

with the following statement:

When in the Course of Human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation. We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and The Pursuit of Happiness— That, to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of those Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government (*A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress Assembled, 4 July 1776*).

Prose in the nineteenth century . This century brought as much variety and abundance in prose style as in other things. The reading public expanded on an unprecedented scale, the popularity of the novel in particular giving impetus to prose writing for entertainment and the growth of journalism making it a major vehicle of news and opinion. Although there are marked differences between the leading novelists of the period, they shared a desire to write accessibly and to keep the interest of the reader, who is addressed directly, as a friend. Narrative style became more assured in the hands of Austen, Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, Hardy, and many other both 'literary' and 'popular' writers. A more didactic type of prose, designed to inform and convince was practiced by Arnold, Carlyle, Macaulay, and others. The following is from Macaulay's essay on Bacon, in the *Edinburgh Review* (1837):

Lady Bacon was doubtless a lady of highly cultivated mind after the fashion of her age. But we must not suffer ourselves to be deluded into the belief that she and her sisters were more accomplished women than many who are now living. ON this subject there is, we think, much misapprehension. We have often heard men who wish, as almost all men of sense wish, that women should be highly educated, speak with rapture of the English ladies of the sixteenth century, and lament that they can find no modern damsel resembling those fair pupils of Ascham and Aylmer who compared, over their embroidery, the styles of Isocrates and Lysias, and who, while the horns were sounding and the dogs in full cry, sat in the lonely oriel, with eyes riveted to that immortal page which tells how meekly and bravely the first great martyr of intellectual liberty took the cup from his weeping gaoler. But surely there complaints have very little foundation. We would by no means disparage the ladies of the sixteenth century or their pursuits. But we conceive that those who extol them at the expense of the women of our time forget one very obvious and very important circumstance. In the time of Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth, a person who did not read Greek and Latin could read nothing, or next to nothing. The Italian was the only modern language which possessed anything that could be called literature. All the valuable books then extant in all the vernacular dialects of Europe would hardly have filled a shelf.

Carlyle wrote in idiosyncratic and sometimes turgid style, but his vigorous use of 'Saxon' forms and his defiance of classical smoothness made him a strong influence on polemical prose: see CARLYLE. In addition, prose writing in English took firm root during this century in many parts of the world, particularly in the US but also in Australia, Canada, India, and New Zealand.

Prose in the twentieth century . More prose writing in English has probably been published in this century than in all past centuries combined. Because, however, the quantities involved are so vast and the objectives and styles have been so varied, it is virtually impossible to make more than a few provisional statements about 20c prose. It can, for example, be argued that there has been in literary and journalistic writing a move away from (often in tandem with a distaste for) the elevated literary and classical style, towards the more direct, immediate, and colloquial. In other areas, however, such as scholarly, scientific, medical, and legal writing, there continues to be a assumption that technical prose is necessarily complex and abstruse: see ACADEMIC USAGE, PLAIN ENGLISH. Despite the work of experimental stylists like Virginia Woolf and James Joyce, creative writing has on the whole become more functional rather than more artistic, and although the 'literary novel' continues to be distinguished from its 'popular' cousin, many writers with a distinct popular bent have from the mid-19c onward come to be regarded as classics in their own right and to be presented as such in university courses in English literature. By and large, although every kind of prose can be found in English in the late 20c, there is a general tendency towards factual and referential writing, favouring shorter sentences and a vocabulary as simple as the subject allows.