This collaborative History aims to become the standard work on Victorian literature for the twenty-first century. Well-known scholars introduce readers to their particular fields, discuss influential critical debates, and offer illuminating contextual detail to situate authors and works in their wider cultural and historical contexts. Sections on publishing and readership, and a chronological survey of major literary developments between 1837 and 1901, are followed by essays on topics including sexuality, sensation, cityscapes, melodrama, epic, and economics. Victorian writing is placed in its complex relation to the Empire, Europe, and America, as well as to Britain’s component nations. The final chapters consider how Victorian literature, and the period as a whole, influenced twentieth-century writers. Original, lucid, and stimulating, each chapter is an important contribution to Victorian literary studies. Together, the contributors have created an engaging discussion of the ways in which the Victorians saw themselves, and of how their influence has persisted.

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The New Cambridge History of English Literature is a programme of reference works designed to offer a broad synthesis and contextual survey of the history of English literature through the major periods of its development. The organization of each volume reflects the particular characteristics of the period covered, within a general commitment to providing an accessible narrative history through a linked sequence of essays by internationally renowned scholars. The History is designed to accommodate the range of insights and fresh perspectives brought by new approaches to the subject, without losing sight of the need for essential exposition and information. The volumes include valuable reference features, in the form of a chronology of literary and political events, extensive primary and secondary bibliographies, and a full index.

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