

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

People need literary works in their lives. Some people think that reading literary works only waste their time and needs more concentrations. It is true. Reading literary works needs high concentration because one has to memorize the plot, characters, theme, conflict, et cetera. The brain has to imagine it in order to catch the understanding in reading literary works. On the other side, some people are interested to read literary works for refreshing the brain, for entertaining and for gaining knowledge about life. Besides that, literary works can make the brain imagine the setting, events, and many things what are written in it. Kennedy states that fiction (from the Latin *fictio*, "a shaping, a counterfeiting") is a name for stories not entirely factual, but at least partially shaped, made up, imagined. It is true that in some fiction such as historical novel, a writer draws upon factual information in presenting scenes, events, and characters (1983: 3). This statement gives the understanding that by reading literary works, especially fiction, can give entertainment by imagining it and give information about many things which happen in the world.

Furthermore, to tell the experiences, one uses a language as a means of gaining literature, culture, science, et cetera. One could tell the world about his experiences through literature. Griffith, in *Writing Essay About Literature* (1990:33), says that writers of literature use language, in short, for its expressive

and emotional qualities. This statement means that language is used by one to tell anything about what he has experienced through the literary works because in the literary works there is a message that is uttered from the writer to the readers.

There are three kinds of literary works, they are: plays, poetry, and prose. Prose can be divided into two kinds: short story and novel. Novel is the popular form of literature. People can get entertainment and knowledge about life through the story and message of the novel. A novel is a long story written in prose, but because it is long, it differs from a short story in other ways too (Jones, 1968: 80). The basic difference between a novel and a short story is about the length. Novel is longer than short story. One more difference between a novel and a short story is in focus. Jones states that a short story focuses on one incident in time; a novel has far more range (1968: 80). It means that it is possible if novel has more number in character, more number in conflict, more number in setting, et cetera.

In Victorian period, reading novel becomes popular as popular as drama in the days of Elizabeth. In that period, people of middle class prefer reading a novel at home to spending their time and money to watch the plays at the theatre or on the street. People were entertained by novel. It is stated by Long:

And since the number of readers has increased a thousandfold with the spread of popular education, it is the age of the newspaper, the magazine, and the modern novel, —the first two being the story of the world's daily life, and the last our pleasantest form of literary entertainment, as well as our most successful method of presenting modern problems and modern ideals. The novel in this age fills a place which the drama held in the days of Elizabeth; and never before, in any age or language, has the novel appeared in such numbers and in such perfection (1945: 455).

Most of the novelists in this period concern their writing with society. The novelists in this period were Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray,

George Elliot, Bronte's Sister, et cetera. The writer will choose one of these novelists' literary works as the source of research.

The writer chooses Charles Dickens' novel entitled *Our Mutual Friend* which was written in 1864. The writer is interested in describing the comparison of the struggle which is done by Bella and Lizzie and their surroundings. Beside that, the struggle in reaching the higher social status is also interesting to explore.

Charles Dickens is one of the talented writers in Victorian Period. He starts his writing as an uneducated person. Instead of Tennyson and Browning, Dickens is the poorer writer. He was born in Landport in 1812. His father was a clerk and Dickens was the second of eight poor children. It is stated by Long:

While Tennyson and Browning were being educated for this life of literature, and shielded most tenderly from the hardships of the world, Dickens, a poor, obscure, and suffering child, was helping to support a shiftless family by pasting labels on blacking bottles, sleeping under a counter like a homeless cat, and once a week timidly approaching the big prison where his father was confined for debt (1945: 487).

But above all these, Dickens could write the great novels on that period, so, he could rise his family life too.

Our Mutual Friend is the last novel of Charles Dickens. There are some struggles to get the higher class that can be found in that novel. The first character, Bella, is the poor girl who receives the will of a rich person. Bella has to marry with someone whom she has never met before. In this situation, Bella starts her dreams to be a rich girl and finishes her unlucky life among the poor family. However, her dreams are not coming true because of the death of her husband to be. It makes Bella struggles although she can not do it by herself. The second character, Lizzie, also comes from the poor family. She lives with her father and

brother who earn their living by working in the dirty Thames River. Looking at her family's condition, Lizzie wants to rise up her family from the poverty. She also struggles in which she has a beautiful romance experience with Eugene.

According to the content of Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, the writer chooses the title to present the causes and effects in the comparison on Bella and Lizzie in struggling to get the higher class, which reflects the daily reality at the era of Victorian. Bella and Lizzie are the portraits of women who respect to the higher social class. Therefore, the writer decides to analyze this novel, *Our Mutual Friend*, especially on the causes and effects on Bella and Lizzie in struggling to get the higher class.

1.2. Statements of the Problem

There are two problems that occur in the novel which are interesting to be analyzed by the writer, they are:

1. What are the similarities and differences between Bella's and Lizzie's causes in struggling to be the high class?
2. What are the effects after Bella and Lizzie have become the member of higher social class they want to be toward themselves and the surroundings?

1.3. Limitation of the Problem

The writer limits her analysis in the character of Bella and Lizzie only, and persons who are involved in their struggle. These characters describe the struggle which they have done at the era of Victorian.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

This analysis has purposes to answer the problems which are stated in the statements of the problem. The purposes are to explain:

1. The similarities and differences between Bella's and Lizzie's causes in struggling to be the high class.
2. The effects after Bella and Lizzie have become the member of higher social class status they want to be toward themselves and the surroundings.

1.5. Significance of the Study

In reading Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, the writer can get knowledge about social class in the era of Victorian. The writer also understands about "society" which contains of rich and educated people, about their life, and vice versa, the writer also knows the life of people in the lower class status which are poor and uneducated. Moreover, the writer also learns more about how the women, Bella and Lizzie, struggle to get the higher social class in the era of Victorian.

The writer hopes that this analysis can be useful for the readers in gaining the knowledge about social class in Victorian period and the people's struggle to survive and get the higher class. The writer also expects that the readers will get more information about struggling to get the higher class through this analysis. Furthermore, this analysis is significant for it can be the reference for the further research on analyzing the struggle to get the higher class in a novel. Finally, the writer hopes that this study can be useful for the other researchers in analysis the struggle of Bella and Lizzie who live in Victorian period in Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*.