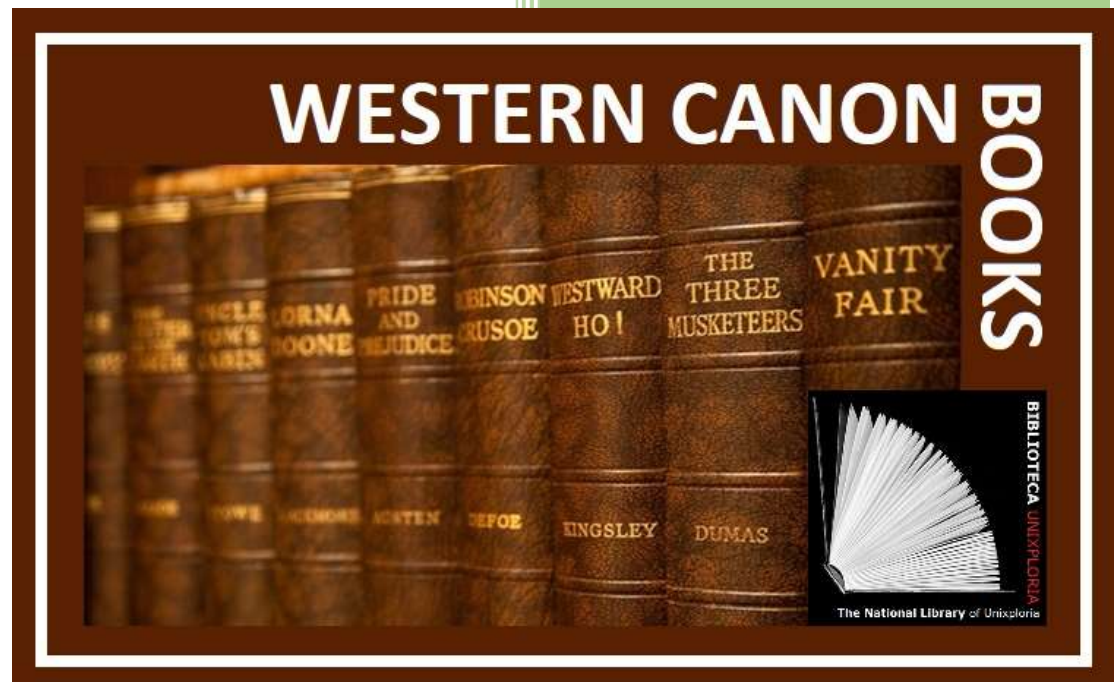


2022

# Western Canon - Books



## **An Attempt at a Western Canon**

The Western canon is the body of high culture literature, music, philosophy, and works of art highly valued in the West: works that have achieved the status of classics. However, not all these works originate in the Western world, and such works are also valued worldwide. The word 'canon' is derived from Ancient Greek: κανών (kanón), meaning a measuring rod or standard. It is "a certain Western intellectual tradition that goes from Socrates to Wittgenstein in philosophy, and from Homer to James Joyce in literature." The Bible, a product of ancient Jewish culture, from the Levant, in Western Asia, has been a significant force in shaping Western culture and "has inspired some of the great monuments of human thought, literature, and art."

More recent discussions have been centered on expanding the canon of books to include more women and racial minorities. In contrast, the canons of music and the visual arts have greatly expanded to cover the Middle Ages and subsequent centuries once primarily overlooked. But some examples of newer media, such as cinema, have attained a precarious position in the canon. Also, during the twentieth century, there has been a growing interest in the West and globally in major artistic works of the cultures of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, including the former colonies of European nations.

## **Classic Books**

A classic is a book, or any other work of art, accepted as being exemplary or noteworthy. In the second-century Roman miscellany *Attic Nights*, Aulus Gellius refers to a writer as "classicus... scriptor, non proletarius" ("A distinguished, not a commonplace writer"). Such classification began with the Greeks' ranking of their artistic works with the word canon (ancient Greek κανών, kanón: "measuring rod, standard"). Moreover, early Christian Church Fathers used canon to rank the authoritative texts of the New Testament, preserving them, given the expense of vellum and papyrus and mechanical book reproduction, thus, being comprehended in a canon ensured a book's preservation as the best way to retain information about a civilization. In contemporary use, the Western canon defines the best of Western culture. In the ancient world, at the Alexandrian Library, scholars coined the Greek term *Hoi enkrithentes* ("the admitted", "the included") to identify the writers in the canon. Although

the term is often associated with the Western canon, it can be applied to works of literature, music and art, etc. from all traditions, such as the Chinese classics or the Vedas.

With regard to books, what makes a book "classic" has concerned various authors, from Mark Twain to Italo Calvino, and questions such as "Why Read the Classics?", and "What Is a Classic?" have been considered by others, including T. S. Eliot, Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, Michael Dirda, and Ezra Pound.

The terms "classic book" and Western canon are closely related concepts, but are not necessarily synonymous. A "canon" is a list of books considered to be "essential", and it can be published as a collection (such as Great Books of the Western World, Modern Library, Everyman's Library, or Penguin Classics), presented as a list with an academic's imprimatur (such as Harold Bloom's) or be the official reading list of a university. In *The Western Canon*, Bloom lists "the major Western writers" as Dante Aligheri, Geoffrey Chaucer, Miguel de Cervantes, Michel de Montaigne, William Shakespeare, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, William Wordsworth, Charles Dickens, Leo Tolstoy, James Joyce, and Marcel Proust.

## **A: "The Theocratic Age"**

### **The Ancient Greeks**

#### **Homer (ca.800BC)**

Iliad; Odyssey.

#### **Hesiod (ca.700BC)**

Works and Days; Theogony.

#### **Sappho (ca.600BC)**

#### **Aeschylus (525 BC – 456 BC)**

Oresteia; Seven Against Thebes; Prometheus Bound; Persians; Suppliant Women.

#### **Sophocles (c. 496-c. 405 BC)**

Oedipus the King; Oedipus at Colonus; Antigone; Electra; Ajax; Women of Trachis; Philoctetes.

#### **Euripides (480 or 484-406 BC)**

Cyclops; Heracles; Alcestis; Hecuba; Bacchae; Orestes; Andromache; Medea; Ion; Hippolytus; Helen; Iphigenia at Aulis.

#### **Aristophanes (ca. 446 BC – 385 BC)**

The Birds; The Clouds; The Frogs; Lysistrata; The Knights; The Wasps; The Assemblywomen.

#### **Herodotus (485-420BC)**

The Histories.

#### **Thucydides, ca.460 BC**

The Peloponnesian Wars.

#### **Plato, c.427-c.347 BC**

Dialogues.

**Aristotle, 384–322 BC**

Poetics; Ethics.

Hellenistic Greeks

**Menander, ca. 342–291 BC**

The Girl from Samos.

**Plutarch, 46–120**

Lives; Moralia.

**Aesop (620 – 560 BC)**

Fables.

**Petronius (c. 27-66 BC)**

**The Romans**

**Terence, 195/185–159 BC**

The Girl from Andros; The Eunuch; The Mother-in-Law.

**Lucretius, 98?–55 BC**

The Way Things Are.

**Marcus Tullius Cicero, 106–43 BC**

On the Gods.

**Horace, 65-8 BC**

Odes; Epistles; Satires.

**Catullus (c.84 BC.– c.54 BC)**

Attis and Other Poems.

**Virgil (70-19 BC)**

Aeneid; Eclogues; Georgics.

**Ovid (43 BC – 17 AD)**

Metamorphoses; The Art of Love; Heroides.

**Seneca, Lucius Annaeus, ca.4 BCE–65 AD**

Tragedies, particularly Medea and Hercules Furens.

**Petronius, c.27-66**

Satyricon.

**Apuleius, c. 123/125-c. 180**

The Golden Ass.

## **The Middle Ages**

**Augustine of Hippo, 354–430**

City of God; Confessions.

**Wolfram von Eschenbach, 1170–1220**

Parzival.

**Chrétien de Troyes, 12th cent**

Yvain: The Knight of the Lion.

**Beowulf (ca.800)**

## **B: "The Aristocratic Age"**

### **Italy**

**Dante (1265 – 1321)**

The Divine Comedy; The New Life.

**Petrarch, 1304-1374**

Lyric Poems; Selections.

**Giovanni Boccaccio, 1313-1375**

The Decameron.

**Matteo Maria Boiardo, 1440 or 41-1494.**

Orlando Innamorato.

**Lodovico Ariosto, 1474-1533**

Orlando Furioso.

**Machiavelli, Niccolò, 1469–1527**

The Prince; The Mandrake, a Comedy.

**Benvenuto Cellini, 1500–1571**

Autobiography.

**Tommaso Campanella, 1568-1639**

Poems; The City of the Sun.

## **Spain**

### **Miguel de Cervantes, 1547-1616**

Don Quixote; Exemplary Stories.

### **Pedro Calderon de la Barca, 1600–1681**

Life is a Dream; The Mayor of Zalamea; The Mighty Magician; The Doctor of His Own Honor.

## **England and Scotland**

### **Chaucer, Geoffrey (ca.1343-1400)**

The Canterbury Tales; Troilus and Criseyde.

### **Thomas Malory, 1430-1471**

Le Morte D'Arthur.

### **Thomas More, 1478-1535**

Utopia.

### **Philip Sidney, 1554-1586.**

The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia; Astrophel and Stella; An Apology for Poetry.

### **Edmund Spenser, 1552-1599**

The Faerie Queene; The Minor Poems.

### **Christopher Marlowe, 1564-1593**

Poems and Plays.

### **Thomas Nashe, 1567-1601**

The Unfortunate Traveller.

**William Shakespeare, 1564-1616**

Plays and Poems.

**John Donne, 1572-1631**

Poems; Sermons.

**Ben Jonson, 1573-1637**

Poems, Plays, and Masques.

**Francis Bacon, 1561–1626**

Essays.

**Robert Burton, 1577–1640**

The Anatomy of Melancholy.

**Thomas Browne, 1605–1682**

Religio Medici; Hydriotaphia, or Urne-Buriall; The Garden of Cyrus.

**Thomas Hobbes, 1588–1679**

Leviathan.

**Herrick, Robert, 1591-1674**

Poems.

**Andrew Marvell, 1621-1678**

Poems.

**John Ford, 1586-ca.1640**

'Tis Pity She's a Whore.



**John Webster, c.1580-c.1634**

The White Devil; The Duchess of Malfi.

**Izaak Walton, 1593-1683**

The Compleat Angler.

**John Milton, 1608-1674**

Paradise Lost; Paradise Regained; Lycidas, Comus, and the Minor Poems; Samson Agonistes; Areopagitica.

**John Aubrey, 1626–1697**

Brief Lives.

**Samuel Butler, 1612-1680**

Hudibras.

**John Dryden, 1631-1700**

Poetry and Plays; Critical Essays.

**Jonathan Swift, 1667-1745**

A Tale of a Tub; Gulliver's Travels; Shorter Prose Works; Poems.

**Alexander Pope, 1688-1744**

Poems.

**John Gay, 1685-1732**

The Beggar's Opera.

**James Boswell, 1740-1795**

Life of Johnson; Journals.

**Samuel Johnson, 1709–1784**

Works.

**Edward Gibbon, 1737–1794**

The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

**Edmund Burke, 1729–1797**

A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful; Reflections on the Revolution in France

**Oliver Goldsmith, 1728-1774**

The Vicar of Wakefield; She Stoops to Conquer; The Traveller; The Deserted Village.

**Richard Brinsley Sheridan, 1751–1816**

The School of Scandal; The Rivals.

**William Cowper, 1731-1800**

Poetical Works.

**Defoe, Daniel (1661?-1731)**

Moll Flanders; Robinson Crusoe; A Journal of the Plague Year.

**Samuel Richardson, 1689-1761.**

Clarissa; Pamela; Sir Charles Grandison.

**Henry Fielding, 1707-1754**

Joseph Andrews; The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling.

**Tobias Smollett, 1721-1771**

The Expedition of Humphry Clinker; The Adventures of Roderick Random.

**Laurence Sterne, 1713-1768**

The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman; A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy.

**Fanny Burney, 1752-1840**

Evelina.

**France**

**Michel de Montaigne, 1533-1592**

Essays.

**Francois Rabelais, 1494?-1553?**

Gargantua and Pantagruel.

**Marguerite de Navarre, 1492–1549**

The Heptameron.

**Jean de La Fontaine, 1621-1695**

Fables.

**Molière, 1622-1673**

The Misanthrope; Tartuffe; The School for Wives; The Learned Ladies; Don Juan; School for Husbands; Ridiculous Precieuses; The Would-Be Gentleman; The Miser; The Imaginary Invalid.

**Blaise Pascal, 1623–1662**

Pensées.

**Rousseau, Jean–Jacques, 1712–1778**

The Confessions; Émile; La Nouvelle Héloïse.

**Voltaire, 1694-1778**

Zadig; Candide; Letters on England; The Lisbon Earthquake.

**Germany****Erasmus of Rotterdam, 1466–1536**

In Praise of Folly.

**Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749–1832**

Faust, Parts One and Two; Dichtung und Wahrheit; Egmont; Elective Affinities; The Sorrows of Young Werther; Poems; Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship; Wilhelm Meister's Years of Wandering; Italian Journey; Verse Plays; Hermann and Dorothea; Roman Elegies; Venetian Epigrams; West-Eastern Divan.

**Friedrich Schiller, 1759-1805**

The Robbers; Mary Stuart; Wallenstein; Don Carlos; On the Naïve and Sentimental in Literature.

## **C: "The Democratic Age"**

### **Italy**

#### **Giovanni Verga, 1840-1922**

Little Novels of Sicily; Mastro-Don Gesualdo; The House by the Medlar Tree; The She-Wolf and Other Stories.

### **France**

#### **Victor Hugo, 1802-1885**

The Distance, the Shadows: Selected Poems; Les Misérables; Notre-Dame of Paris; William Shakespeare; The Toilers of the Sea; The End of Satan; God.

#### **Gautier, Théophile, 1811–1872**

Mademoiselle de Maupin; Enamels and Cameos.

#### **Balzac, Honoré de, 1799-1850**

The Girl with the Golden Eyes; Louis Lambert; The Wild Ass's Skin; Old Goriot; Cousin Bette; A Harlot High and Low; Eugénie Grandet; Ursule Mirouet.

#### **Stendhal, 1783-1842**

On Love; The Red and the Black; The Charterhouse of Parma.

#### **Gustave Flaubert, 1821-1880**

Madame Bovary; Sentimental Education; Salammbô; A Simple Soul.

**George Sand, 1804-1876**

The Haunted Pool.

**Charles Baudelaire, 1821-1867**

Flowers of Evil; Paris Spleen.

**Guy de Maupassant, 1850-1893**

Selected Short Stories.

**Emile Zola, 1840-1902**

Germinal; L'Assommoir; Nana.

**Scandinavia**

**Henrik Ibsen, 1828-1906**

Brand; Peer Gynt; Emperor and Galilean; Hedda Gabler; The Master Builder; The Lady from the Sea; When We Dead Awaken.

**Great Britain**

**William Blake, 1757-1827**

Complete Poetry and Prose.

**William Wordsworth, 1770–1850**

Poems; The Prelude.

**Walter Scott, 1771-1832**

Waverley; The Heart of Midlothian; Redgauntlet; Old Mortality.

**Jane Austen, 1775-1817**

Pride and Prejudice; Emma; Mansfield Park; Persuasion.

**Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1772–1834**

Poems and Prose.

**Hazlitt, William, 1778-1830**

Essays and Criticism.

**George Byron, 1788-1824**

Don Juan; Poems.

**Thomas de Quincey, 1785–1859**

Confessions of an English Opium Eater; Selected Prose.

**Maria Edgeworth, 1767-1849**

Castle Rackrent.

**Elizabeth Gaskell, 1810-1865**

Cranford; Mary Barton; North and South.

**Charles Robert Maturin, 1782–1824**

Melmoth the Wanderer.

**Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1792-1822**

Poems; A Defence of Poetry.

**Mary Shelley, 1797-1851**

Frankenstein.

**John Keats, 1795-1821**

Poems and Letters.

**Robert Browning, 1812–1889**

Poems; The Ring and the Book.

**Charles Dickens, 1812-1870**

The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club; David Copperfield; The Adventures of Oliver Twist; A Tale of Two Cities; Bleak House; Hard Times; Nicholas Nickleby; Dombey and Son; Great Expectations; Martin Chuzzlewit; Christmas Stories; Little Dorrit; Our Mutual Friend; The Mystery of Edwin Drood.

**Alfred Tennyson, 1809-1892**

Poems.

**Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1828-1882**

Poems and Translations.

**Matthew Arnold, 1822-1888**

Poems; Essays.

**Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894.**

Poems.

**Thomas Love Peacock, 1785–1866**

Nightmare Abbey; Gryll Grange.



**Thomas Carlyle, 1795–1881**

Selected Prose; Sartor Resartus.

**John Ruskin, 1819-1900**

Modern Painters; The Stones of Venice; Unto This Last; The Queen of the Air.

**John Stuart Mill, 1806–1873**

On Liberty; Autobiography.

**Anthony Trollope, 1815-1882**

The Barsetshire Novels; The Palliser Novels; Orley Farm; The Way We Live Now.

**Lewis Carroll, 1832-1898**

Complete Works.

**George Gissing, 1857-1903**

New Grub Street.

**Charlotte Bronte, 1816-1855**

Jane Eyre; Villette.

**Emily Bronte, 1818-1848**

Poems; Wuthering Heights.

**Anne Bronte, 1820-1849**

**William Makepeace Thackeray, 1811-1863**

Vanity Fair; The History of Henry Esmond.

**George Meredith, 1828-1909**

Poems; The Egoist.

**Chesterton, G. K. (Gilbert Keith), 1874-1936**

Collected Poems; The Man Who Was Thursday.

**Samuel Butler, 1835-1902**

Erewhon; The Way of All Flesh.

**Wilkie Collins, 1824-1889**

The Moonstone; The Woman in White; No Name.

**Thomson, James, 1834-1882**

The City of the Dreadful Night.

**Oscar Wilde, 1854-1900**

Plays; The Picture of Dorian Gray; The Artist as Critic; Letters.

**George Eliot, 1819-1880**

Adam Bede; Silas Marner; The Mill on the Floss; Middlemarch; Daniel Deronda.

**Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-1894**

Essays; Kidnapped; Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde; Treasure Island; The New Arabian Nights; The Master of Ballantrae; Weir of Hermiston.

**William Morris, 1834-1896**

Early Romances; Poems; The Earthly Paradise; The Well at the World's End; News from Nowhere.

**Bram Stoker, 1847-1912**

Dracula.

**George MacDonald, 1824-1905**

Lilith; At the Back of the North Wind.

## **Germany**

**Jakob Grimm, 1785–1863 and Grimm, Wilhelm, 1786–1859**

Fairy Tales.

**Hoffmann, E. T. A. (Ernst Theodor Amadeus), 1776-1822**

The Devil's Elixir; Tales.

**Friedrich Nietzsche, 1844–1900**

The Birth of Tragedy; Beyond Good and Evil; On the Genealogy of Morals; The Will to Power.

## **Russia**

**Aleksandr Pushkin, 1799-1837**

Complete Prose Tales; Complete Poetry; Eugene Onegin; Narrative Poems; Boris Godunov.

**Nikolai Gogol, 1809-1852**

The Complete Tales; Dead Souls; The Government Inspector.

**Mikhail Lermontov, 1814-1841**

Narrative Poems; A Hero of Our Time.

**Ivan Turgenev, 1818-1883**

A Sportsman's Notebook; A Month in the Country; Fathers and Sons; On the Eve; First Love.

**Fyodor Dostoyevsky, 1821-1881**

Notes from the Underground; Crime and Punishment; The Idiot; The Possessed (The Devils);  
The Brothers Karamazov; Short Novels.

**Leo Tolstoy, 1828-1910**

The Cossacks; War and Peace; Anna Karenina; A Confession; The Power of Darkness; Short  
Novels.

**Anton Chekhov, 1860-1904**

The Tales; The Major Plays.

**The United States**

**Washington Irving, 1783-1859**

The Sketch Book.

**James Fenimore Cooper, 1789–1851.**

The Deerslayers.

**Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803–1882**

Nature; Essays; Representative Men; The Conduct of Life; Journals; Poems.

**Emily Dickinson, 1830–1886**

Complete Poems.

**Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1804-1864**

The Scarlet Letter; Tales and Sketches; The Marble Faun; Notebooks.

**Herman Melville, 1819-1891**

Moby-Dick; The Piazza Tales; Billy Budd; Collected Poems; Clarel.

**Edgar Allan Poe, 1809-1849**

Poetry and Tales; Essays and Reviews; The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym; Eureka.

**Henry David Thoreau, 1817–1862**

Walden; Poems; Essays.

**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807–1882**

Selected Poems.

**Ambrose Bierce, 1842-1913**

Collected Writings.

**Louisa May Alcott, 1832–1888**

Little Women.

**Kate Chopin, 1850-1904**

The Awakening.

**William Dean Howells, 1837-1920**

The Rise of Silas Lapham; A Modern Instance.

**Henry James, 1843-1916**

The Portrait of a Lady; The Bostonians; The Princess Casamassima; The Awkward Age; Short Novels and Tales; The Ambassadors; The Wings of the Dove; The Golden Bowl

**Mark Twain, 1835-1910**

Complete Short Stories; The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn; The Devil's Racetrack; Number Forty-Four: The Mysterious Stranger; Pudd'nhead Wilson; A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.

**William James, 1842–1910**

The Varieties of Religious Experience; Pragmatism.

## **D: "The Chaotic Age"**

### **France**

#### **Anatole France, 1844-1924**

Penguin Island; Thaïs.

#### **Marcel Proust, 1871-1922**

Remembrance of Things Past (In Search of Lost Time).

#### **Albert Camus, 1913-1960**

The Stranger; The Plague; The Fall; The Rebel.

### **Great Britain and Ireland.**

#### **Yeats, W. B. (William Butler), 1865-1939**

The Collected Poems; Collected Plays; A Vision; Mythologies.

#### **George Bernard Shaw, 1856-1950**

Major Critical Essays; Heartbreak House; Pygmalion; Saint Joan; Major Barbara; Back to Methuselah.

#### **John Millington Synge, 1871-1909**

Collected Plays.

#### **George Douglas Brown, 1869-1902**

The House with the Green Shutters.

**Thomas Hardy, 1840-1928**

The Well-Beloved; The Woodlanders; The Return of the Native; The Mayor of Casterbridge;  
Far From the Madding Crowd; Tess of the D'Urbervilles; Jude the Obscure; Collected Poems.

**Rudyard Kipling, 1865-1936**

Kim; Collected Stories; Puck of Pook's Hill; Complete Verse.

**Housman, A. E., 1859-1936**

Collected Poems.

**Joseph Conrad, 1857-1924**

Lord Jim; The Secret Agent; Nostromo; Under Western Eyes; Victory.

**Ronald Firbank, 1886-1926**

Five Novels.

**Ford Madox Ford, 1873-1939**

Parade's End; The Good Soldier.

**Saki, 1870-1916**

The Short Stories.

**Wells, H. G., 1866-1946**

The Science Fiction Novels.

**David Lindsay, 1876-1945**

A Voyage to Arcturus.

**Arnold Bennett, 1867–1931.**

The Old Wives' Tale.

**John Galsworthy, 1867-1933**

The Forsyth Saga.

**Lawrence, D. H., 1885-1930**

Complete Poems; Studies in Classic American Literature; Complete Short Stories; Sons and Lovers; The Rainbow; Women in Love.

**Virginia Woolf, 1882-1941**

Mrs. Dalloway; To the Lighthouse; Orlando: A Biography; The Waves; Between the Acts.

**James Joyce, 1882-1941**

Dubliners; Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man; Ulysses; Finnegans Wake.

**George Orwell, 1903-1950**

Collected Essays; 1984.

**Germany.**

**Franz Kafka, 1883–1924**

Amerika; The Complete Stories; The Blue Octavo Notebook; The Trial; Diaries; The Castle; Parables, Fragments, Aphorisms.



## **Russia.**

**Maksim Gorky, 1868-1936**

Reminiscences of Tolstoy, Chekhov, and Andreev; Autobiography.

## **Scandinavia.**

**Knut Hamsun, 1859-1952**

Hunger; Pan.

## **Czech.**

**Karel Čapek, 1890-1938**

War with the Newts; R.U.R.

## **Australia and New Zealand.**

**Miles Franklin, 1879-1954**

My Brilliant Career.

**Katherine Mansfield, 1888-1923**

The Short Stories.

## **The United States.**

### **Edith Wharton, 1862–1937**

Collected Short Stories; The Age of Innocence; Ethan Frome; The House of Mirth; The Custom of the Country.

### **Willa Cather, 1873-1947**

My Antonia; The Professor's House; A Lost Lady.

### **Gertrude Stein, 1874–1946**

Three Lives; The Geographical History of America; The Making of Americans; Tender Buttons.

### **Theodore Dreiser, 1871-1945**

Sister Carrie; An American Tragedy.

### **Sinclair Lewis, 1885-1951**

Babbitt; It Can't Happen Here.

### **Eugene O'Neill, 1888-1953**

Lazarus Laughed; The Iceman Cometh; Long Day's Journey into Night.

### **Fitzgerald, F. Scott, 1896-1940**

Babylon Revisited and Other Stories; The Great Gatsby; Tender is the Night.

### **Nathanael West, 1903-1940**

Miss Lonelyhearts; A Cool Million; The Day of the Locust.