Tale Of Two Cities By Dickens Essay, Research Paper

A Tale of Two Cities Dickens, Charles Appleton Library 266 pp. The main purpose of this book is to show the contrasts between the peaceful city of London and the city of Paris, tearing itself apart in revolution. This is apparent in the very first line of the book, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times….” This is a contrast of the two cities, London, the tranquil home of Mr. Lorry and the Darnays’; and Paris, the center of a bloody revolution. The author shows gentleness in these violent times in the persons of Dr. and Lucie Mannette, both gentle and peaceful. He also characterizes the evil side of the revolution in the apathetic and depraved Misuser and Mademoiselle Defarge, who go about their business while death carts roll– as do heads– through the streets of Paris. He does though, depict a ray of light amongst all this evil; the heroic Carton, who gave his life for his friend and a woman he knew he would never have. The biggest contrast of all, is in the person of Misuser Darnay, the gentle English family man, who is also related to the evil Marquis Evremonde. I personally like stories that use historical events as backdrops because it brings these seemingly distant events closer to us. This book definitely offers insight into life in the two cities at the time of the French Revolution. I think it does an excellent job of depicting just how totally involved some people became in the revolution. It shows how people were blinded by the desire for freedom from their former oppressors, so much so, that they attacked anyone and anything that was even remotely related to their past rulers. I think this was effectively done by excellent characterization, using each character to depict a different aspect of society, then contrasting them by making them rivals. I really took away a different view of that time period. Some of the language he used was definitely outdated. The language was exactly what you would expect for a novel of that time period. I was able to follow the story pretty well, although there were a few times, in switching back and forth between cities, that I got a little lost Still on the whole I liked the way the story flowed. Unlike some stories of that time, there wasn’t really any profanity or taking of God’s name in vain, which is always good to see. There are other Dickens books that I have liked more, but I still thought this was a very good example of his work. I thought the style was pretty consistent with other books by Dickens I’ve read. It seems he uses characters to symbolize traits of people quite often, like Tiny Tim symbolizing innocence in the Christmas Carol to contrast Scrooge’s unkindness. I thought the setting, combined with the title and characterization, provided an in-depth look at the time period of the French Revolution and the events around it. It starts with the title, which is appropriate for obvious reasons, those being that the story shifts between London and Paris quite often. The description of the settings really added to the experience of the time period. The way he described the prison cells, the area around the guillotine, and beautiful house of the Darnays’ helped promote the contrasts between the cities, as well as put you right into the story. As far as suspense goes, there really wasn’t much, so if you’re looking to be kept on the edge of your seat, then I wouldn’t really recommend this. However, this book has an fantastically intricate plot, and a pretty good ending. Overall I liked this book a lot and would recommend it to anyone who likes Dickens and is also interested by the time period surrounding the French Revolution. However, if you’re looking for a cliffhanger full of action, this isn’t really the book for you.