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The nineteenth century witnessed unprecedented expansion in the reading public and an explosive growth in the number of books and newspapers produced to meet its demands. These specially commissioned essays examine not only the full range and variety of texts that entertained and informed the Victorians, but also the boundaries of Victorian literature: the links and overlap with Romanticism in the 1830s, and the roots of modernism in the years leading up to the First World War. The Companion demonstrates how science, medicine and theology influenced creative writing and emphasizes the importance of the visual in painting, book illustration and in technological innovations from the kaleidoscope to the cinema. Essays also chart the complex and fruitful interchanges with writers in America, Europe and the Empire, highlighting the geographical expansion of literature in English. This Companion brings together the most important aspects of this prolific and popular period of English literature.