



Literature and Science in the Nineteenth Century: An Anthology (Oxford World's Classics)

By Laura Otis

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'It has been said by its opponents that science divorces itself from literature; but the statement, like so many others, arises from lack of knowledge.' John Tyndall, 1874

Although we are used to thinking of science and the humanities as separate disciplines, in the nineteenth century that division was not recognized. As the scientist John Tyndall pointed out, not only were science and literature both striving to better 'man's estate', they shared a common language and cultural heritage. The same subjects occupied the writing of scientists and novelists: the quest for 'origins', the nature of the relation between society and the individual, and what it meant

to be human. This anthology brings together a generous selection of scientific and literary material to explore the exchanges and interactions between them. Fed by a common imagination, scientists and creative writers alike used stories, imagery, style, and structure to convey their meaning, and to produce work of enduring power.

The anthology includes writing by Charles Babbage, Charles Darwin, Sir Humphry Davy, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Michael Faraday, Thomas Malthus, Louis Pasteur, Edgar Allan Poe, Mary Shelley, Mark Twain and many others, and introductions and notes guide the reader through the topic's many strands.

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About the Author

Laura Otis was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship for her interdisciplinary studies of the nervous system, and is currently working at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin.

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