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# THE UNITED KINGDOM

## A POLITICAL HISTORY

BY

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AUTHOR OF "THE UNITED STATES," ETC., ETC.

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*The best form of government is that which doth actuate  
and inspire every part and member of a state to the  
common good. — PVM.*

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VOLUME I

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## PREFACE

THE limited aim of these pages is to give the ordinary reader, so far as was in the author's power, a clear, connected, and succinct view of the political history of the United Kingdom as it appears in the light of recent research and discussion.

Among works of special research by which the writer has been assisted, and to the authors of which his grateful acknowledgments are due, are the following :—

Freeman's "History of the Norman Conquest of England."

Stubbs's "Constitutional History of England."

Miss Kate Norgate's "England under the Angevin Kings."

"The Life and Reign of Edward I.," by the author of "The Greatest of the Plantagenets."

James Hamilton Wylie's "History of England under Henry the Fourth."

Sir James H. Ramsay's "Lancaster and York."

Mrs. J. R. Green's "Town Life in the Fifteenth Century."

J. S. Brewer's "Reign of Henry VIII.," edited by James Gairdner.

Francis Aidan Gasquet's "Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries."

Paul Friedmann's "Anne Boleyn."

Froude's "History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth" (the later volumes).

Gilbert W. Child's "Church and State under the Tudors."

David Masson's "Life of John Milton, narrated in Connexion with the Political, Ecclesiastical, and Literary History of his Time."

Samuel Rawson Gardiner's Histories, embracing the period from James I. to the Protectorate.

W. E. H. Lecky's "History of England in the Eighteenth Century."

Henry Jephson's "The Platform: its Rise and Progress."

Sir Spencer Walpole's "History of England from the Conclusion of the Great War in 1815."

William Nassau Molesworth's "History of England from the Year 1830."

John Hill Burton's works on Scotch history.

A. G. Richey's "Short History of the Irish People, down to the Date of the Plantation of Ulster," edited by Robert Romney Kane.

T. Dunbar Ingram's "History of the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland," and the same writer's "Two Chapters of Irish History."

J. T. Ball's "Historical Review of the Legislative Systems operative in Ireland, from the Invasion of Henry the Second to the Union (1172-1800)."

"Social England: A Record of the Progress of the People in Religion, Laws, Learning, Arts, Industry, Commerce, Science, Literature, and Manners from the Earliest Times to the Present Day." By various writers. Edited by H. D. Traill, D.C.L.

The "Dictionary of National Biography."

John Mercier McMullen's "History of Canada, from its First Discovery to the Present Time."

The works on India of Sir Richard Temple, Sir W. W. Hunter, Sir Alfred Lyall, Sir John Strachey, Colonel Chesney, and Sir James Fitzjames Stephen.

Particular acknowledgments are due to the admirable works of Freeman, Stubbs, Gardiner, and Lecky; to that of Stubbs with special reference to the constitutional policy of Edward I. The historical part of Mr. Masson's work also calls for particular recognition.

The author at the same time embraces the opportunity

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of testifying to the noble service which the editors and writers of the "Dictionary of National Biography" have rendered to British History.

In one or two parts of the book the author has drawn on previous works of his own.

The friends who urged the writer to undertake this task know that it has been performed by the hand of extreme old age.

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