

# Classes

In the post-emancipation period, there really were only three MAIN classes or divisions that could be seen.

**1. The Upper class:** this group consisted of those who owned and controlled the wealth: large landowners, businessmen, commercial dealers etc., those who had political power and sway: the Governor and his officials and the members of the House of Assembly.

**2. The Middle class-** many of these were coloured people. Chief among them would be the professionals such as journalists, teachers and lawyers. The identifying feature would be the fact that they were educated and held what we called 'white collar' jobs. They wore shirt and tie to work and some could be seen proudly displaying a pen or two on their shirt pockets, sometimes more!

**3. The lower or laboring class.** Their lives were characterized by **hard / strenuous physical work**. They labored on agricultural estates whether sugar, coffee or bananas. They worked in the factories, (light industries). They did menial work in the hotels and in peoples' homes as domestics. Some were craftsmen or skilled people such as tailors and shoemakers.

Somewhere between the bottom of the middle class and the laboring class, we could insert the peasantry and small retailers. These were people who did not work for an employer, for examples the small farmer and the shopkeeper.