

Prose Writers of The Early Victorian Age

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1. The prose of the Early Victorian Age gives a clear picture of the temperament of the time.
2. It gives the characteristics of literature, Science, geographical exploration and the rapidity of economic change.
3. The prose represents aesthetic self-assertion.
4. It represents the urgent will 'to survive'. This was the characteristic of the Early Victorians.
5. It is a prose that is vigorous. It is more conscious of vocabulary and imagery.
6. The number of prose writers during this period is large.
7. There is a greater variety of styles among them.
8. Mathew Arnold opened the 'Doing As One Liked'.
9. The view of Victorian individualism is seen in the prose style.
10. We can say in one way, that Victorian prose is a 'Romantic Prose'.
11. The influence of Romanticism is seen in the Victorian Prose.
12. The Romantic elements and the seriousness of tone, concreteness, and particularity, constitute the prose of the Early Victorian Age.
13. The great prose - writers of this period were - Carlyle, Ruskin, Mathew and Arnold.

2.

Thomas Carlyle(1795-1881)

1. Thomas Carlyle was the dominant figure of the Victorian period.
2. He made his influence in every aspect of Victorian life with moral forces.
3. Carlyle suffered from doubts in his youth.
4. He strived vainly to recover his lost belief in God.
5. And then he took a 'spiritual new birth'.
6. This brought him faith and courage.

7. His notable works are 'Sartor Restartus, French Revolution, Past and Present' and many more.
8. Carlyle was a Puritan.
9. He could not tolerate any moral weakness or social unrealities.
10. To him, History was the revelation of God's righteous dealings with man.
11. He had no faith in democracy.
12. He denounced scientific materialism and utilitarianism.
13. He preached in a forceful way that spiritual freedom was the only life giving birth.
14. Carlyle's style is a reflection of his personality.
15. His literary characters are closely and strongly blended.
16. He twists the language to suit his needs.
17. His language is like an army formed of all sorts of exotic elements.
18. He is one of the most acute critics of his age.

John Ruskin (1819-1900)

1. John Ruskin is ranked next to Carlyle.
2. He is one of the most acute critics.
3. He was deeply religious and pious by nature.
4. He could not separate beauty from religion.
5. So for him, "all great art is praise".
6. He also found that architecture indicated the state of the nation's health.
7. Ruskin himself is more inspiring than any of his books.
8. In the face of drudgery and poverty, he wrote, "I will endure it no longer quietly, but henceforward, with any few or many who will help, do my best to abate this misery.
9. He also wrote about labour and justice.
10. He is generally studied as an ethical teacher.
11. He is admired for his richly ornate style and for his message to humanity.

12. His notable works are - Modern Painters, The seven lamps of Architecture, Sesame and Lilies and many more.
13. His last work was an autobiography- Praterita.
14. The prose of Ruskin has rhythmic, melodious quality. It gives a political touch.
15. He tried to bring the employer and the employed together in mutual trust and helpfulness.
16. For him, to seek beauty, truth, and goodness was the chief end of life.

Thomas Babington Lord Macaulay (1800-1859)

1. Thomas Babington Lord Macaulay was a voracious reader.
2. Here member everything he read. He read out all twelve books of Paradise Lost.
3. Macaulay wrote a Historical essay as well as a History of England.
4. He also wrote biographical and critical essays.
5. He wrote, "A perfect Historian must possess an imagination sufficiently powered to make his narrative affecting and picturesque".
6. The chief quality which makes Macaulay distinct from other prose writers of the period is - the variety and brilliance of details in his writings.

Mathew Arnold (1822-1888)

1. Mathew Arnold was a poet and a prose writer as well.
2. He was a social critic and a vehement critic of his age.
3. He opined that Englishman needed classical qualities.
4. That this quality would make them achieve harmonious perfection in morals and literature.
5. He was not in favour if the Hebrews or the Germans or in the Middle Ages.

6. He favoured the Greeks and the French Hellenic culture.
7. According to him, England had reasons to be proud of the Elizabethan period and the glories of the Romantic period.
8. He wrote incessantly to raise the intellectual and cultural level of his countrymen.
9. He declared that "culture is the minister of the sweetness and right essential to the perfect character."
10. He looked upon poetry as, "criticism of life".
11. Arnold's touching appealed to the educated class.
12. He is a superb prose-writer.
13. His notable works are, 'On Translating Homer', 'The Style of Celtic Literature', 'Essays in Criticism', 'Culture and Anarchy' and many more.
14. Later Arnold returned from religion and politics to his sphere of literature.
15. His substance was then, admirable, expressions delighting and distinguished.
16. The style Arnold is not ready to imitate.
17. It sparks with wit. It seldom diverts attention.
18. Arnold will always hold a high rank for grace, elegance and elaborate charm.