

Victorian Period (1832 -1901)

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The Victorian period started in 1832 and ended in 1901. It is named after Queen Victoria. She ruled from 1837 to 1901. But the period started in 1832 because of the First Reform Bill. From 1832 to 1837, the ideas were already changing. So, this time is also included. This age was a time of big social, political, and scientific change. The Victorian Age is famous for **poetry and novels**. There are two subperiods **The Age of Pre-Raphaelites (1848-1860)** and **The Age of Aestheticism (1880-1901)**.

The Age of Pre-Raphaelites (1848-1860)

This age came in the middle of the Victorian period. It is called the Age of Pre-Raphaelites. A group of artists started it. The group was made by D. G. Rossetti, W. H. Hunt, and J. Millais. Later, Christina Rossetti, W. Morris, and A. Swinburne joined them. They followed the style before Raphael, the Italian painter. At first, it was for painting, but later it became a literary movement. Their writing had some special features. These include medievalism, symbolism, truth, beauty, and simplicity. They wanted to bring beauty and deep feelings into poetry.

The Age of Aestheticism (1880-1901)

The last part of the Victorian era is called the Age of Aestheticism. It is also called the Age of Decadence. In this time, people stopped following strict Victorian values. Writers focused more on beauty and art. The motto was **"Art for Art's Sake."** Oscar Wilde was a famous writer of this movement. People cared less about morality and more about feelings and beauty.

Growth of Science and Conflict with Religion

In the Victorian age, science grew very fast. People started to believe more in logic and less in religion. One major event was the book *"The Origin of Species"* by Charles Darwin. It came out in 1859. It said that humans came from apes. This idea shocked many people. It went against the Bible. So, a big conflict started between science and religion. Some writers showed hope, but some showed sadness. Tennyson tried to make peace. He said science and religion can stay in their own places.

Conflict Between Science and Religion

This conflict was very important in the Victorian age. Science became strong. Religion became weak. **Darwin's theory** made many people lose their faith. Writers and thinkers became confused. Some accepted science. Some stayed with religion. Others tried to mix both. **Tennyson** said we should respect both sides. This debate made literature very deep and thoughtful.

Victorian Poetry

Victorian poets wrote about faith, doubt, love, and human struggle. Tennyson talked about science and religion. He gave hope in hard times. Robert Browning used dramatic monologue. He showed people's deep thoughts. Matthew Arnold wrote about sadness and lost faith. Christina Rossetti wrote about love and God. All these poets showed the real feelings of Victorian people in their poems.

Victorian Novels

The Victorian age is called the golden age of the novel. Novels showed real life and social problems. Famous novelists were Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, and Thackeray. They wrote about poverty, injustice, and women's life. Female novelists also became popular. Like Charlotte Brontë, Emily Brontë, Ann Brontë, and George Eliot (real name: Mary Ann Evans). Their novels were deep, emotional, and strong.

Dramatic Monologue

Dramatic monologue is a type of poem. In this poem, one person speaks. He talks to a silent listener. But we don't hear the listener's voice. The speaker shows his inner thoughts and emotions. Robert Browning made it popular. His famous poems like "*The Patriot*", "*My Last Duchess*" and "*The Last Ride Together*" are dramatic monologues.

The Pre-Raphaelite Movement

This was a group of artists and poets. They wanted to go back to the style before Raphael. Their art was full of detail, color, and emotion. They loved beauty and truth. They used **symbols** and **old medieval stories**. In literature, they wrote about love, nature, and spiritual beauty. D. G. Rossetti and Christiana Rossetti were famous poets in this group.

The Oxford Movement

This movement started in the Church of England. It wanted to bring back old Catholic values. People thought the Church had become too modern. So, some members of Oxford University

started this movement. John Henry Newman was one of the leaders. It influenced religious writing in the Victorian period. It made people think deeply about religion and morals.

“The Origin of Species”

This is a book written by Charles Darwin in 1859. It introduced the theory of evolution. Darwin said that living things change over time. Strong ones survive, weak ones die. He called it “survival of the fittest.” He said humans came from animals. This idea shocked religious people. It became the reason for the science vs. religion debate.

Tennyson as a Representative Poet

Alfred, Lord Tennyson was the most famous poet of the Victorian age. He became **Poet Laureate** in 1850. His poems show the feelings of the Victorian people. He wrote about sadness, loss, hope, and faith. He tried to balance science and religion. His famous poems include “*Ulysses*”, “*In Memoriam*”, and “*The Charge of the Light Brigade*.” He used rich language and beautiful imagery.

Important Features of the Victorian Period

- **Realism:** Victorian writers wanted to show real life. They wrote about true events and real people. They showed daily life, problems, and society. Writers used simple and honest language. They focused on poor people, city life, and struggles. Realism made stories feel real to readers.
- **Religion vs Science:** This age saw a big fight between religion and science. People believed in God and the Bible. But science gave new ideas that were different. Writers showed this clash in their works. They asked: Can science and religion live together? This was a major theme in many books and poems.
- **Materialistic Outlook:** People in the Victorian time wanted more money. They ran after wealth and high status. They thought money was the key to success. Love, emotion, and kindness were often ignored. Writers showed how this love for wealth hurt people.

- **Adventurous Tendency:** Victorian people loved adventure and travel. They explored new lands and cultures. Many books talked about brave people and new places. Stories were full of danger, excitement, and new experiences. Adventure became a favorite theme in many novels.
- **Imperialism:** The British Empire grew big in this time. Britain took over many countries. This was called imperialism. Books and poems praised the British Empire. They showed British people as great rulers. But some writers also questioned this power.
- **Industrialization:** The Industrial Revolution changed everything. Factories grew fast, and cities became crowded. People moved from villages to towns for work. Rich got richer, and poor got poorer. Writers wrote about factory life, poverty, and child labor. They showed how machines changed human lives.
- **Women's Position in All Sectors:** Women stayed at home and did housework. They had fewer rights than men. But slowly, women started to fight for equal rights. Some writers supported this fight in their books. They showed women as strong and wise. Female writers also became popular in this time.
- **Domination of Novels:** Novels became the most loved form of writing. People read stories in newspapers in parts. This was called serial publication. Big writers like Dickens and George Eliot became stars. Novels talked about society, love, and problems. It was the golden time for English novels.

Remarkable Writers and Literary Works of the Victorian Period

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59)

- History of England (1849-61)

Cardinal Newman (1801-1890)

- Loss and Gain (1848)
- The Idea of a University (1852)

John Stuart Mill (1806-73)

- **On Liberty (1859)**
- **Utilitarianism (1863)**
- The Subjection of Women (1869)

Charles Robert Darwin (1809-82)

- **The Origin of Species (1859)**
- The Descent of Man (1871)

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-92), Victorian representative poet:

- **The Lady of Shalott (1832)**, published in Tennyson's collection "Poems."
- **Morte d'Arthur (1842)**, part of the collection "Poems"
- **Locksley Hall (1842)**, published in the collection "Poems."
- **Ulysses (1842)**, published in the collection "Poems."
- **In Memoriam A.H.H. (1850)**
- Maud, and Other Poems (1855)

Edward Fitzgerald (1809-83)

- The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (1859), translated into
- English from Persian.

Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell (1810-1865), popularly known as Mrs. Gaskell:

- Mary Barton (1848)
- Cranford (1853)
- Ruth (1853)
- North and South (1855)
- Sylvia's Lovers (1863)

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63)

- **Vanity Fair (1848)**

- The Virginians (1859)

Charles Dickens (1812-70)

- The Pickwick Papers (1836)
- **Oliver Twist (1837)**
- **David Copperfield (1850)**
- **Bleak House (1852)**
- **A Tale of Two Cities (1859)**
- **Great Expectations (1861)**

Robert Browning (1812-89), a master of dramatic monologues, Optimistic poet:

- **Dramatic Lyrics (1842)**
- **Men and Women (1855)** (The Patriot, Fra Lippo Lippi, Andrea del Sarto, The Last Ride Together)
- **Dramatis Personae (1864)** (My Last Duchess)

Charlotte Brontë (1816-55)

- **Jane Eyre (1847)**
- Shirley (1849)
- Villette (1853)
- The Professor (1857)

Emily Brontë (1818-48)

- **Wuthering Heights (1847)**

Ann Bronte (1820-1849)

- Agnes Grey (1847)
- **The Tenant of Wildfell Hall (1848)**

Karl Marx (1818-83)

- Das Kapital (1867)

George Eliot (1819-80), known as Mary Ann Evans.

- The Mill on the Floss (1860)
- Scenes of Clerical Life (1858)

- **Adam Bede (1859)**

- **Silas Marner (1861)**

- Romola (1863)
- Middlemarch (1871-72)
- Herman Melville (1819-1891)

- **Moby-Dick (1851)**

- Bartleby, the Scrivener (1853)

Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880)

- Madame Bovary (1857)
- Sentimental Education (1869)
- The Temptation of Saint Anthony (1874)

Matthew Arnold (1822-88), Pessimistic poet, victorian representative poet, a critic:

- **"Essays in Criticism" (1888)**

- Culture and Anarchy (1867)

- **The Study of Poetry (1888)**

- **Poems (1853)** (The Scholar Gipsy)

- **New Poems (1867)** (Thyrsis, Dover Beach)

Mark Twain (1835-1910), real name is Samuel Langhorne Clemens:

- The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876)
- The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1885)

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), a regional novelist:

- **The Return of the Native (1878)**
- **The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886)**
- **Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891)**

Henry James (1843-1916)

- Daisy Miller (1879)
- The American (1877)
- The Portrait of a Lady (1881)
- The Tragic Muse (1890)
- The Spoils of Poyton (1897)

Frederick Nietzsche (1844-1900)

- The Birth of Tragedy (1872)
- Thus Spoke Zarathustra (1885)
- The Antichrist (1895)

Oscar Wilde (1856-1900), a poet, novelist and dramatist:

- Lady Windermere's Fan (1892)
- A Woman of No Importance (1893)
- An Ideal Husband (1895)
- **The Importance of Being Earnest (1895)**

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), a modern dramatist, famous for his 'drama of ideas'.

- **Arms and the Man (1894)**
- **You Never Can Tell (1898).**
- Mrs. Warren's Profession (1898)

George Robert Gissing (1857-1903)

- The Nether World (1889)
- Born in Exile (1892)
- Denzil Quarrier (1892)
- The Odd Women (1893)
- The Paying Guest (1895)
- The Whirlpool (1897)
- Charles Dickens: A Critical Study (1898)

Kenneth Grahame (1859-1932)

- Pagan Papers (1893)
- The Golden Age (1895)
- Dream Days (1898)
- The Reluctant Dragon (1898)
- The Headwoman (1898)

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

- **The Jungle Book (1894)**
- Departmental Ditties (1886)
- Plain Tales from the Hills (1888)
- Soldiers Three (1890)

