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**GEORGE III.**  
**(1738-1820.)**

MODERN ENGLAND  
BEFORE THE REFORM BILL

BY

JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P.

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES," ETC.

*SECOND EDITION*

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## PREFACE

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IN this volume and in the one to follow my purpose is to give an account of the social and political development of England since the opening of the century. I do not attempt anything like a minute and detailed history of the events that followed each other during that time ; and indeed, my intention is rather to draw something like a picture than to give to my readers a chronicle and a record. I have endeavoured to describe each remarkable political and social development, and to group the statesmen and philanthropists of every order by whom each development was assisted in its progress.

I have, while keeping in view the order of historical succession, endeavoured to make the story of each great reform, political or social, a story complete in itself, and disentangled as far as possible from the cluster and confusion of events that were passing all around it, and exterior to it. The true history of England during that long period of marvellous growth will be found to be the history

of the country's progress in education, in science, and in the conditions that tend to make life useful, healthful, and happy. Successive changes in administration, the rivalries of statesmen at home and abroad, the barren wars which spring from the competing ambitions of dynasties are, after all, but the accidental difficulties in the way of man's improvement; and while they cannot be denied, their proportionate representation in history are sometimes dealt with as if they were the main events of history, and were entitled to occupy the largest space and foremost place in the picture drawn by the historian. My purpose has been something different from this; my desire has been to describe the marvellous changes wrought by science and literature, by statesmen and philanthropists in the social life of England during the wonderful century which is now drawing to a close. My wish has been to make my readers acquainted with the men who helped to bring about those changes, as well as with the nature, extent, and influence of the changes themselves; and thus to tell the story of England's nineteenth century in such a manner as to secure it an easy way to the understanding, and a place in the memory of even my youngest readers.

JUSTIN McCARTHY.



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