Fiction and Poetry

Reading became an increasingly popular entertainment in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain, Europe and America, reaching an ever wider spectrum of society as the cost of printing came down and levels of literacy rose. The novels avidly consumed in this period were not merely escapist fiction. Many of them drew attention to serious social issues such as slavery, child labour and other forms of exploitation that blighted the age of revolutions and empire, some were thinly disguised autobiographies, while others had clear educational aims: thus the line between fiction and non-fiction was a fluid one. Poetry too flourished across a wide range of genres, and the political and social agendas of the Romantic movement in particular led to its being read and appreciated at all levels of society. In this series, the Cambridge Library Collection offers the texts of fiction and poetry as these works were first published and received by an eager reading public.

Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

An accomplished mathematician, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (1832–98), writing under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, transformed children’s literature with this world-famous classic. First published in 1865, this tale of the topsyturvy was originally created to entertain the young Alice Liddell and her sisters during a picnic in the summer of 1862. The humour with which Dodgson enlivened his mathematical works is exploited to the full here: many of the now-familiar nonsense songs and poems in the story are parodies of contemporary works, and there are a number of allusions to mathematical concepts in the text. The illustrations by Punch cartoonist Sir John Tenniel (1820–1914) depict the cast of much-loved characters – including the White Rabbit, the Cheshire Cat and the Mad Hatter – with a brilliance which perfectly enhances Dodgson’s gently satirical fantasy. In its universal appeal, the story remains unsurpassed.
Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library and other partner libraries, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection brings back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.
Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

Lewis Carroll
ALICE'S ADVENTURES
IN WONDERLAND.
ALICE’S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND.

BY

LEWIS CARROLL

WITH FORTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS

BY JOHN TENNIEL.

London:
MACMILLAN AND CO.
1866.

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All in the golden afternoon
    Full leisurely we glide;
For both our ears, with little skill,
    By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
    Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour,
    Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
    To stir the tiniest feather!
Yet what can one poor voice avail
    Against three tongues together?
In imperious Prima flashes forth
    Her edict "to begin it"—
In gentler tone Secunda hopes
    "There will be nonsense in it!"—
While Tertia interrupts the tale
    Not more than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
    In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
    Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast—
    And half believe it true.

And ever, as the story drained
    The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
    To put the subject by,
"The rest next time—" "It is next time!"
    The happy voices cry.
Thus grew the tale of Wonderland:
   Thus slowly, one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out—
   And now the tale is done,
And home we steer, a merry crew,
   Beneath the setting sun.

Alice! a childish story take,
   And with a gentle hand
Lay it where Childhood’s dreams are twined
   In Memory’s mystic band,
Like pilgrim’s withered wreath of flowers
   Placed in a far-off land.
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