the goose came from, he was tricked by the detective in order to get the information. Indeed, Holmes bet that the goose was bred in the countryside (while he knew it was wrong) so that Breckinridge would tell him otherwise to win this game. The reader understands that the salesman loses at Holmes' game when Breckinridge answers: "It's merely taking your money, for I know that I am wright. But I'll have a sovereign on with you, just to teach you not to be obstinate" (253), saying this, he shows that he likes games. Gareth Stedman Jones affirms that betting was a form of amusement which was popular in the lower class (180). He states that this was considered badly by the middle class, it was qualified as a vice and often associated with drinking (204). The fact that Breckinridge accepts the bet proves, in the eyes of nineteenth century people, that he is not a moral person, which is another characteristic that Wohl cites in his article (Race). Holmes even emphasises this by saying:

> "When you see a man with whiskers of that cut and the 'Pink 'un' protruding out of his pocket, you can always draw him a bet," said he. "I daresay that if I had put £100 down in front of him,

> that man would not have given me such complete information as was drawn in front of him by the idea that he was doing me on a wager." (253)

He implicitly tells that someone who likes sports and has the style of a working man has to be immoral.

One of the main characters in "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle" is James Ryder, another member of the working class, and the stone's thief. Holmes' first encounter with Ryder is also meaningful as he calls him "little rat-faced fellow" (253) and "cringing creature" (253), once again using animal names to describe lower class people's physical appearance, as he also does later, calling him a "shrimp" (255). This dehumanisation from Holmes is also to be seen when he tells Watson "Give him a dash of brandy. So! Now he looks a little more human" (255). This man, who is the criminal, is not represented as violent as the salesman is, but rather insecure, as the following terms suggest: "quavering" (254), "quivering" (254), "half-frightened, half-hopeful eyes"(254), or "nervous tension" (254). Another peculiar aspect of his personality is that, when he understands that Holmes has discovered the truth and he is scared to be denounced to the police, he becomes very religious: "For God's sake, have mercy!" (255), "I'll swear it on the Bible" (255), "For Christ's sake" (255), "God help me! God help me!" (256), and when Holmes tells him he will not call the police "Oh, Heaven bless you!" (256). It is also shown in this illustration of the short story by Sidney Paget:

"'Have mercy!' he shrieked." Illustration by Sidney Paget, *The Strand Magazine*, January 1892.

This is meaningful as Stedman Jones writes that many of the working class people were not believers but only attended church because they wanted to recieve charity (196). Here, we can see that when he is scared, Ryder implores God a lot. Wohl explains that the lower class was often considered as "having no religion but only superstition" (Race), which is probably what Doyle has wished to show with this character, as he did not mention God before he knew he was in trouble. James Ryder, like Neville St. Clair in "The Man with the Twisted Lip", shows that he is ashamed of his behaviour: "Think of my father! of my mother! It would break their hearts. I never went wrong before! I never will again. I swear it." ("BC" 255). He seems to be more scared for his family to learn his bad conduct, than to go to jail and pay for his crime. This can be linked with Stedman Jones' idea that image was really important for members of the working class at the end of the Victorian era (201).

Andrew Glazzard asserts that an important feature of this short story is the way Holmes traces the goose's economical journey (17). Indeed, he writes, the detective goes to the same places the goose did, but backwards, analysing its price and finding out where she has been bought (17). He adds that this is also the reason why he met Ryder, who was also tracing the

goose's way, in the opposite direction than Holmes (17). Glazzard argues that this provides an account of the economical process, the supply chain which was in use in the *fin de siècle* London, and how this linked people from different social classes (17, 19). Discovering the geographical route of the bird and Holmes also provides the contemporary reader an overview of historical places of London like Covent Garden Market. It also brings the reader through Bloomsbury and Tottenham court road. Christopher Keep and Don Randall argue that Sherlock Holmes knows the geographical location of London's streets really well, although he sometimes lacks of knowledge about their cultural location (213).

"The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle" provides an account of the prejudices in which people believed in the end of the nineteenth century about the working class. When Holmes guesses that Henry Baker is a middle class man, he is sure he cannot be guilty of the theft of the blue carbuncle. He also affirms that he is an intelligent man, having consideration for him even though he has lost a lot of money. However, when Watson encounters the salesman, he represents him as a violent man who gets easily angry. The story also approaches the question of betting, which was considered by the middle class as an immoral game, but which is practised by the salesman (and by Holmes, in order to solve the enquiry). Dehumanisation is present in this short story, like in the previously analysed one, as Watson reports that Holmes uses animal names in order to refer to people of a lower social class than his. James Ryder mentions God a lot, while religion on the part of the lower class is often considered to be superstition, which is indeed the case here as he only shows his belief in God when he begs Holmes not to tell he is the thief. This is important to him because he does not want his family to discover that he made such an immoral action. The story is also a journey: geographically and economically speaking, which shows the different stages of a goose at Christmas time. The two short stories analysed above provide an account of the way males of the lower class are represented in the Sherlock

Holmes' stories. However, women are left aside, I am thus going to analyse the way a working class woman is presented in this fictional work.

"The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger"

"The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger" was first published in the American magazine *Liberty* in January 1927, then in the United Kingdom the next month, in *The Strand Magazine* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). It is the fifty-ninth Sherlock Holmes' story and has later been collected in *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). This short story provides information about the narration of the whole Sherlock Holmes' stories but also allows for a comparison between the way male and female characters of the working class are depicted by Holmes and Watson. I will argue that even though there are similarities in the way Watson describes them, such as the fact that they are compared to animals, this comparison does not have the same signification when it concerns a woman or a man. Men in this story not only are dehumanised by being compared to animals, but also by their lack of masculine qualities which were an ideal of the Victorian man.

The story takes place in 1896, when Mrs Merrilow, an elderly woman, meets Sherlock Holmes to talk about Eugenia Ronder, a woman who has been living in her house in Brixton for the last seven years but who always covers her face with a veil. Mrs Merrilow has only seen her face once, by accident, and has discovered that she is completely mutilated. Her health has weakened and she often shouts at night, which has lead the old woman to bring Holmes to her so that she could tell him what is on her mind. Holmes remembers that he has heard of her story, she and her husband were lion tamers in a circus and got attacked by their animal one night. Mr Ronder died but his wife survived, although she was disfigured. Mrs Ronder confesses to Holmes that her husband was a violent man who used to beat her. With her lover Leonardo, they planned to kill her husband with a fake lion paw, then to release the animal from its cage. But things went wrong and the lion, enraged with the smell of blood, attacked its mistress. Leonardo, frightened, did not help her and screamed, until other members of the troupe came

and she was saved. She then decided to live far from the people she had known before, hiding her face from the rest of the world.

The beginning of the short story reinforces the idea that Sherlock Holmes has really existed, as Watson explains that he will not reveal the elements which concerned people do not want to divulge to the public. He also adds this:

> I deprecate, however, in the strongest way the attempts which have been made lately to get at and to destroy these papers. The source of these outrages is known, and if they are repeated I have Mr. Holmes's authority for saying that the whole story concerning the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant will be given to the public. There is at least one reader who will understand. (1095)

This passage is relevant because, if the person who reads it believes in the veracity of the stories, it can create or strengthen suspicion with regard to politicians who would be ready to commit illegal deeds in order to save their image. Watson also explains that, writing the story of Mrs Ronder, he has "made a slight change of name and place, but otherwise the facts are as stated." (1095). This also gives the impression that the reported events are true, as Watson has invented names for people and places to tell the story without breaking people's intimacy.

A working class male character in this short story is, once again, compared to animals. Joseph Kestner claims that Doyle's work focuses on men and masculine qualities like rationality, daring, logic, etc. But this story focuses on a woman and the male characters who are represented do not correspond to the representation made by Kestner. Indeed, Mr Ronder is, like Breckinridge in "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle", a violent person. Ronder's widow tells Holmes that he used to beat her and that he had the reputation of being a bully who had many enemies. This is how Watson describes the man as he sees a picture of him:

> It was a dreadful face–a human pig, or rather a human wild boar, for it was formidable in its bestiality. One could imagine that vile mouth champing and foaming in its rage, and one could conceive those small, vicious eyes darting pure malignancy as they looked forth upon the world. Ruffian, bully, beast–it was all written on that heavy-jowled face. ("VL" 1100)

Again, animals are used to refer to the lower class male figure, the pig and boar in this case. Other terms are used to dehumanise Ronder like “bestiality”, “mouth champing and foaming”, “rage”, or the pronoun “it” instead of “he”. However, in this story, contrarily to the others, it is told that he was violent to his wife. This is in the eyes of a nineteenth century reader a valuable reason for a married couple to divorce, nevertheless Glazzard affirms that divorce in the Victorian society was not easy to obtain (87). Indeed, he explains that since the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857, adultery was the only accepted cause of divorce for men, but women had to prove that their husband was both unfaithful and violent (87). He adds that this law changed in 1891, when no proof of violence was needed for a woman to obtain divorce (109). Glazzard claims that Doyle stood for divorce because of his parent’s unhappy union, and as he himself could not marry Jean Leckie when he desired to because of his previous union (88). The Ronders probably did not divorce because it was not common in the nineteenth century, and Eugenia Ronder did not have enough money to survive on her own. The depiction of Mr Ronder can be compared to this of a wild animal, his lion. Although the lion has attacked Mrs Ronder, she was more afraid of her husband than of the animal. Another negative aspect in the character Mr Ronder is the fact that he is a lion tamer. Indeed, historian Brenda Assael argues that animal cruelty in circuses was already a concern for the population in the late Victorian era (246). She adds that many people had been shocked after a representation in which the tamer was violent to his lion (250). Ronder could thus be considered as a violent person even without knowing about his personality, only because he represented a violent figure through his occupation.

Another male figure in this story is Leonardo, the lover who is also described by Watson when he sees his photograph: “He was clearly a professional acrobat, a man of magnificent physique, taken with his huge arms folded across his swollen chest and a smile breaking from under his heavy moustache–the self-satisfied smile of the man of many conquests.” (1099). At first glance, Leonardo seems to be a nice person, but, like Mr Ronder, he does not bear the

masculine qualities cited by Kestner which Doyle praised. Indeed, Mrs Ronder calls him a coward as he does not help her when she is attacked by the lion, although he had an arm in his hands. She says:

> The Leonardo came more and more into my life. You see what he was like. I know now the poor spirit that was hidden in that splendid body, but compared to my husband he seemed like the angel Gabriel. He pitied me and helped me, till at last our intimacy turned to love–deep, deep, passionate love, such love as I had dreamed of but never hoped to feel. (1100)

She expresses her love for him, as much as she expressed hatred for her husband. Although she praises him for his physical appearance, she also refers to him as a "poor spirit", which explains that she does not love him anymore and that she is now angry at him. Whereas Leonardo is at the same time Mrs Ronder's saviour (releasing her from her husband) and the person who almost became responsible for her death (because the lion attacked her and he did not act), he has nevertheless killed a man. This story is relevant in an analysis because this crime is lessened in the story, as if Mr Ronder's life was not important in the eyes of the society. He is indeed a working man who did not seem to have many attachments as he constantly moved. In the previous Sherlock Holmes' stories which were analysed, criminals were depicted as ugly and compared to animals but in this case, it is the victim who is so badly depicted (even if he was not only a victim, but first a cruel husband).

The main protagonist of the story is Eugenia Ronder, whose face has been mutilated by the lion. This is how her landlady talks about her face: "[Y]ou would hardly say it was a face at all. That's how it looked. Our milkman got a glimpse of her once peeping out of the upper window, and he dropped his tin and the milk all over the front garden." (1096). Which explains why she wears a veil in order to hide her face to the people, as shown by Frank Wiles' illustration:

"There was something in the woman's voice which arrested Holmes' attention." Illustration by Frank Wiles, *The Strand Magazine*, February 1927.

Her character is also dehumanised, not because of physical features which were borne in her genes, but because of the incident she survived of. She is also compared to an animal because of the way she lives: "From keeping beasts in a cage, the woman seemed, by some retribution of fate, to have become herself a beast in a cage." (1099). Here, it is again implied that tamer was not an appreciated job at that time. But she does not bear the negative aspects and brutality which is sometimes implied when referring to animals. On the contrary, Watson seems to pity her and her fate, like the one of a lion who has to spend its life in a cage. Nevertheless, she is not reduced to her job, as can be understood with Watson's words:

> Long years of inaction had coarsened the lines of her figure, but at some period it must have been beautiful, and was still full and voluptuous. A thick dark veil covered her face, but it was cut off close at her upper lip and disclosed a perfectly shaped mouth and a delicately rounded chin. I could well conceive that she had indeed been a very remarkable woman. Her voice, too, was well modulated and pleasing. (1099)

This passage provides an account of the gentleness and beauty which Mrs Ronder emits. Although she is not seen as beautiful anymore because of the lion's attack, she seems to have been a sumptuous woman before the accident. Watson, but also Holmes, do not behave with a woman of the working class as they would with a man of the same class. They are not so tender

and nice to men, when they talk to them but also when they talk about them. When the moment came for her to reveal the entirety of her face, Watson uses hard words as shown in this passage, but she herself does too:

> She raised her veil and stepped forward into the light.
> "I wonder if you would bear it," she said.
> It was horrible. No words can describe the framework of a face when the face itself is gone. Two living and beautiful brown eyes looking sadly out from that grisly ruin did but make the view more awful. Holmes held up his hand in a gesture of pity and protest, and together we left the room. (1102)

Even though Watson notices the beauty of the woman behind her scars, he is also extremely violent in his words, saying that she has no face anymore. The brutality of these words can be relevant as it is often expected from a woman to be beautiful, especially in the eyes of men.

This story is in fact about a woman who had no choice but to marry a violent man in order to survive and have a status in the nineteenth century society. Mrs Ronder indeed has really poor origins, as she explains:

> I was a poor circus girl brought up on the sawdust, and doing springs through the hoop before I was ten. When I became a woman this man loved me, if such lust as his can be called love, and in an evil moment I became his wife. From that day I was in hell, and he the devil who tormented me. (1100)

This passage provides an account of the sadness of the woman's life. She was so poor that she had no other choice than marrying this terrible person, and she probably did not know what life looked like outside the circus. It is also relevant that she calls her husband "the devil", as she later compares Leonardo with the angel Gabriel. Another common feature between Mrs Ronder, Neville St. Clair and James Ryder is the fact that they are ashamed of their story: "I could not stand the scandal and publicity which would come from a police examination" ("VL" 1099). She explains that she could not live with her story being publicly revealed but now that she knows that her health is weakening, she feels the need to tell what happened to her, although Watson does not divulge her real identity.

The reader is provided, with this short story, an account of a certain type of life adopted by some members of the lower class, which is uncommon for the majority of people, that of circus performers. It also deals with a subject matter which is still actual in the twentieth century: domestic violence. It is striking that such an important question was already treated in a work which was written almost a century ago, by a man. However, the manner of which Watson talks about Mrs Ronder's physical appearance also shows the expectations for a woman from the society. It is found in this story anew that working class people are compared to animals, even if it is not as violent for women as for men. Mr Ronder is also considered as a beast, but we can wonder if this does not show Watson's bias about criminals and brutal persons. Not only is Mr Ronder brutal in his actions, but his job is also badly considered in Victorian society. I have analysed three stories about lower class people, I am now going to compare these analyses with three short stories involving middle class characters.

Middle Class

"The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb"

The eleventh Sherlock Holmes' story is "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb", a short story which was first published in *The Strand Magazine* in 1892, then collected in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). In this story, there is a difference of treatment between the way Watson depicts Victor Hatherley, and the way Hatherley depicts Elise and Stark, who are Germans. Hatherley seems to detain all the qualities which an English gentleman should bear in the eyes of the Victorian society, whereas Elise is thought to have mental issues when she tries to save Hatherley's life. Stark, being German, is not expected to be a gentleman but is also different from other characters because of his physical appearance. In this analysis, I will argue that if an English middle class man shows masculine qualities which were respected during the Victorian era, he will be considered as a gentleman, whereas others are not. I will also show that a middle class criminal is sometimes better treated than an honest working class man in the Sherlock Holmes' stories.

The events of the story take place in the summer of 1889, when Mr Victor Hatherley, a young hydraulic engineer, goes to Dr Watson with his severely injured thumb. Watson decides to bring the man to his friend Sherlock Holmes to tell him his story. The previous day, he was asked by Colonel Lysander Stark, a mysterious man with German origins, to come to his house at night to examine his hydraulic press, which he uses for illegal affairs. He insists that Hatherley has to be discreet over his business and offers him a high sum of money for the job. At night, the engineer goes to the fictional place of Eyford, Berkshire by train where he is taken by Stark in his carriage for a ride to his house, supposedly in the countryside. There, he gets trapped by Stark in the press after being told by a German woman in the house that he should escape. Fortunately, she saves him in extremis from being crushed by the press, but as he tries

to run away through the window, Stark attacks him with a cleaver and cuts his thumb off. After he ran for a while, he fainted, Hatherley mysteriously woke up close to Eyford's station and went to London where he met Watson.

This story, such as "The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger" bears information about narration. Watson in some way admits that he tries to render his stories catching for the reader, as can be understood with these lines:

> The story has, I believe, been told more than once in the newspapers, but, like all such narratives, its effect is much less striking when set forth *en bloc* in a single half-column of print than when the facts slowly evolve before your own eyes, and the mystery clears gradually away as each new discovery furnishes a step which leads on to the complete truth. ("ET" 274)

This statement strengthens Nathalie Jaëck's idea that Watson does not respect the stories' temporality in order for the resolution of the enquiry to be more powerful when the reader discovers it (104). As Watson is an all-mighty narrator, he has total control over his story-telling and it is impossible to know if Hatherley's story really happened as it is told, or if Watson has embellished it to add sensationalism. Writing this, Doyle reinforces the impression that Watson and Holmes existed and that this was not a fictional story.

Victor Hatherley is a middle class man who has inherited a lot of money after his father's death, although he presently does not earn much money because he has very few opportunities to work, which is the reason why he accepts Stark's dubious proposition. The description of his character contrasts heavily with the ones which were made of lower class male characters. Watson writes the impression he had of him at their first encounter:

> I entered in my consulting-room and found a gentleman seated by the table. He was quietly dressed in a suit of heather tweed, with a soft cloth cap which he had laid down upon my books. […] He was young, not more than five-and-twenty, I should say, with a strong, masculine face; but he was exceedingly pale and gave me the impression of a man who was suffering from some strong agitation, which it took all his strength of mind to control. ("ET" 274)

Watson calls Hatherley a gentleman even before he learned anything about his personal history or personality. It can thus be deduced that he immediately recognised him as a fellow middle

class person. The following part of the description evokes a refined man, well dressed, who manages to be calm despite the pain in his finger and the fact that he escaped death a few hours before. Another difference with the lower class people Doyle has written about is the fact that the engineer bears masculine characteristics, which, according to Kestner, were appreciated in the Victorian society. Indeed, he shows "strength of mind" and seems to be daring as he went to Stark's despite the suspicious affair and the recommendations of the woman in that house. However, a moment later, he loses his temper due to the events he has just lived, and Watson seems uncomfortable towards it as he writes: "'Stop it!' I cried; 'pull yourself together!'" (275). This does not seem to be only the reaction of a doctor who wants to heal a patient, but also that of a man who wants other men to behave in a respectful manner.

Another character who can be analysed is Elise, the woman who tried to warn Hatherley against the danger he was facing with Stark. It is not clear who she is and what her relations are with Stark, but Hatherley supposes that she is also German. She is physically described by Hatherley, whose words are reported by Watson: "[A] woman appeared with a lamp in her hand, which she held above her head, pushing her face forward and peering at us. I could see that she was pretty, and from the gloss with which the light shone upon her dark dress I knew that it was a rich material" (280). These terms suggest that she also is a wealthy woman who can afford nice clothing. However, we do not know much about her and it can be wondered if the money which served to buy her clothes comes from Stark's illegal business or if she earned money otherwise. Whereas Hatherley is described as calm despite his misadventure, Elise shows nervosity that night: "I could see at a glance that she was sick with fear, and the sight sent a chill to my own heart. She held up one shaking finger to warn me to be silent, and she shot a few whispered words of broken English at me, her eyes glancing back, like those of a frightened horse, into the gloom behind her" (280-281). Hatherley explains that she was not calm as she knew what would happen to the engineer if he went in the press, and her behaviour

is compared to a "frightened horse", which reminds of the depictions of Holmes and Watson about lower class characters in other stories. I argue that this comparison to an animal emphasises the fact that she does not act in accordance to the masculine qualities that I mentioned above and which are to be found in Hatherley's temper. Elise acts like a "weak" person who fails to be silent about what will happen to this man. She is also the person who first mentions the fact that Hatherley is not the first engineer whom Stark tries to kill in the press, although it is understood that the other(s) died. Before knowing Stark's intentions, Hatherley even suggests that she may have some mental issues: "This woman might, for all I knew, be a monomaniac" (281). Whereas he has few doubts about the fact that Stark might be untrustworthy, Hatherley supposes that Elise might be facing some psychological problems in her everyday life, rather than considering that she is behaving that way because there is a real peril. This might be representative of the way some middle class men considered women in the nineteenth century. When he realises that he was wrong and he is safe because of her, Hatherley calls her a "good friend whose warning I had so foolishly rejected" (283), which expresses that he now considers himself the fool, rather than her. In the end, she acts bravely as she physically retains Stark in order for the engineer to escape.

The third character in "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb" who I am going to analyse is Colonel Lysander Stark, a middle class man whose look is quite menacing but who is not depicted as lower class criminals, although he is a criminal himself. This character has a peculiar physical appearance, as can be seen in Sidney Paget's illustration:

"Colonel Lysander Stark." Illustration by Sidney Paget, *The Strand Magazine*, march 1892.

In this picture, Paget has represented Stark with a very thin face, which corresponds to the description made by Hatherley to Holmes and Watson:

> [A] man rather over the middle size, but of an exceeding thinness. I do not think that I have ever seen so thin a man. His whole face sharpened away into nose and chin, and the skin of his cheeks was drawn quite tense over his outstanding bones. Yet this emaciation seemed to be his natural habit, and due to no disease, for his eye was bright, his step brisk, and his bearing assured. He was plainly but neatly dressed, and his age, I should judge, would be nearer forty than thirty. (277)

He also adds further in the story that he has a "cadaverous face" (282). These elements inspire fear towards the colonel, as if he was a dead body. However, he is never referred to by an animal's name such as lower class people in the Sherlock Holmes' stories. This might mean that, although he is a criminal who tried to kill Victor Hatherley, he, in some way, deserves to be more respected than honest working class people who have a bad temper, such as Breckinridge in "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle". Nevertheless, his cadaveric appearance and the fact that Hatherley explains that he had "[n]ever seen so thin a man" are also a way to dehumanise Stark. One of the main differences between Stark and Elise, and the other characters in this story is the fact that they are German. This might explain why Watson and Hatherley seem to be more neutral when they refer to them than when they refer to other

English middle class people, as they do not have to represent the ideals of the English gentleman or woman.

This short story shows that being called a gentleman is not only accorded to upper class people, but also to middle class people who behave bravely and manage to maintain their calm in times of pain, like Victor Hatherley. Another aspect of the story is the way Elise is thought to be a "monomaniac" (281), when she knows that the engineer is in great peril and tries to save him. Hatherley does not describe Colonel Lysander Stark's personality traits but only his physical appearance, which is dehumanised as he is told to look "cadaverous" (282). We can argue that Doyle chose to provide this character such a look in order to be menacing, however, these traits might have been reinforced by Watson in his narration. He is never referred to as a criminal, although Holmes finds out in the end that he has killed an engineer a year before he called Hatherley for his services. This also contrasts with the way James Ryder, for example, was depicted in "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle". As Victor Hatherley is positively seen by Holmes and Watson, I will show that they can also have a good opinion about a middle class woman.

“A Case of Identity”

The fifth Sherlock Holmes’ story is “A Case if Identity” which was published in *The Strand Magazine* in September 1891 then collected in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). This short story deals with members of the bourgeoisie, such as Miss Mary Sutherland, who takes great care of her appearance but is generous and amiable, and her step-father, James Windibank, whose main preoccupation is money. Indeed, he has played a trick on his stepdaughter so that she would not get married soon and he would be offered more money from her. I will argue that this short story shows two different sides of the middle-class, with two persons who have different goals in life, and the impact it has on Holmes and Watson’s opinion about them.

Watson, in this short story, narrates Miss Mary Sutherland’s misadventure. She is a middle class woman who lives with her mother and her step-father, Mr James Windibank, who is only five years older than his step-daughter and works as a traveller in wine. Mary Sutherland receives a large sum of money each year from her uncle in New Zealand, which she donates to her parents, and earns a living by typewriting. She comes to Sherlock Holmes’ to seek help: on her wedding day, her fiancé, Mr Hosmer Angel, employee in an office, has disappeared before they could get married. After telling all the details of their relationship, Holmes accepts to help her finding her fiancé. Later, he meets her step-father who in fact dressed up as Homer Angel in order to prevent his step-daughter from marrying. Indeed, if she got married, he would not receive her money anymore and would not be able to maintain his standard of living.

The beginning of the short story connects to what was written in my analysis of “The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger” in terms of narration. Indeed, Watson asks Sherlock Holmes about the origin of a ring he wears, and this is what Holmes answers: “It was from the reigning family of Holland, though the matter in which I served them was of such delicacy that I cannot

confide it even to you, who have been good enough to chronicle one or two of my little problems" ("CI" 191). In "The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger", it was written that some people do not want their story to be revealed to the public, which is also the case in "A Case of Identity" in which Holmes tells that the royal family of Holland has needed Holmes' help but do not desire that their problem gets widespread. Another relevant feature for an analysis of the narration is the fact that Holmes explains that he wants the stories to be "interesting" for the reader after Watson wonders if he has some affairs to resolve at that moment:

> Some ten or twelve, but non which present any feature of interest. They are important, you understand, without being interesting. Indeed, I have found that it is usually in unimportant matters that there is a field for the observation, and for the quick analysis of cause and effect which gives the charm to an investigation. ("CI" 191)

This, in some way, contradicts what Lauren Owen writes about the fact that Holmes does not appreciate Watson's narratives because it is too sensational and lacking of exactitude (32-33). In this statement, Holmes affirms that a purely scientific affair would not interest the reader and that, to be chronicled, a story has to be catching. Holmes, with these words, approves his friend's work, although it does not mean that he totally agrees with his methods. This kind of statements which can often be read at the beginning of Sherlock Holmes' short stories about narration contributes to the fact that many people believed that this was not a fictional work but real events. This might influence the Victorian reader's way of understanding Sherlock Holmes and their opinion about some categories of people in the society. In this short story, it might have an influence on their opinion about middle class men.

Miss Mary Sutherland is the main character in this short story, and she makes a good impression on Watson and Holmes. This is how she is described by Watson on their first encounter:

> [T]here stood a large woman with a heavy fur boa round her neck, and a large curling red feather in a broad-brimmed hat which was tilted in a coquettish Duchess of Devonshire fashion over her ear. From under this great panoply she peeped up in a nervous, hesitating fashion at our windows, while her body oscillated backward and forward, and her fingers fidgeted with her

> glove buttons. Suddenly, with a plunge, as of the swimmer who leaves the bank, she hurried across the road, and we heard the sharp clang of the bell. (192)

This description matches the illustration made by Sidney Paget for *The Strand Magazine*:

"She laid a little bundle upon the table." Illustration by Sidney Paget, *The Strand Magazine*, September 1891.

Miss Sutherland takes care of her appearance through clothing, as shown in the description and picture. She seems to be the contrary of what might be expected from a man at that time as she seems to be nervous and urged to tell her story, although no crime has been committed and her life is not endangered. She can also be considered as naïve, as she believed in the trick that her step-father played her when he dressed up as Mr Angel. However, Miss Sutherland seems to be appreciated by Holmes and Watson, as can be understood in these passages, the first one providing Watson's thoughts, and the second one being Holmes' words reported by his friend: "For all the preposterous hat and the vacuous face, there was something noble in the simple faith of our visitor which compelled our respect" (196), and "I found her more interesting than her little problem" (196). She might be appreciated because she corresponds to what was expected from a woman of the bourgeoisie during the Victorian era.

One of Mary Sutherland's biggest qualities is her generosity, as she tells Holmes and Watson about her mother and step-father: "[A]s long as I live at home I don't wish to be a

burden to them, and so they have the use of the money just while I am staying with them" (193). This might come from the education she has received from her late father, who seemed to be very different from Mr Windibank, as can be understood when she talks about them both:

> Father was a plumber in the Tottenham Court Road, and he left a tidy business behind him, which mother carried on with Mr. Hardy, the foreman; but when Mr. Windibank came he made her sell the business, for he was very superior, being a traveller in wines. They got £4700 for the goodwill and interest, which wasn't near as much as father could have got if he had been alive. (193)

She explains that her family was less wealthy when her father was still alive, and that they earned more money when her step-father stepped in the family. She seems to believe that he is "superior", however he made her mother sell the father's business, which was probably a loss of money for her. Indeed, Windibank's main preoccupation seems to be money, as he is ready to play with Miss Sutherland's feelings in order to keep her fortune. Contrarily to the detective and his friend, he does not appreciate his stepdaughter: "[S]he is a very excitable, impulsive girl, as you may have noticed, and she is not easily controlled when she has made up her mind on a point" (199). It can be wondered if he talks about her in such terms because he believes it, or because he wants to make her seem vulnerable in the eyes of Holmes and Watson so that he would not be thought of as guilty in this affair. This thus shows that both characters are opposite in their relationship with money, as Mary is ready to donate her money for the well-being of her family whereas Windibank wants to prevent Mary from being happy in order to be wealthier. Mary Sutherland represents a purer and simpler mind and education, closer to the working class, whereas her step-father represents the bourgeois who is too attached to money.

Mr Windibank, in order to maintain his standard of living, passes as Hosmer Angel. There is a noticeable difference between the descriptions of Hosmer Angel in the journal, and the description made by Watson when he sees James Windibank for the first time, although they are one and the same person. Indeed, Angel is presented as a gentleman, his height is provided with numbers and we learn that he is "strongly built" (197) as written in this passage:

> [A] gentleman named Hosmer Angel. About five feet seven inches in height; strongly built, sallow complexion, black hair, a little bald in the centre, bushy, black side-whiskers and moustache; tinted glasses, slight infirmity of speech. Was dressed, when last seen, in black frock-coat faced with silk, black waistcoat, gold Albert chain, and gray Harris tweed trousers, with brown gaiters over elastic-sided boots. Known to have been employed in an office in Leadenhall Street. (197)

On the contrary, Mr Windibank is not called a gentleman, but rather a "man" or a "fellow". Whereas Angel's stature was described positively, Mr Windibank's is described as being "middle-sized":

> The man who entered was a sturdy, middle-sized fellow, some thirty years of age, clean-shaven, and sallow-skinned, with a bland, insinuating manner, and a pair of wonderfully sharp and penetrating gray eyes. He shot a questioning glance at each of us, placed his shiny top-hat upon the sideboard, and with a slight bow sidled down into the nearest chair. (199)

This shows that someone's actions might influence the way this person is perceived, even physically. Indeed, when he is believed to be an innocent man who seems to be loyal and trustworthy, positively connoted words are used, whereas more neutral words are written when he is suspected of having acted in an immoral manner. This shows how passing as someone else can have positive effects on the person who passes, however, in this case it is done for bad reasons, as he wants to prevent his step-daughter from getting married.

In "A Case of Identity", Doyle chose to confront two opposite characters: Mary Sutherland and James Windibank. On the one hand, Mary is appreciated by Watson and Holmes, as she represents what a woman of the middle-class was expected to be in the Victorian era. She is also generous to her family, hard-working and friendly towards other people, although she might be a little naïve and wears extravagant clothing. On the other hand, Mr Windibank is negatively considered by the detective and his friend as he is a liar, accords a strong importance to money and is even ready to hurt her stepdaughter's feelingd in order not to lose money. This man does not represent the ideal of the gentleman at the end of the nineteenth century, although the character he has made up, Hosmer Angel, seems to bear those qualities and to be a respectable middle-class man. The story also confronts the reader to the

fact that the stories which might be considered as “interesting” to the public, are those who are quite sensational, and that many Sherlock Holmes’ enquiries might thus never have been revealed because they lacked emotion. This passage at the beginning of the narrative contributes to the fact that many people believed Sherlock Holmes and his adventures were real. I am now going to analyse Doyle’s writing about a governess, a middle class woman who has less money than other people of the same social rank and thus have to work to earn a living.

"The Problem of Thor Bridge"

"The Problem of Thor Bridge" is a short story which was first published in *The Strand Magazine* in February 1922, then in *Hearst's* the next month in the United States of America (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). It is the fiftieth Sherlock Holmes' story and is now collected in *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). This short story reveals many elements about the treatment which could be received by a governess at the beginning of the twentieth century, as Miss Dunbar is herself the governess of the Gibson family. It provides a comparison between the governess, whose status makes her a vulnerable character as she has to obey her employers to earn money, and the upper class characters Mr and Mrs Gibson, whose social and political status is of great importance in the English society. In this analysis, I will argue that the position of Miss Dunbar makes her a prey in the eyes of dishonest people of a higher social status.

In "The Problem of Thor Bridge", Holmes and Watson meet Neil Gibson, also called the Gold King because of the fortune he has made as a magnate in gold mining. Gibson's wife has been found dead at Thor Bridge, their residence, and the governess, Miss Dunbar, is accused of being the murderer. However, Gibson is convinced that she is not guilty and asks Sherlock Holmes to find evidence of her innocence. Holmes has many suspicions about the nature of the relationship between the Gold King and the governess, and he is told that Gibson is a violent man, especially to his wife. After Holmes and Watson went to Thor Bridge in order to investigate, he finds out that Mr Gibson was attracted to the governess and that his wife was jealous of it. This jealousy lead her to commit suicide by shooting a bullet in her brain, and trying to have Miss Dunbar accused of her murder in order to ruin her life.

At the beginning of this story, such as in many other Sherlock Holmes' stories, Watson writes about the fact that there are other enquiries which are not published, and that some of

these are not told to the public because it could tarnish some people's reputation, in this case, Sherlock Holmes':

> There remain a considerable residue of cases of greater or less interest which I might have edited before had I not feared to give the public a surfeit which might react upon the reputation of the man whom above all others I revere. In some I was myself concerned and can speak as an eye-witness, while in others I was either not present or played so small a part that they could only be told as by a third person. The following narrative is drawn from my own experience. ("TB" 1055)

This is a means for Doyle to keep the reader interested in his novels, and to blur the line between what is fiction and what is reality. It provides credit to his stories and Sherlock Holmes' procedures as so many people seem to seek for his help and he rarely fails to discover the truth, even in some extremely complicated affairs such as "The Adventure of Thor Bridge".

The character Miss Dunbar is representative of the governess, which is a relatively important part of the Victorian society as, according to Philip V. Allingham, Great Britain counted 21.000 governesses in 1851. Allingham writes that governesses were often women from the upper or middle class whose family has lost their fortune. These young women thus had to work in order to keep a little bit of independence. He cites *The Quarterly Review*'s definition of the governess, which explains that the governess is a person "who is our equal in birth, manners and education, but our inferior in worldly wealth… there is no other class which so cruelly requires its members to be, in birth, mind, and manners, above their station, in order to fit them for their station". This means that they were treated with less consideration than other women from the same social class, because they were not wealthy enough. Allingham adds that their salary was quite low and that this whole situation made them quite vulnerable. Miss Dunbar in this short story indeed receives a bad treatment as her employer's wife tries to have her go to jail for a crime which she has not committed, in order to take her revenge. Holmes and Watson only meet her at the end of the narrative, and she is represented in this scene which has been drawn by Alfred Gilbert for *The Strand Magazine*:

"Suddenly Holmes sprang from his chair. 'Come, Watson, come!' he said. 'With the help of the God of justice I will give you a case which will make England ring.'" Illustration by Alfred Gilbert, *The Strand Magazine*, February 1922.

Miss Dunbar is the female character who is represented in the picture, while she is locked up for the crime she is suspected to have committed. She is drawn as an elegant woman, although she does not wear elegant clothing. Watson has also described his first impressions when he has met the young woman:

> I had expected from all that we had heard to see a beautiful woman, but I can never forget the effect which Miss Dunbar produced upon me. It was no wonder that even the masterful millionaire had found in her something more powerful than himself–something which could control and guide him. One felt, too, as one looked at the strong, clear-cut, and yet sensitive face, that even should she be capable of some impetuous deed, none the less there was an innate nobility of character which would make her influence always for the good. She was a brunette, tall, with a noble figure and commanding presence, but her dark eyes had in them the appealing, helpless expression of the hunted creature who feels the nets around it, but can see no way out from the toils. Now, as she realized the presence and the help of my famous friend, there came a touch of colour in her wan cheeks and a light of hope began to glimmer in the glance which she turned upon us. (1065-1066)

Because of her situation as someone who has been wrongly accused, she seems vulnerable. This condition even leads Watson to dehumanise her when he calls her a "hunted creature", comparing her to an animal who had been caught by a hunter, which can be linked to his words about Mrs Ronder in "The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger". However, something special seems to emanate from Miss Dunbar and seduce men. Even Gibson writes about her that she is "[T]he best woman God ever made" ("TB" 1056). Although governesses were often badly seen

and treated by other people from the same or a higher social status, Miss Dunbar seems to be seen as more powerful than most people around her. She is not described by the Gold King or Watson as an inferior human being.

One central element in this story is the contrast between the character Miss Dunbar, and the Gibsons. Mr Gibson and his wife are described as follows by Watson:

> This man is the greatest financial power in the world, and a man, as I understand, of most violent and formidable character. He married a wife, the victim of this tragedy, of whom I know nothing save that she was past her prime, which was the more unfortunate as a very attractive governess superintended the education of two young children. (1056)

Although Mr Gibson is a respected person because of his business, he does not seem to act as a gentleman, whereas he probably is very lucky as he is married to a woman who loves him and is immensely rich. His wife, however, became violent because of the fact that her husband accorded less interest to her, and more to a younger woman. Mrs Gibson is totally different from Miss Dunbar. Indeed, she is a member of the upper class and depicted as an impulsive person who is cruel towards the governess because of her jealousy, as she suspected her to have an affair with her husband. This is how she is described by her husband:

> Maria Pinto was the daughter of a government official at Manaos, and she was very beautiful. I was young and ardent in those days, but even now, as I look back with colder blood and a more critical eye, I can see that she was rare and wonderful in her beauty. It was a deep, rich nature, too, passionate, whole-hearted, tropical, ill-balanced, very different from the American women whom I had known. (1060)

The fact the she comes from South America justifies her impulsive nature in the eyes of Mr Gibson. He explains that she used to be a beautiful woman, although she had changed as she took age, and this is the reason why he was less and less interested in his wife. Mrs Gibson was thus jealous of Miss Dunbar's youth and beauty, which had been so important to her. She decided to commit suicide because she could not tolerate the fact that she had changed, and she wanted to take revenge on the young woman whom her husband considered as more attractive. In some point of view, Mrs Gibson can also be considered as a clever person as she makes up

a plan in which Miss Dunbar seems to have very few chances to be saved from her situation. This can be understood when Sherlock Holmes explains why she would be the perfect culprit:

> Finally there is the motive. Senator Gibson is an attractive person. If his wife dies, who more likely to succeed her than the young lady who had already by all accounts received pressing attentions from her employer? Love, fortune, power, all depending upon one middle-aged life. Ugly, Watson–very ugly! (1057)

Miss Dunbar seemed to have several reasons for wishing her mistress to die, as she could have married Mr Gibson and become rich, however, she never acted in such a way. Mrs Gibson is thus a negative character, who tries to ruin an innocent's life, whereas Miss Dunbar is considered as a positive character. In this story, the middle class character is depicted as a better person than the upper class woman.

Whereas Miss Dunbar is depicted as a powerful person because of the positive energy which emanates from her, Mr Gibson is powerful because of his social and political status and seems to be cold and serene despite the tragedy which has occurred to his wife, as Watson describes the first impressions he felt when he met him:

> As I looked upon him I understood not only the fears and dislike of his manager but also the execrations which so many business rivals have heaped upon his head. If I were a sculptor and desired to idealize the successful man of affairs, iron of nerve and leathery of conscience, I should choose Mr. Neil Gibson as my model. His tall, gaunt, craggy figure had a suggestion of hunger and rapacity. An Abraham Lincoln keyed to base uses instead of high ones would give some idea of the man. His face might have been chiselled in granite, hard-set, craggy, remorseless, with deep lines upon it, the scars of many a crisis. Cold gray eyes, looking shrewdly out from under bristling brows, surveyed us each in turn. He bowed in perfunctory fashion as Holmes mentioned my name, and then with a masterful air of possession he drew a chair up to my companion and seated himself with his bony knees almost touching him. (1058)

Gibson is almost depicted as someone who does not have feelings and keeps calm in every possible situation, which contrasts with miss Dunbar who is told to look afraid because she is wrongly accused. However, Mr Marlow Bates, Gibson's manager of estate, comes to 221B Baker street to inform Holmes about the true nature of his employer, and these are the words he uses: "Mr. Holmes, he is a villain–an infernal villain" (1057) which suggests that he is not such a cold person, as he does not treat his employees with indifference but cruelty. At the end

of the story, when Holmes accuses Gibson of lying about the case, he momentarily shows some weaknesses as he gets angry towards the detective but instantly pulls himself together, as described by Watson: “With an effort the Gold King mastered his fury. I could not but admire him, for by a supreme self-command he had turned in a minute from a hot flame of anger to a frigid and contemptuous indifference” (1059). As Watson writes, this can be seen as admirable as Gibson barely shows any feeling during the narrative. This self-control was not seen in lower class characters such as Mr Breckinridge in “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”, although some middle class characters also have this capacity, such as Victor Hatherley, the engineer who cheated death and whose thumb has been cut off in “The Adventure of the Engineer’s Thumb”. Mr Gibson is thus a person who shows his real nature, that of a cruel man to the people he considers as inferior to him, but he can manage to contain his feelings in front of people who might have an ascendency on him, such as Sherlock Holmes who can become dangerous for his reputation. He is also completely different than Miss Dunbar, the central figure of this short story, as his power comes from his status and wealth but not from his personality, which is the case for the governess. He also seems to attach great importance to the physical appearance of the women around him, as he neglected his wife when she became older and gave more importance to a younger and supposedly better looking person.

In “The Adventure of Thor Bridge”, Miss Dunbar, the governess who is wrongly accused of having killed her employer, Mrs Gibson, is depicted as a powerful woman as she created a special effect on the men around her. She is described as good-looking and sympathetic, although she fears for her future. On the contrary, upper class figures are seen as negative people. Mrs Gibson is depicted as a lady whose actions show that she is cold-hearted as she commits suicide and wants her governess to be accused of the murder to take her revenge on the woman whom her husband finds attractive. Mr Gibson is also considered as a cold character who acts in accordance to his reputation and who does not want to let his emotions

be seen by other people. He thus has a strength of character as he manages to stay calm when he decides to, but he becomes violent when in the company of people whom he considers as inferior to him, such as Mr Bates, who works for him. As Holmes and Watson are two members of the middle class, their vision about other people from that same social category was rather positive. I will now compare their conduct with lower and middle class people to their behaviour with upper class people.

Upper Class

"The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor"

The first short story that I chose to examine for my analysis on upper class in Sherlock Holmes is "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor", which is the twelfth Sherlock Holmes story (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). It was first published in American newspapers in March 1892, then in *The Strand Magazine* the next month in the United Kingdom (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). It has then been collected in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). Holmes' client in this short story, Lord Robert St. Simon, is an aristocrat, the son of a duke, who has lost a lot of money, similarly to many members of the upper class in the Victorian era. He is quite old-fashioned in his look and behaviour but is willing to marry a rich American heiress who has received a totally different education than his in order to receive the dowry. The plot of this story shows similarities with "A Case of Identity" in which Miss Sutherland's fiancé disappears before their wedding. I will analyse the manners of St. Simon, in comparison to Miss Doran's in "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor".

This short story tells the misadventure of Lord Robert St. Simon, the son of the Duke of Balmoral. At the age of forty-one, he decided to marry Miss Hatty Doran, the daughter of an American who made a fortune in gold mines in California. A few hours after they got married, Miss Doran vanished during the reception. Sherlock Holmes was thus called by St. Simon to find the young woman, which he did. Holmes discovered that Miss Doran had fallen in love with a man named Francis Moulton before her father became one of the richest men in America. When they became rich, Mr Doran refused their union and the lovers decided to secretly get married before Moulton had to move in order to make a fortune and be accepted by heis father-in-law. After hearing news about a camp which had been attacked by Native Americans, Miss Doran believed her husband was dead and agreed to go to London to marry Lord St. Simon.

However, on the day of their wedding, she saw Moulton who wrote her a note to tell her that they could meet later. She then flew from the wedding reception and was reunited with her lover.

The short story begins as many others from the Sherlock Holmes' narratives, with elements which imply the truthfulness of the events related. In the first paragraph of the story, Watson writes that Lord St. Simon's story happened four years before he chose to report it in his recollection. He writes that "[f]resh scandals have eclipsed it, and their more piquant details have drawn the gossips away from this four-year-old drama" (287). This is, as in many other stories which were analysed in this essay, a way for Doyle to reinforce the belief that Holmes and Watson have really existed and that the stories related actually happened. It is also written that "the full facts have never been revealed to the general public" (287), which may also increase the reader's feelings of uniqueness and privilege, as he will have the chance to learn about this private story which supposedly happened to a member of the aristocracy.

Doyle chose to put the accent on the social position of Lord St. Simon in "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor", who is higher on the social scale than the other protagonists, but also than the majority of the readers. He also provides an account of Sherlock Holmes' opinion about the different social classes and how he behaves in the company of its different members. This extract of a dialogue between Watson and Holmes shows the latter's thoughts about his clients' social grade:

> "Your morning letters, if I remember right, were from a fish-monger and a tide-waiter."
>
> "Yes, my correspondence has certainly the charm of variety," he answered, smiling, "and the humbler are usually the more interesting. This looks like one of those unwelcome social summonses which call upon a man either to be bored or to lie."
>
> He broke the seal and glanced over the contents.
>
> "Oh, come, it may prove to be something of interest, after all."
>
> "Not social, then?"
>
> "No, distinctly professional."

> "And from a noble client?"
>
> "One of the highest in England."
>
> "My dear fellow, I congratulate you."
>
> "I assure you, Watson, without affectation, that the status of my client is a matter of less moment to me than the interest of this case." (287)

This conversation between the two characters is significant because the reader can tell that there is a difference between the way Holmes considers social status, and the way Watson sees it. Watson seems to be impressed by the status of Lord St. Simon and even congratulates his friend for having a member of the aristocracy as a client. However, Holmes explains that he is not impressed by his grade and that he will treat his matter such as any other. He even tells that he often finds the problems of less prestigious clients of better interest than the ones of figures such as St. Simon. Benjamin O'Dell affirms that Holmes has a good knowledge of the different social classes' cultures, which helps him through his enquiries (54). He also writes that "[a]s arrogant as he may seem when dealing with men of his own class, Holmes rarely appears before the poor as social superior" (54). I would add that he also seems to behave in an arrogant manner with men of a superior class than his, as can be read in this dialogue between St. Simon and him:

> "I understand that you have already managed several delicate cases of this sort, sir, though I presume that they were hardly from the same class of society."
>
> "No, I am descending."
>
> "I beg pardon."
>
> "My last client of the sort was a king."
>
> "Oh, really! I had no idea. And which king?"
>
> "The King of Scandinavia."
>
> "What! Had he lost his wife?"
>
> "You can understand," said Holmes suavely, "that I extend to the affairs of my other clients the same secrecy which I promise to you in yours."
>
> "Of course! Very right! very right! I'm sure I beg pardon." (291)

In this extract, Sherlock Holmes shows that he is not impressed by his client's status, and he even tells him that he is far from being the most prestigious person he has helped. He is quite arrogant in his words, and pushed St. Simon to present his excuses for the mistake he has made.

Watson's description of Lord St. Simon's physical appearance as he enters is not as positive as could be imagined with a man of such a high social status:

> A gentleman entered, with a pleasant, cultured face, high-nosed and pale, with something perhaps of petulance about the mouth, and with the steady, well-opened eye of a man whose pleasant lot it had ever been to command and to be obeyed. His manner was brisk, and yet his general appearance gave an undue impression of age, for he had a slight forward stoop and a little bend of the knees as he walked. His hair, too, as he swept off his very curly-brimmed hat, was grizzled round the edges and thin upon the top. As to his dress, it was careful to the verge of foppishness, with high collar, black frock-coat, white waistcoat, yellow gloves, patent-leather shoes, and light-coloured gaiters. (291)

Sidney Paget's illustration of Lord St. Simon for *The Strand Magazine* corresponds to Watson's description:

"Lord Robert St. Simon." Illustration by Sidney Paget, *The Strand Magazine*, April 1892.

Altough these representations of St. Simon are those of a distinguished and well-mannered person, they provide the impression of an old-fashioned man whose manners are dated for the late Victorian era. As Martin Wiener affirms, traditions were important for the upper class,

especially in the Victorian era (43). This is confirmed by St. Simon's behaviour throughout the story. Whereas Lord St. Simon is the son of a duke, he is also impoverished and has to marry a rich American heiress in order to keep his standard of living. This might be another reason for his attachment to his rank. The fact that St. Simon is not provided a perfect image in this narrative might be linked to the fact that, according to Glazzard, Doyle believed that the decline of the aristocracy in many matters (financial, political, etc.) was the result of "moral degeneration" (98).

Robert St. Simon seems to be well aware of his status and to expect from other people to respect it. In the following extract of a note written by St. Simon to Holmes, it can be understood that he believes he has to be a priority for the people who work for him: "I will call at four o'clock in the afternoon, and, should you have any other engagement at that time, I hope that you will postpone it, as this matter is of paramount importance" (288). This quote is quite relevant as it shows how St. Simon imposes the time whe, he arrives and expects from Holmes to cancel his potential other appointments or activities in order to receive him and solve his problem. This can be compared to Nancy Ellenberger's assertions of the fact that members of the upper class could be rude to the people who were working for them (68). After he learned that Holmes has solved his enquiry, however, St. Simon shows gratitude towards him, which inspires humour to Holmes: "Bowing in a stately, old-fashioned manner [St. Simon] departed. 'It is very good of Lord St. Simon to honour my head by putting it on a level with his own,' said Sherlock Holmes, laughing" ("NB" 294). As Holmes knows the manners of upper class people, he is aware of the fact that St. Simon's behaviour at that moment is a way, for him, to express gratitude, which can be quite surprising as Holmes belongs to an inferior social class.

The loss of the fortune of the Duke of Balmoral impacts his son's estate, which leads him to marry a woman he would probably not have considered as a potential future wife if he

was not in need of money. In his description of Miss Doran, it can be understood that there are differences in their education:

> "[H]er education has come from Nature rather than from the schoolmaster. She is what we call in England a tomboy, with a strong nature, wild and free, unfettered by any sort of traditions. She is impetuous–volcanic, I was about to say. She is swift in making up her mind and fearless in carrying out her resolutions. On the other hand, I would not have given her the name which I have the honour to bear"–he gave a little stately cough–"had not I thought her to be at bottom a noble woman. I believe that she is capable of heroic self-sacrifice and that anything dishonourable would be repugnant to her." (292)

This does not correspond to the representation of English upper class women made by Ellenberger in her book *Balfour's World*. This shows that there is an enormous difference in education and mentality for an upper class English woman, or an American woman who only became rich in her twenties. Hatty Doran was raised in a freer and wilder environment, and probably was not taught about the manners which were to be adopted with English high society. However, this does not prevent her from being a respectable person who would be legitimate to marry the son of a Duke, one of the most important figures of the English society.

The narrative of "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor" is, similarly to many other Sherlock Holmes' stories, perpetuating the idea that the characters and events which take place in the story were real. It also presents Lord St. Simon, who corresponds to the stereotype of the upper class male in the Victorian era: a man who is attached to traditions and appearance, and who shows his superiority although he has suffered from the crisis that attained many members of the upper class in the late nineteenth century. The short story also provides a view on Sherlock Holmes' opinion about people who are on a higher step of the social scale than he is. Whereas he tends to be nice and patient with members of the lower class, Holmes tends to act as superior with people from the upper class. Another important aspect of the story is Miss Hatty Doran's personality and education. Being an American who was not rich at birth, she was raised in the nature and quite freely in comparison to the English aristocracy. However, St. Simon chooses to marry her in order to preserve his standard of living, and he does not hesitate

to praise her for her qualities of mind. Although Lord St. Simon is attached to traditions and rather old-fashioned, he is a man who does not have bad intentions. I will now analyse another short story in which an upper class male is presented, but who is quite different from St. Simon as he faints to know nothing about the kidnapping of his son, but in fact protects someone who is dear to him.

"The Adventure of the Priory School"

First published in *Collier's* in the United States in January 1904, "The Adventure of the Priory School" was then published in the United Kingdom the next month in *The Strand Magazine* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). It is the thirty-second Sherlock Holmes' story and is now collected in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). In this short story, contrarily to "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor", the Duke of Holdernesse did not want his problem to be known in order to avoid scandal, and because he knew the truth and wanted to protect the malefactor, his illegitimate son. In this analysis, I will argue that there are many differences in education between the legitimate and the illegitimate son of the Duke and that Wilder contrasts with the figure of his biological father, in appearance and mentality. It also provides an account of the treatment received by working class people from their upper class employers, which in this story is highly negative and leads to revenge.

In this short story, Holmes' help is asked by Dr Thorneycroft Huxtable, founder and principal of the Priory, a preparatory school in the North of England. He is embarrassed as one of his students, Lord Saltire, the heir of the Duke of Holdernesse, has been missing for a few days. Not only the ten-year-old boy has disappeared, but also Heidegger, the German master, who flew away on a bicycle. Holmes and Watson thus go to the Priory school in order to investigate and find the young Lord. There, they meet the Duke and his secretary, James Wilder. Holmes and Watson decide to follow the bicycle track from the school, which leads them to find the dead body of the German master. Then, after some investigation, Sherlock Holmes discovers part of the truth about the disappearance of Lord Saltire: it is James Wilder who has kidnapped him, and the master was killed by his accomplice Reuben Hayes, a man who lives in the countryside and the former head coachman of the Duke. The Duke confesses that he knew the truth, and added that Wilder was his illegitimate son, who was jealous of Lord Saltire and

kidnapped him in order for the Duke to change his mind about the heritage. The Duke hid this affair to Holmes and every other people in order to avoid scandal. Finally, all ends well and James Wilder is leaving for Australia in order to make a fortune there.

One of the biggest differences between Lord St. Simon in "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor" and the Duke of Holdernesse in "The Adventure of the Priory School" is that the Duke is one of the wealthiest men in England, contrarily to St. Simon whose family has lost a lot of money. Indeed, even Sherlock Holmes seems impressed when he reads about the Duke in his encyclopaedia, whereas he was quite indifferent about St. Simon's social status:

> 'Holdernesse, 6th Duke, K.G., P.C.'–half the alphabet! 'Baron Beverly, Earl of Carston'–dear me, what a list! 'Lord Lieutenant of Hallamshire since 1900. Married Edith, daughter of Sir Charles Appledore, 1888. Heir and only child, Lord Saltire. Owns about two hundred and fifty thousand acres. Minerals in Lancashire and Wales. Address: Carlton House Terrace; Holdernesse Hall, Hallamshire; Carston Castle, Bangor, Wales. Lord of the Admiralty, 1872; Chief Secretary of State for—' Well, well, this man is certainly one of the greatest subjects of the Crown! ("PS" 539-540)

His status is also the reason why Dr Huxtable, the principal of the Priory School, was so worried about the disappearance of Lord Saltire. The Duke is so attached to his image that he prefers to avoid public scandal than to have his son back as soon as possible. Indeed, he prefers to save Wilder from the judiciary system and having the young Lord staying at the Cock Inn for three more days, than to reveal to the society that he has an illegitimate son. Sherlock Holmes knows that scandal is one of the biggest fears of the Duke, and that is the reason why he asks him for money when he learned the truth: "'I fancy that I see your Grace's check-book upon the table,' said he. 'I should be glad if you would make me out a check for six thousand pounds. It would be as well, perhaps, for you to cross it. The Capital and Counties Bank, Oxford Street branch are my agents'" (554). In this passage, Holmes shows that, although he seemed impressed by the status of the Duke, he nevertheless wants him to pay for his bad morality and asks him for a large sum of money, whereas he does not expect for is poorer clients to pay. This behaviour shows once more that Holmes is usually more arrogant with people who belong to higher

classes of the society. The Duke's fear for scandal confirms Gareth Stedman Jones' affirmation that image was important for people from all social classes in the English society of the Victorian era (201).

The Duke of Holdernesse's physical appearance and manners inspire serenity and respect, as shown by Watson's description:

> I was, of course, familiar with the pictures of the famous statesman, but the man himself was very different from his representation. He was a tall and stately person, scrupulously dressed, with a drawn, thin face, and a nose which was grotesquely curved and long. His complexion was of a dead pallor, which was more startling by contrast with a long, dwindling beard of vivid red, which flowed down over his white waistcoat, with his watch-chain gleaming through its fringe. (543)

Such as Lord St. Simon, the Duke has a traditional appearance. His appearance and calmness of temper seem to correspond to the ideal of masculinity as depicted by Joseph Kestner, although the Duke loses his temper at the end of the short story, when he fears for the secret and the security of James Wilder. Contrarily to his biological father, Wilder does not correspond to this ideal, which might be the result of his unhappiness of not being the heir, and the fact that he was not raised as a Lord. Here is how he is depicted by Watson: "Beside him stood a very young man, whom I understood to be Wilder, the private secretary. He was small, nervous, alert, with intelligent light-blue eyes and mobile features. It was he who at once, in an incisive and positive tone, opened the conversation" ("PS" 543). Sidney Paget has drawn the Duke of Holdernesse and Wilder side by side, as can be seen in this picture in which Wilder stands at the left side and the Duke at the right side:

"Beside him stood a very young man." Illustration by Sidney Paget, *The Strand Magazine*, February 1904.

Whereas the Duke stands straight and seems to be very serious, Wilder seems more relaxed and is less impressive than his biological father. Both characters contrast in this representation. The Duke has sent his legitimate son, Lord Saltire, to the Priory school in order to teach him the manners which a man of his rank should show, which he has not done with Wilder. Indeed, the Priory is, according to Huxtable, "without exception, the best and most select preparatory school in England" (540). The fact that a boy from the aristocracy went to an elitist school is, as Wiener writes, a way to homogenise the members of the upper class and lead them to become respectable gentlemen (11).

Whereas Wilder contrasts with the figure of the Duke in his physical appearance and behaviour, the character who shows more differences with the others in this short story is Reuben Hayes, who is a member of the working class and who used to work at the service of the Duke, whom he did not appreciate. Watson reports their first encounter with him:

> [A] squat, dark, elderly man was smoking a black clay pipe.
>
> "How are you, Mr. Reuben Hayes?" said Holmes.

> "Who are you, and how do you get my name so pat?" the countryman answered, with a suspicious flash of a pair of cunning eyes.
>
> […]
>
> Mr. Reuben Hayes's manner was far from gracious, but Holmes took it with admirable good-humour. (550)

Hayes' manners are really different from the Duke's and he does not treat Holmes and Watson as if they had a different social status than himself. Watson also transcribes the man's accent as he talks, as he calls the Duke "the Dook", which shows that he is less educated than other protagonists of the story. Hayes' words about the Duke confirm Nancy Ellenberger's affirmation about the fact that upper classes people had a tendency to be unfriendly to the people at their service:

> "I've less reason to wish the Dook well than most men," said he, "for I was his head coachman once, and cruel bad he treated me. It was him that sacked me without a character on the work of a lying corn-chandler. But I'm glad to hear that the young lord was heard of in Liverpool, and I'll help you to take the news to the Hall." ("PS" 551)

According to Hayes, the Duke was cruel towards him, and that might be the reason why he accepted to help Wilder in the kidnapping of his son, as a revenge. This is similar to the behaviour of Mr Gibson in "The Problem of Thor Bridge" who was told to be cruel to his employees. The fact that the Duke lacks respect towards people from the lower class but shows a lot of respect towards people like Holmes who could help him in protecting him from scandal proves that he only considers other people when they might be of some use to him.

"The Adventure of the Priory School" provides an account of the manners of one of the most important persons in the English Society at the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed, the Duke of Holdernesse usually shows calmness and respect towards other people, even people from the middle class such as Sherlock Holmes. However, we learn that he was unsympathetic towards his employees. The Duke, whereas peaceful in his daily attitude, is irritated when he fears that revelations are going to be made about his illegitimate son. He wants to keep the affair silent at all cost, although it puts his young son, Lord Saltire, in a dangerous situation. Another

important aspect of this short story is education, which is a central subject matter as the events take place in a school. Indeed, the Duke's son and heir follows classes in a prestigious school, whereas James Wilder, the Duke's illegitimate son, could not beneficiate from such an education. The result is that he does not have the same manners and appearance as his father, and it leads him to the kidnapping of the young Lord, in order to become the heir of the Duke of Holdernesse. Having analysed two short stories about male figures from the upper class, I chose to pay heed to a female upper class character in my following analysis.

"The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax"

The short story "The disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax" is the forty-fifth Sherlock Holmes' story, which was first published in December 1911 in *The Strand Magazine*, and is now collected in *His Last Bow* (*The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia*). This short story shows the importance accorded to a woman's physical appearance in the society at the beginning of the twentieth century. It also shows the dangers which a single woman might face, and I will argue that the weaknesses of their personality due to their rank, education and gender, might be used against them. Physical appearance is not only important for the lady, but also for the criminals who do not seem to be "good-looking" people and even are dehumanised.

In this short story, Watson is sent by Holmes to Lausanne in search of Lady Frances Carfax, a rich and unwed woman who has disappeared. During his investigation, he discovers that the lady has been followed by a man whom she may be trying to escape. In Montpellier, while meeting her former maid, Watson was attacked by Philip Green but was saved by Sherlock Holmes dressed as a workman. Green is in fact an Englishman who is in love with Lady Frances and also looking for her. They all return to London, knowing that the lady has come back there with the Shlessingers, a couple she has met in Baden. However, Holmes discovers that the Shlessingers are in fact Holy Peters and Mrs Fraser, two criminals who have already stolen goods from lonely rich ladies. With Green's help, they learn that the criminals are planning a funeral the next morning. Holmes thus goes to theirs but finds an old lady in the coffin. On the next morning, he realises what has happened and discovers that Lady Frances Carfax also lies in the coffin which has a false bottom. Hopefully, she is still alive.

Sherlock Holmes, when he introduces the problem of the disappearance of the lady to Watson, first talks about the dangers of being a lonely rich woman. He indeed explains that

such a person is often confronted to criminals who consider them as preys which they can easily rob, as shown by this passage:

> "One of the most dangerous classes in the world," said he, "is the drifting and friendless woman. She is the most harmless and often the most useful to mortals, but she is the inevitable inciter of crime in others. She is helpless. She is migratory. She has sufficient means to take her from country to country and from hotel to hotel. She is lost, as often as not, in a maze of obscure *pensions* and boarding-houses. She is a stray chicken in a world of foxes. When she is gobbled up she is hardly missed. I much fear that some evil has come to the Lady Frances Carfax." (943)

Holmes even compares the society with a world of animals in which people whom he considers as vulnerable such as Lady Frances Carfax would be chickens, and criminals foxes. This is peculiar because this time, a woman of the upper class is compared to an animal, and not only criminals or working class people. One of the particularities in this short story is the fact that Watson does not provide a description of the main protagonist's physical appearance. The information provided comes from Holmes when he explains the matter to his friend. We learn that the lady is "beautiful" and that she comes from a rich family, although she has only inherited of jewels, as explained in this passage:

> "Lady Frances," he continued, "is the sole survivor of the direct family of the late Earl of Rufton. The estates went, as you may remember, in the male line. She was left with limited means, but with some very remarkable old Spanish jewellery of silver and curiously cut diamonds to which she was fondly attached–too attached, for she refused to leave them with her banker and always carried them about with her. A rather pathetic figure, the Lady Frances, a beautiful woman, still in fresh middle age, and yet, by a strange chance, the last derelict of what only twenty years ago was a goodly fleet." (943)

Holmes explains that the lady does not have a lot of money taking her social rank into account because she is a woman, and money is passed through males. As she remained unmarried, she could not benefit from the fortune of a man. However, she lives a comfortable life and has valuable jewels, which attracts criminals. In this short story, such as Mrs Ronder in "The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger", Lady Frances is described by her beauty which has declined as time has passed. Not only Holmes, but also a hotel employee evokes the fact that she must have been a beautiful woman in her younger years, as reported by Watson: "Lady Frances, by all who met her. Her age was not more than forty. She was still handsome and bore every sign

of having in her youth been a very lovely woman" ("DLFC" 944). This shows that, especially for women, image is important in the eyes of men at that time. Most of the information provided about the lady concerns her physical appearance rather than her personality.

Nonetheless, some elements of Lady Frances' personality are provided in the story, such as the fact that she is pious, which is one of the reasons why she was kidnapped, as it was used by Holy Peters against her, which can be understood in this passage:

> Lady Frances had stayed at the Englischer Hof for a fortnight. While there she had made the acquaintance of a Dr. Shlessinger and his wife, a missionary from South America. Like most lonely ladies, Lady Frances found her comfort and occupation in religion. Dr. Shlessinger's remarkable personality, his whole hearted devotion, and the fact that he was recovering from a disease contracted in the exercise of his apostolic duties affected her deeply. (944)

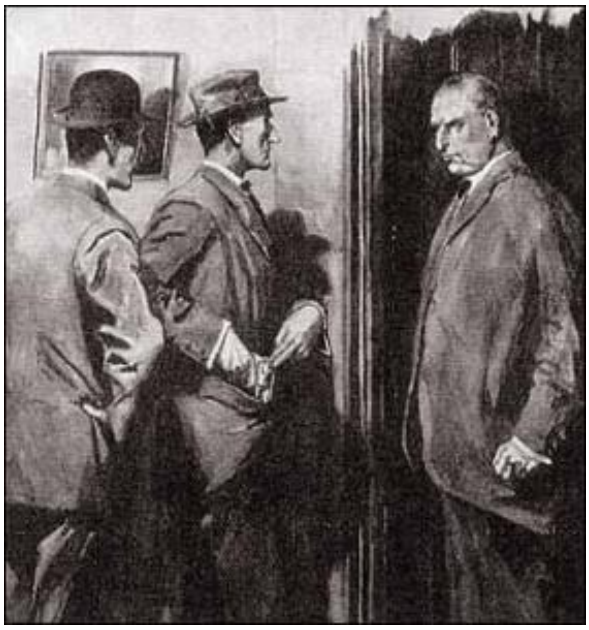
According to Nancy Ellenberger, religion was important for women of the upper class, who were worried about sin and goodness (48-49). This was different for males of that class, to whom religion was secondary even in their education, as Mangan affirms (81). This difference of education may have been a means to maintain women in a more vulnerable position than men, which lead more easily to situations such as Lady Frances'. This naivety almost killed the lady, who needed men to be saved in extremis. Indeed, she is a rather inactive character as the only time Holmes and Watson see her, she is unconscious. This provides the impression that she did not act to save her life or never realised the danger she was in. It also shows why marriage was so important for women at the time, as expressed by Ellenberger (43). Indeed, if she had had a husband, Lady Frances Carfax would probably not have been kidnapped.

The description of Holy Peters/Rev Dr Shlessinger contrasts a lot with that of Lady Frances Carfax. While enquiring, Watson had a conversation with an hotel employee about that man, before he knew that he was responsible for the disappearance of the lady:

> "[H]e was an Englishman, though of an unusual type."
>
> "A savage?" said I, linking my facts after the fashion of my illustrious friend.

> "Exactly. That describes him very well. He is a bulky, bearded, sunburned fellow, who looks as if he would be more at home in a farmers' inn than in a fashionable hotel. A hard, fierce man, I should think, and one whom I should be sorry to offend." (945)

Although the employee does not know what his activities are or what his role in the disappearance of the lady is, he has a bad image of Peters, who does not inspire trust. This character is also dehumanised during this dialogue, as he is told to be a "savage". Watson also provides a description of his physical appearance when he sees him: "[A] big, clean-shaven bald-headed man stepped lightly into the room. He had a large red face, with pendulous cheeks, and a general air of superficial benevolence which was marred by a cruel, vicious mouth" (950). He was also drawn by Alec Ball for *The Strand Magazine*. Peters is the character at the right side.



"Holmes half drew a revolver from his pocket." Illustration by Alec Ball, *The Strand Magazine*, December 1911.

Such as many criminals who are met by Holmes and Watson, Peters is not described as a "good-looking" person and his physical appearance seems to be menacing. Not only Peters is dehumanised and described with a disadvantageous physical appearance, but also his accomplice, Mrs Fraser, who is compared to an animal: "She is a tall, pale woman, with ferret eyes" (948). This recalls to the analysis of criminals and lower class people which were made

earlier in this essay, but also to the comparison of Lady Frances with chickens. Whereas the lady is compared to animals because of her position as a person who would be easily robbed, Mrs Fraser is compared to a ferret because of her physical appearance. As their appearance and social position did not inspire trust in most people's eyes, they decided to pass as a couple, the Shlessingers, and Peters used the identity of a reverent to gain Lady Frances Carfax's confidence. They thus used passing in order to achieve their crime. Passing, in this short story, is used for highly serious matters as their plan was to kill the lady, whereas in other short stories such as "The Man with the Twisted Lip" or "A Case of Identity", passing did not endanger people's lives. However, in the three short stories mentioned in this paragraph, the people who have passed have used this method for financial matters, as Mr St. Clair earned a living with passing as a beggar, Mr Windibank did not want to lose his step-daughter's donation and therefore passed as Hosmer Angel, and Mr Peters and Mrs Fraser passed in order to rob a wealthy lady.

"The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax" is a Sherlock Holmes' stories which deals with a woman from the upper class as the main character. However, the lady is only seen by Holmes and Watson at the very end of the events, as they are in search for her during the whole story. She is described as a woman who was beautiful in her youth, although she has never been married. Her physical appearance is an important feature of the story, as well as the fact that she is a Christian, which was used against her by Holy Peters who pretended to be a reverent in order to gain her trust and lead her to follow him and his accomplice to London. The characters Holy Peters and Mrs Fraser, the two criminals, are dehumanised, as was often seen in the Sherlock Holmes' stories. Mrs Fraser is even compared to an animal (a ferret), which is more often seen about male than female characters. This short story thus shows that a single lady was considered as a prey for criminals in the early twentieth century society. Lady Frances Carfax

is also represented as a vulnerable and naïve character, which might show Arthur Conan Doyle's opinion about women.

Conclusion

The Sherlock Holmes' stories, as I have shown in my analyses, are a good way for the twenty-first century reader to realise what the life in the Victorian and Edwardian eras looked like for many different people, as Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson meet a wide range of people during their enquiries. Indeed, people of all social classes are encountered: the two protagonists go to some of the most ill-famed quarters of London in "The Man with the Twisted lip", but they also meet aristocrats such as the Duke of Holdernesse in "The Adventure of the Priory School". These encounters provide the reader with an idea of how middle class males (such as Holmes and Watson, but especially Arthur Conan Doyle) perceived other people (males and females) from the same or a different social class.

One of the main aspects which could be perceived in my analyses of nine Sherlock Holmes' short stories is the way people are dehumanised in Holmes' and Watson's words. Indeed, many characters are compared to animals, especially lower class people and criminals, however, some middle and upper class people can also be dehumanised when they do not act as expected from the society. The characters who are appreciated the most by the detective and his acolyte are those who behave according to the ideals which were praised in the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Males had to be brave and behave as gentlemen, such as Victor Hatherley in "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb" who manages to be calm despite the pain and fear he had suffered the night before. Another figure who was appreciated is Miss Sutherland in "A Case of Identity", who chose to work to earn a living and donate most of her money to her mother whereas she could have chosen to keep her uncle's heritage for herself. One interesting fact to analyse is that Sherlock Holmes does not choose his clients in relation to their social status, but agrees to help the people who need him. In his career, he has resolved enquiries for working class people, as well as for kings. He also claims that the most

interesting investigations often comes from lower class people. Sherlock Holmes often behaves as a member of the working class with people of that social rank, but acts as if he was superior than people of the upper class who are often arrogant.

Sherlock Holmes and some of the secondary characters whom are to be read about in the stories such as Neville St. Clair, James Windibank and Holy Peters share at least one element. Indeed, they all pass for someone else at some point of their life. Sherlock Holmes often dresses up as someone else in order to resolve an enquiry or to analyse other people's conduct. However, the three men mentioned above have passed for financial reasons, sometimes leading to put someone's life in great danger like in "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax". Holmes, St. Clair and Windibank change their appearance in order not to be recognised, however, Holy Peters and Mrs Fraser pretended to be the Shlessingers without changing their appearance, as the lady whom they wanted to rob did not know them previously. Appearance is nevertheless important in the eyes of Holmes and Watson, as they often provide precise description of their client's features, and this often influences their opinion about them. For example, in "The Man with the Twisted Lip", their opinion radically changes when they talk about Hugh Boone or about Neville St. Clair, who are in fact one and the same person.

Many people believe that Sherlock Holmes has really existed and that his adventures were real. Some called the Sherlockians even fake to pretend that they believe in his existence. The reason why so many readers believe in his existence is that the character Dr Watson writes his chronicles as if they were real, pretending that he has to hide some elements to the public or that some chronicles existed which were never published. The events take place in real places most of the time, inside or around the city of London, the English reader could thus identify the places. The fact that so many people believed Doyle's stories really happened probably contributed to their popularity.

Holmes and Watson also encounter people who do not come from England during their investigations, such as Colonel Lysander Stark in “The Adventure of the Engineer’s Thumb”. Stark is a criminal and tries to kill an honest man in order to keep his business secret, Holmes and Watson thus utilise hard words when talking about his personality or physical appearance. It would thus be interesting to look at other characters who are not English, nor even European, to analyse the detective and his friend’s opinion and behaviour towards people who do not share the same culture as they do.

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