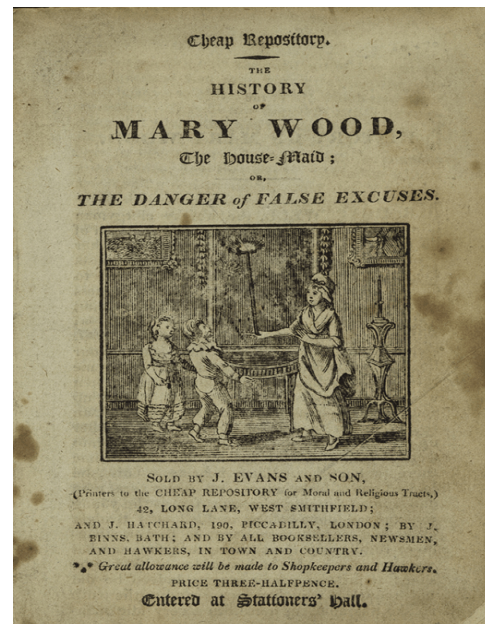


Retail Prices of Reading Materials, 1814-1835¹

Cheap Weekly Magazines	1.5d.-6d. (<i>Mirror of Literature</i> , 1822)
Political tracts	2d.
Cheap Non-Fiction	6d. per part 4s.6d. per complete volume (1827)
Weekly Magazine	6d.-1s.
Daily Newspapers	7d.
Recycled	1d.-3d. Illegally hired/lent to multiple readers
Re-prints (Literature)	1s-12s. (Shakespeare's plays)
Critical Periodicals	2s. (<i>Fraser's</i>)
Monthly Magazines	2s.6d.-4s.
Numbered Series (Fiction)	2s.-5s. per weekly installment
Poetry Volume	5s.
Review Periodicals	6s. (<i>Quarterly Review</i> , <i>Edinburgh</i>)
Literary Annual	12s.-£3
3 Volume Novel	15-21s. (1814-1823)
Serialized Novel	20s. total for parts 21s. complete vol. (<i>Pickwick Papers</i> , 1836)
Scott Novel	31s.6d. (1820)
Circulating Library	35s. (per year for unlimited access)

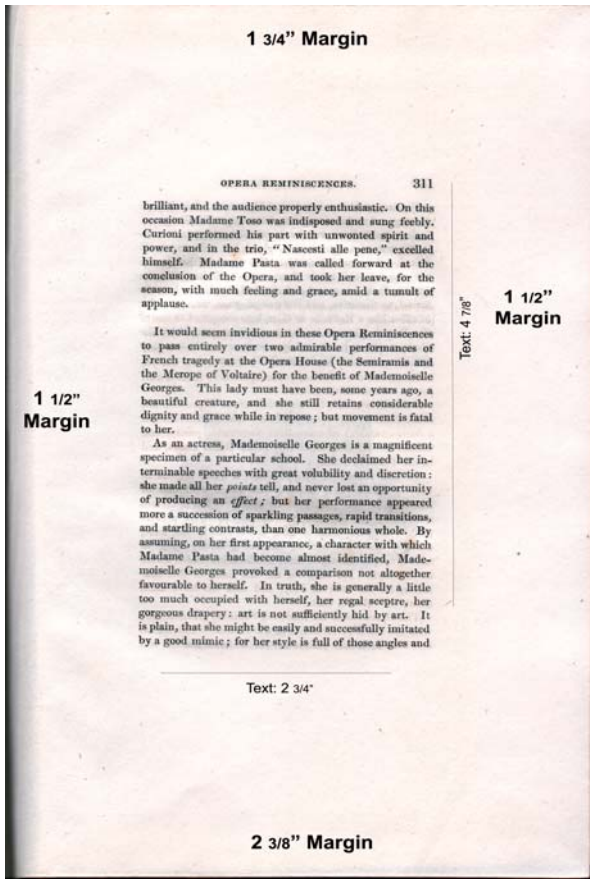


“Reading the News” from 1830 *Friendship's Offering*. Accompanies prose by Charles Knight, publisher of *The Penny Magazine* (1832) and *The Monthly Review* (1826). Reacts to communal reading though Knight is champion of producing working-class materials.

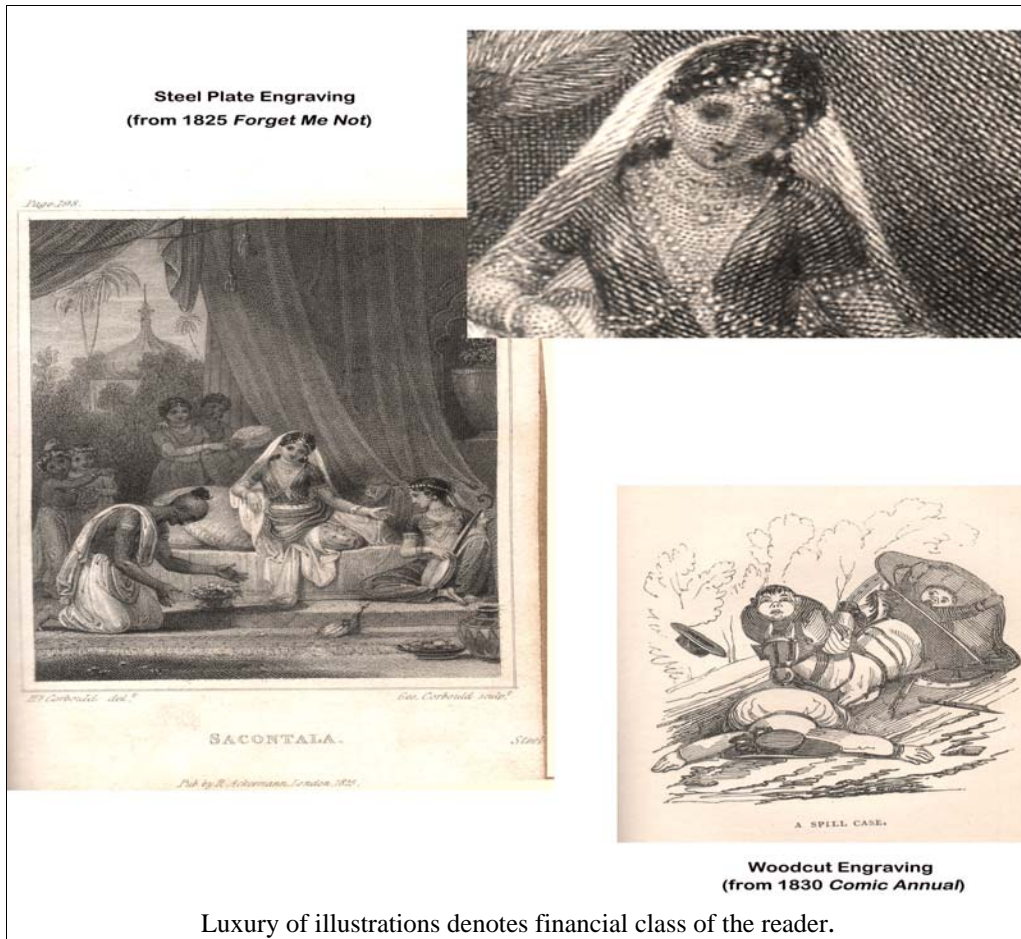


Booklets of poetry, Bible stories and simple allegories: 1) theological meaning, 2) tales of fictional instruction, 3) designed to inculcate homely virtues and habits of sound living. Attempting to introduce Christianity to working class/poor. Considered wholesome reading material for poor to encourage attaining or maintaining respectability in poverty

¹ Figures amassed from Richard Altick's *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 260-293; 318-347. Table published in Katherine D. Harris's article, "Feminizing the Textual Body: Women and their Literary Annuals in Nineteenth-Century Britain." *Publications of the Bibliographical Society of America*. 99:4 (Dec. 2005): 573-622.



1828 Keepsake
 Example of extended margins
 Text produced from plates for quarto volume



Luxury of illustrations denotes financial class of the reader.

Types of Early 19th-Century Reading Materials²

Both the working and middle classes could afford only a few *books* a year. However, the increased availability and cheap price of newspapers afforded an opportunity for the lower working classes (unskilled laborers) to access reading materials – whether as the original consumer or as the tenth reader.

Didactic pamphlets	More's <i>Cheap Repository Tracts</i>
Fiction	Radcliffe, Scott's <i>Waverley</i> (1814)
Serialized Fiction	Dickens' <i>Pickwick Papers</i> (1836) <i>Master Humphrey's Clock</i> (1840)
Silver-Fork novels	Lister's <i>Granby</i>
Poetry Volumes	Charlotte Smith, Hannah More, Scott, Byron, Landon, Hemans
Non-Fiction Personal Narr	Equiano's <i>Interesting Narrative</i> (1789) Wollstonecraft's & Williams' <i>Letters</i>
Juvenile Literature	Barbauld & Wollstonecraft
Conduct Manuals	Wollstonecraft & lots of others until 1820
Textbooks & Reference	Cobbett's <i>Grammar of the English Language</i> (1818)
Two & Threepenny Weekly & Daily Newspapers	Limbird's <i>Mirror of Literature</i> (1822), <i>Penny Magazine</i> (1832), <i>Nic Nacs</i> , <i>Diorama</i> , <i>Freebooters</i> , <i>Batatelles</i> & 60 others
Monthly & Quarterly Mag Review Periodicals	<i>Town and Country Magazine & Fraser's Magazine</i> <i>Quarterly Review</i> (6s.), <i>Analytical Review</i> , <i>The Literary Gazette</i> , <i>Monthly Review</i> , <i>The Gentleman's Magazine</i>
Art Periodicals	Ackermann's <i>Repository of Arts</i>
Women's Periodicals	<i>The Ladies Diary</i> , <i>Lady's Monthly Museum</i> & <i>The Lady's Magazine</i>
Literary Annuals	<i>Forget Me Not</i> (1823)
Class Re-Prints	<i>The Family Shakespeare</i> (expurgated, 1818) Shakespeare's plays (12s., 1825)
Theatrical Journalism & Temperance Periodicals	

Some Useful Information

Book production (excluding periodicals and newspapers)

- 440% rise from 18th Century
- Producing printed materials less labor intensive
- Innovations in setting type, creating paper & printing multiple copies
- Division of bookselling from printing (Kilgour 112)

Income

- Middle-class family (not factory worker) weekly income 48s., or roughly £125 a year
- Beneficed clergyman £300 to £400
- Officer of the line £200 to £400 (Altick 276)

² These authors, titles and dates were amassed from primary research of newspapers, periodicals and printed materials 1789-1860. Some references were taken from J.R. de J. Jackson's enumerative bibliography, *Romantic Poetry by Women*, Richard Altick's appendices in *The English Common Reader* (381-96) and "On Cheap Periodical Literature" in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, June 1825 (483-86).

The Romantic Novel³

- Romanticism is a movement in art and literature that began in Europe in the late 18th century and was most influential in the first half of the 19th century.
- Romanticism fosters a return to nature and also values the imagination over reason and emotion over intellect.
- One strain of the Romantic is the Gothic with its emphasis on tales of horror and the supernatural.

The Victorian Novel⁴

- The Victorian Age is marked roughly by the reign of Queen Victoria of England from 1837-1901.
- The Victorian reading public firmly established the novel as the dominant literary form of the era. The novel is the most distinctive and lasting literary achievement of Victorian literature.
- Earlier in the century Sir Walter Scott had created a large novel-reading public and had made the novel respectable. He had also strengthened the tradition of the 3-volume novel.
- The publication of novels in monthly installments enabled even the poor to purchase them
- The novelists of the Victorian era:
 - ▶ accepted middle class values
 - ▶ treated the problem of the individual's adjustment to his society
 - ▶ emphasized well-rounded middle-class characters
 - ▶ portrayed the hero as a rational man of virtue
 - ▶ believed that human nature is fundamentally good and lapses are errors of judgment corrected by maturation
- The Victorian novel appealed to readers because of its:
 - ▶ realism
 - ▶ impulse to describe the everyday world the reader could recognize
 - ▶ introduction of characters who were blends of virtue and vice
 - ▶ attempts to display the natural growth of personality
 - ▶ expressions of emotion: love, humor, suspense, melodrama, pathos (deathbed scenes)
 - ▶ moral earnestness and wholesomeness, including crusades against social evils and self-censorship to acknowledge the standard morality of the times
- The Victorian novel featured several developments in narrative technique:
 - ▶ full description and exposition
 - ▶ authorial essays
 - ▶ multiplotting featuring several central characters
 - ▶ issuing novels in serial installments led novelists to become adept at subclimaxes

³ from <http://www.nvcc.edu/home/ataormina/novels/history/19thcent.htm>

⁴ Ibid.