

The Victorians: Great Britain in the 19th Century



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Heraklion 2011-12

Students participating in the Project

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Objectives of the Project

- The students meet the Woman who dominated a whole Era
- They take a voyage in time studying the historical framework of the Era
- They realize how the technological progress changed the World
- They advance their use of the English language by searching for information in English and American sources

Activities within the Project

- Within the Project framework, the students:
 - ✓ Visited various internet sites and searched for information on
 - Leading personalities of the Era
 - Major historic events
 - Scientific discoveries
 - Major advances in Technology and Engineering
 - Human Rights
 - ✓ Read “The Canterville Ghost” written by Oscar Wilde
 - ✓ Staged this short story
 - ✓ Participated in the Presentation of the Cultural Projects of 6th Gymnasium in Lachanagora as well as in the 3rd “A world of English Festival” in Androgeo Hall

Victorian Era

- Mark Twain: “***British history is two thousand years old and yet, in a good many ways, the world has moved farther ahead since the Queen was born than it moved in all the rest of the two thousand put together***”
- The comment captures the sense of dizzying change that characterized the Victorian Period.



An Overview

- The Victorian Era corresponds with the reign of Queen Victoria in England from 1837 until her death in 1901.
- It was a long period of peace (known as the *Pax Britannica*), prosperity and national self confidence for Britain.
- The period is beloved for its attention to high morals, modesty and proper decorum

[more information](#)

An Overview (2)

- The Victorian Era was characterized by rapid change and developments in nearly every sphere – from advances in medical, scientific and technological knowledge to changes in population growth and location.

An Overview (3)

- In the 19th century Great Britain became the world's first industrial society.
- It also became the first urban society.
- The population of Britain boomed: In 1801 it was about 9 million. By 1901 it had risen to 41.

Queen Victoria

(24/05/1819-22/01/1901)

- Victoria was the monarch of The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Empress of India.
- She reigned for 63 years, 7 months and 2 days, the longest in British history.
- She reigned until her death in 1901 bestowing her name upon her age.

[Video part 1, part 2, part 3](#)

Influential Politicians:

Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881)

➤ Known as a dandy, a novelist and a brilliant debater and England's first and only Jewish Prime Minister, Disraeli is best remembered for bringing India and The Suez Canal under control of the Crown.

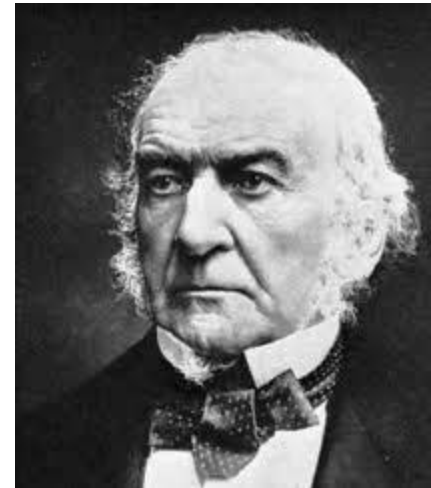
➤ *“When men are pure, laws are useless; when men are corrupt, laws are broken”*



Influential Politicians:

William E. Gladstone (1809-1898)

- An active legislator and reformer
- He passed the *Irish Land Act*, which provided for compensation to tenant farmers who were evicted by land owners.
- He was responsible for passage of *Forster's Education Act*, making elementary education available to children between ages 5 and 13.
- *"Here is my first principle of foreign policy: good government at home"*



[W. E. Gladstone](#)

Major events of Victoria's Reign

- Women rights movement
- The Irish famine
- The Crimean War
- The Boer Wars
- Reforming Acts

Women's Rights

- Women had no political rights during the whole 19th century. There had been some movement to advance the rights of women in other areas.
- In 1839, a law was passed, which stated that if a marriage broke down and the parents separated, children under 7 years of age should stay with their mother.
- In 1857, women could divorce husbands who were cruel to them or had left them.
- In 1870, women were allowed to keep money they had earned.
- In 1891, women could not be forced to live with husbands unless they wished to.

[Video 1](#)

[Video 2](#)

The Irish Famine (1845-1852)

- During the summer of 1845 a blight devastated Ireland's potato crop.
- Starvation, combined with an increased susceptibility to diseases such as typhus, dysentery and cholera devastated the population.
- More than 750,000 died and another 2 million emigrated.
- The famine entered folk memory and became a rallying point for various nationalist movements.



The Crimean War (1853-1856)

- The war was fought mainly on the Crimean Peninsula.
- It was a conflict between the Russians on the one side and an alliance of the French Empire, the British Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom Of Sardinia on the other.



[more](#)

The Crimean War (2)

- The Crimean War is considered to be one of the first modern wars as it introduced technical as well as military changes, which affected the future course of the warfare:
 - ✓ The first tactical use of the railways
 - ✓ The electric telegraph
 - ✓ Trenches
 - ✓ Blind artillery fire



The Crimean War (3)

- In Britain, the Crimean War is principally remembered for three reasons:
 - ✓ The Charge of the Light Brigade
 - ✓ Maladministration (military and logistical errors) in the British Army
 - ✓ Ms. Florence Nightingale

The Charge of the light Brigade

A. Tennyson's poem and text

Florence Nightingale

(12/05/1820-13/08/1910)

- A celebrated English nurse and statistician.
- She came to prominence for her pioneering work in nursing during the Crimean War.
- She was a reformer of hospital sanitation methods.

- She was dubbed “The Lady with the lamp”, after her habit of making rounds at night.



- [more](#)

The Boer Wars

- Two wars were fought between the British and the descendants of the Dutch settlers (Boers) in South Africa.

[more](#)



The Boer Wars (2)

- The first Anglo-Boer War (1880-1881) was a rebellion of Boers against British rule in the Transvaal that re-established their independence.
- The second war (1899-1902) was a lengthy war, which ended with the conversion of The Boer Republics into British Colonies
- Paul Kruger became an icon of inspiration to the battling Boers.



Reform Acts

- The electoral system in Great Britain had remained unchanged since the late 1680s, by contrast to a country whose economy, class system and political methods had changed immeasurably over that time.
- The principal reason for the great change in the orientation of the country was the Industrial revolution, which had created a new economy and caused the emergence of new cities such as Manchester and Birmingham.

Reform Acts (2)

- Pressure for Parliamentary reform had grown rapidly.
- This came from country gentlemen, manufacturers and businessmen keen to win political influence to match with their economic power.
- The three Parliamentary Reform Acts introduced in 1832, 1867 and 1884, respectively, as well as the 1872 Ballot Act satisfied moderate reformers.

Reform Acts (3)

- The changes the Reform Acts introduced were important, albeit moderate:
 - ✓ Parliamentary seats were redistributed to give greater weight to larger towns and cities.
 - ✓ The Ballot Act of 1872, which introduced secret ballots, made it far more difficult for voters to be bribed or intimidated.
 - ✓ The 1884 Reform Act established the principle “***One Man, One Vote***”.

Britain's Industrial Revolution

- The industrial Revolution resulted in fundamental economic changes
- Why did the British Industrial Revolution happen?
 - ✓ Expansion of trade, mercantile economic policy
 - ✓ Agricultural changes: four-course rotation of crops, new scientific approaches to farming
 - ✓ Iron utilization and production processes
 - ✓ The Steam Engine
 - ✓ Transportation technology: improved roads and canals provided much cheaper transportation of bulky goods
 - ✓ Railroad
 - ✓ The factory system
 - ✓ The new banking system
 - ✓ The stable political environment

[more](#)

Victorian Technology and Innovation

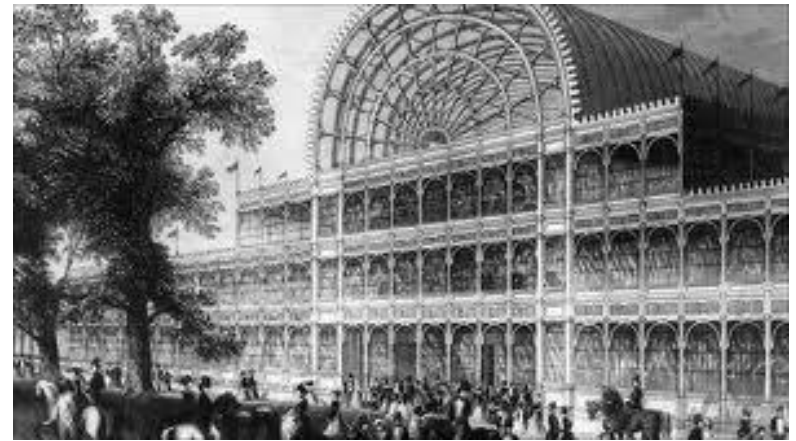
- Technology was responsible for the most readily visible changes in the 19th Century
- Literally visible in many cases as for example in:
 - ✓ The bridges
 - ✓ The railway train sheds
 - ✓ The revolutionary advances in transportation, communication and industrial production

Key Innovations and Inventors

- John Kay's "Flying Shuttle"
- James Hargreave's "Spinning Jenny"
- Richard Arkwright's "Water Frame"
- Samuel Crompton's "Crompton's Mule"
- James Watt's "Steam Engine"
- Robert Fulton's "Steamboat"
- Stephenson's "Steam Powered Train"

The Great Exhibition

- The Great Exhibition of the works of Industry of All Nations was the 1st international exhibition of manufactured goods.
- A special building, nicknamed The Crystal Palace was built to house the show.



[more](#)

The Great Exhibition (2)

- 100,000 artifacts and inventions were on display
- 6,000,000 people, from all walks of life, visited the exhibition
- The profits from the exhibition were used to purchase land in Kensington, where several museums were built.

- The Harrison Power loom



- A four-wheeled crank-driven vehicle





Transport



ATTRACTIVE COAL BURNING FREIGHT LOCOMOTIVE
ROGERS LOCOMOTIVE & MACHINE WORKS

- The Victorian Era saw a great deal of advances in transportation.
 - ✓ A rise in popularity of the bicycle
 - ✓ The new Steamships
 - ✓ Locomotives, powered by steam
- However, stage coaches were still very popular and a relatively reliable means of transportation.



The Railway



- The first passenger railway opened in 1825 between Stockton and Darlington
- By 1848, there were 5,000 miles of railways in Britain
- Railways
 - ✓ provided a great boost to other industries, such as iron
 - ✓ revolutionized transport
- The National Railway Network stimulated travel and leisure opportunities for all

Leisure Time



Leisure Time

- With industrialisation there was more leisure time to be enjoyed
- When the railway line from London to Brighton was established, going on holiday began to be a regular part of Victorian Time



Friends Meeting at the Seaside

Class structure in the Victorian Era

- Victorian society can be split into three classes: upper, middle and lower

[more](#)



The Upper Class

- The upper class consisted of the nobility or the peerage, such as dukes, earls and viscounts
 - ✓ They were often related to the royal families of Britain and Europe
 - ✓ Most of these aristocrats did not have a profession ,as their families had sufficient funds to live in affluence



The middle Class

- The Victorian middle class is largely associated with the growth of cities and the expansion of the economy
 - ✓ It consisted of families who were respectable but lacked a title
 - ✓ They often had a skilled profession, such as a doctor or a teacher



The Lower Class (working class)

- The lower class were made up of the rural and urban poor
 - ✓ They had low skilled, dangerous and dirty jobs
 - ✓ They had almost no political power
 - ✓ The most skilled workers established trade unions designed to protect them from exploitation



The Sunken People (paupers)

- There was a class below the working class
 - ✓ They lived in extreme poverty often because of illness, unemployment, old age or strained resources



Health and Medicine

- The progress of scientific thought led to significant changes in [medicine](#) during the 19th century.
- These changes increased specialization and developments in surgery and hospital building.
- There were notable breakthroughs in Anesthetics and in Antiseptic pioneered by Joseph Lister. [more](#)

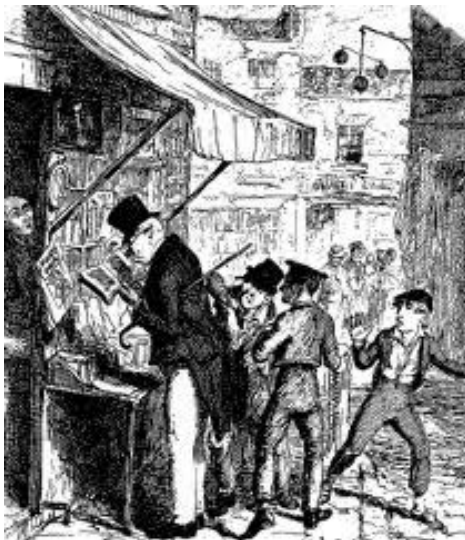
Crime and The Victorians

- Crime rates skyrocketed in the Victorian England
- Reasons:
 - ✓ The Industrial Revolution not only created more wealth, but it took wealth away from many other families, creating more poverty
 - ✓ The resulting urbanisation caused many families to move into densely populated cities
 - ✓ The high poverty rates in Cities caused the crime rates to rise

Types of Crime

➤ Minor crimes

- ✓ Drunkenness
- ✓ Vagrancy
- ✓ Larceny



Pick pocketing

➤ Major Crimes

- ✓ Burglary
- ✓ Murder
- ✓ Rape

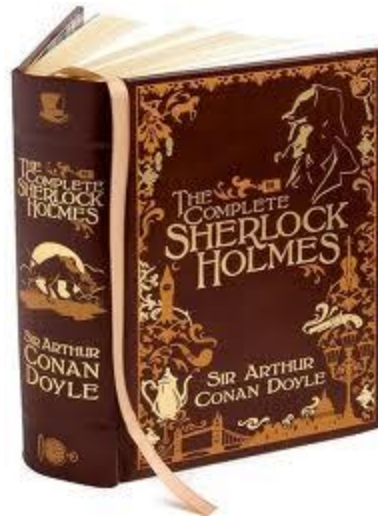


Jack The Ripper is famous for his murders in East London (1818). He was never found or tried for the crimes he committed.

Crime and Punishment

- The jury, judge and prosecutor had much more power than they have today in deciding the outcome of a trial.
- Trials in court were often very quick.
- Punishments were harsh.
- Prison began used more often and it was seen as a fit way to reduce crime.
- Transportation was an alternative punishment to hanging. Convicted criminals were transported to the colonies to serve their prison sentences.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle



“How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth?” Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Sherlock Holmes) *The Sign of Four*

[more quotations](#)

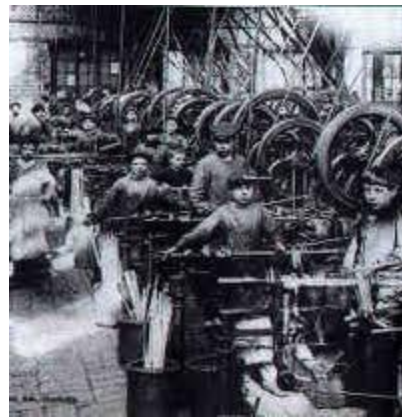
Children in the Victorian Era

- Significant differences in the lives of children during the Victorian times.
- The kind of life a child had depended on its family.



Child Labour

- The Victorian era became notorious for the employment of young children in factories and mines and as chimney sweeps. [more](#)



Child Labour (2)

- Child Labour was the most critical issue prevalent at this time.
 - ✓ Children worked very long hours with little breaks and no fresh air.
 - ✓ They often worked in very dangerous conditions.
 - ✓ Very young children were expected to work.
 - ✓ Children were paid very little.
 - ✓ It seemed perfectly natural to use children for work adults couldn't do: crawling underneath machinery or sitting in coal mines to open and close the ventilation doors.

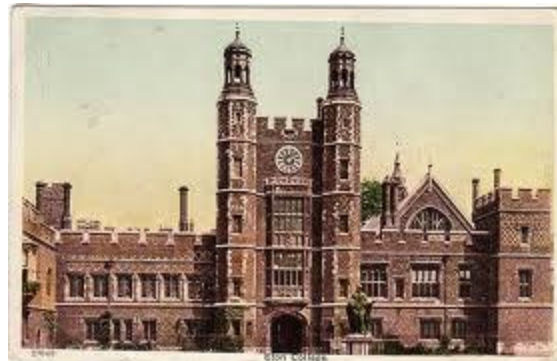
Education in the Victorian Era

- Prior to the 1870 Education Act, children in England were educated in many different ways, or not at all, depending upon their sex and their parents' situation, social class, religion and values. [video](#)



Schools

- In early Victorian England only the upper and middle class children went to school.
- Children from rich families were taught at home by a governess until they were 10.
 - ✓ Once a boy turned 10, he was sent to Public Schools like Eton or Harrow.



Education for poor children

- Poor children went to free charity schools or “**Dame Schools**” (so called because they were run by women).
- They also went to **Sunday Schools**, which were run by churches.
- **Ragged Schools** were for orphans and very poor children
- The Church of England became active in the field and erected **National Schools**, which taught children Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Religion. [more](#)

The Dunce Cap



- The Dunce cap is a conical paper hat, frequently marked with the letter D or the word Dunce.
- It was used as a method of punishment through public humiliation in classrooms.
- Students who were slow, lazy or considered to be stupid were forced to sit in the corner of the classroom with a Dunce cap on, often on a high stool after being punished physically as well.

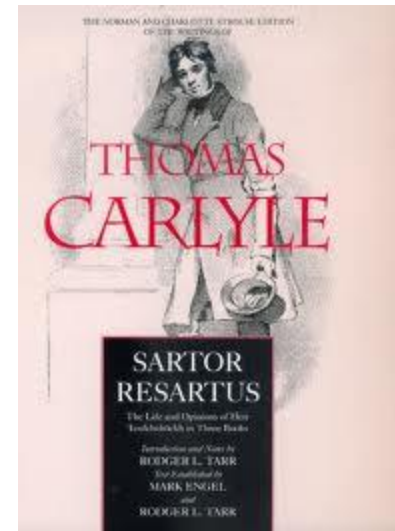
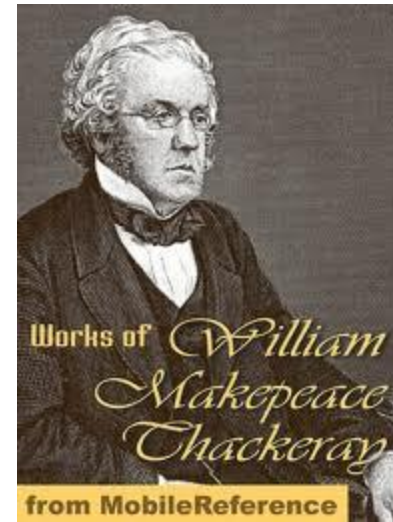
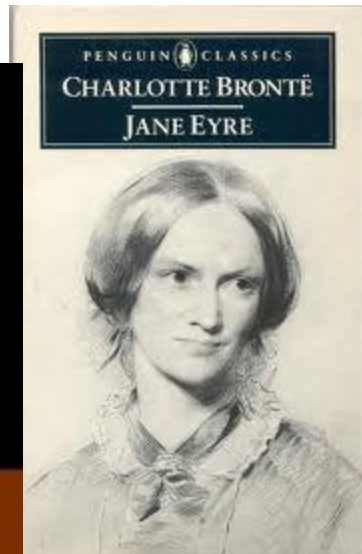
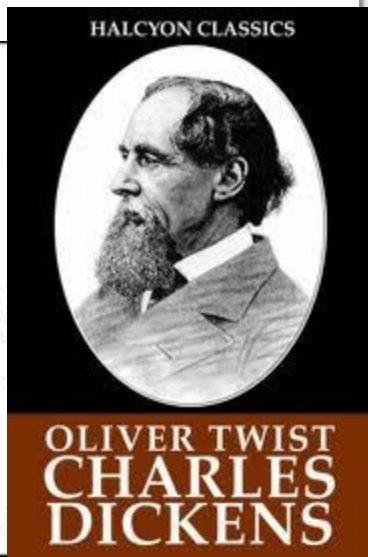
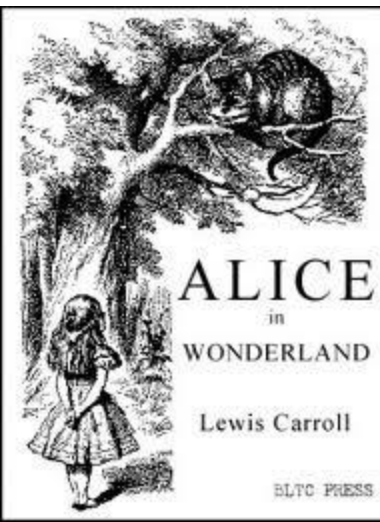
Spare us the tears, Jeremiah...
If you'd stop insisting there are
26 letters in the alphabet, you
wouldn't have had to put the
cap on to begin with.



Victorian Literature



- Victorian Literature is often considered a bridge between the Romantic Era works and what would become the literature of the newly industrialised world of the 20th century.



Victorian Literature (2)

- It is characterized by a strong sense of morality, and it frequently champions the downtrodden.
- It is often equated with prudishness and oppression.
- It combines imagination and emotion with the neoclassical idea of the accessibility of art for the common person.

The Victorian Novel

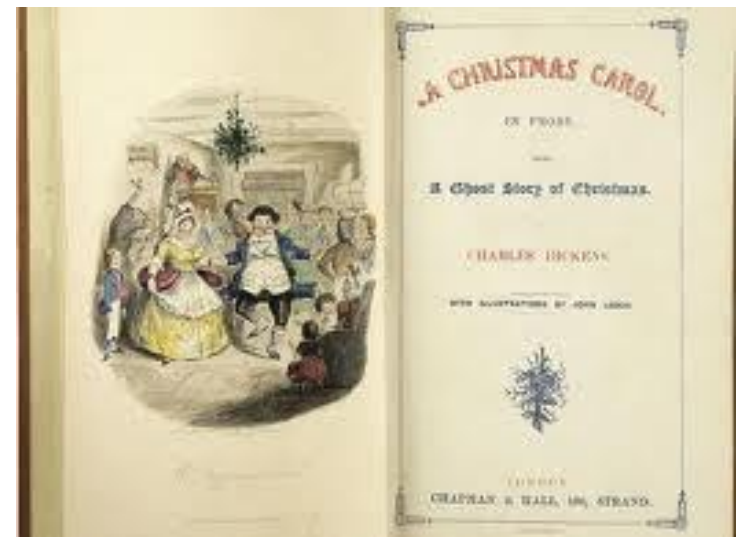
- The 19th century saw the novel become the leading form of literature in English.
- Victorian Novels tend to be idealised portraits of difficult lives in which hard work, perseverance, love and luck win out in the end.
- Virtue would be rewarded and wrongdoers are suitably punished.

Characteristics of the Novel

- Realistic
- Thickly plotted
- Crowded with characters
- Long
- It was the ideal form to describe contemporary life and to entertain the middle class

Charles Dickens: A great novelist

- The novels of Charles Dickens, full to overflowing with drama, humour and an endless variety of vivid characters and plot complications, spare nothing in their portrayal of what urban life was like for all classes. quotes



Famous Victorians

- Lord Shaftesbury
- Lewis Carol
- Charles Darwin
- Robert Louis Stevenson
- Charles Dickens
- Thomas Carlyle
- Rudyard Kipling
- William Thackeray
- The Bronte Sisters
- Alfred Tennyson
- Robert Browning
- Oscar Wilde
- George Bernard Shaw

The Gothic Novel

- Gothic literature focuses with the humanity's fascination with the grotesque, the unknown and the frightening, inexplicable aspects of the universe and the human soul.
- The gothic creates horror by portraying human individuals in confrontation with the overwhelming, terrifying forces found in the cosmos and within themselves.
- Elements of the gothic have made their way into mainstream writing. They are found in Sir Walter Scott's novels, Ch. Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, E. Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, Oscar Wilde's *The Canterville Ghost*.

- Elements of the gothic novel

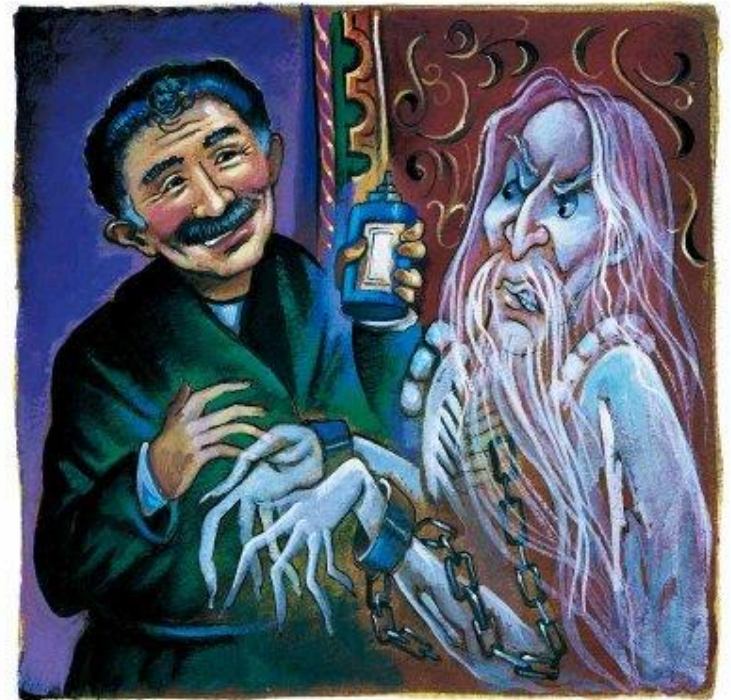


Oscar Wilde
The Canterville Ghost



Fair Price Classics

The Canterville Ghost by Oscar Wilde



Staged in 2012 by the students of
Heraklion 6th Junior High School

Victorian Era (1837-1901): Summary

- In 1837, when 18-year-old Victoria became Queen,
 - ✓ relatively few of England's people had ever travelled more than 10 miles from the place where they were born
 - ✓ little more than half the population could read and write
 - ✓ children as young as five worked in factories and mines
 - ✓ political power was entirely in the hands of a small minority of men who held property.

Victorian Era (1837-1901): Summary

- By the time Queen Victoria died in 1901
 - ✓ railways provided fast and cheap transportation for both goods and people
 - ✓ telegraph messages sped to the far corners of The British Empire in minutes
 - ✓ education was compulsory
 - ✓ a man's religion no more barred him from sitting in Parliament
 - ✓ women were not only wives and domestic servants but also physicians, dentists, telephone operators and university lecturers.