

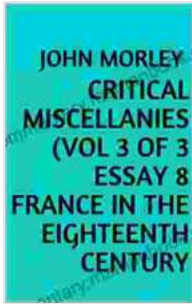
# Critical Miscellanies Vol. III: Essay on France in the Eighteenth Century



**Critical Miscellanies (Vol 3 of 3 Essay 8 France in the Eighteenth Century** by John Morley

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 6177 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Print length	: 18 pages
Lending	: Enabled



Matthew Arnold's *Critical Miscellanies*, Volume III, is a collection of essays that explore the intellectual and cultural landscape of France in the 18th century. Published in 1868, the essay "France in the Eighteenth Century" is a seminal work in literary criticism that offers a comprehensive and nuanced analysis of this transformative era.

In this article, we will delve into the key arguments, literary techniques, and historical context of Arnold's essay. We will explore Arnold's insights into French society, culture, and literature, and examine how his work contributes to our understanding of this fascinating period.

## Literary Techniques

Arnold's essay is a master class in literary criticism. He employs a range of techniques to engage the reader and convey his insights:

- **Comparative Analysis:** Arnold compares France in the 18th century with England, highlighting the similarities and differences between the two nations.
- **Historical Context:** Arnold provides a thorough overview of the historical events that shaped France in the 18th century, from the reign

of Louis XIV to the French Revolution.

- **Biographical Criticism:** Arnold draws on the lives and works of key French thinkers and writers, such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot, to illustrate his arguments.
- **Literary Analysis:** Arnold provides insightful commentary on French literature of the period, discussing the works of major authors such as Molière, Racine, and Beaumarchais.

## Key Arguments

Arnold's essay presents a complex and multifaceted view of France in the 18th century. Some of his key arguments include:

- **The Enlightenment:** Arnold argues that the Enlightenment was a profound intellectual movement that transformed French society and culture. He praises the Enlightenment thinkers for their emphasis on reason, individual liberty, and the pursuit of knowledge.
- **Rococo and Romanticism:** Arnold examines the tension between the Rococo and Romantic movements in French literature. He sees Rococo as a superficial and artificial style, while Romanticism as a more genuine and expressive movement.
- **The French Revolution:** Arnold argues that the French Revolution was a direct result of the Enlightenment and the social and economic changes that occurred in France in the 18th century. He sees the Revolution as a necessary but also tragic event.

## Historical Context

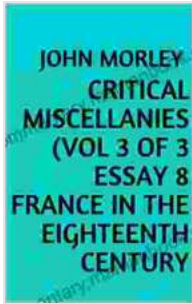
Arnold's essay is deeply rooted in the historical context of France in the 18th century. He provides a detailed account of the major events and trends that shaped this era:

- **The Reign of Louis XIV:** Arnold discusses the reign of Louis XIV as a period of unprecedented prosperity and cultural achievement in France.
- **The Regency and the Enlightenment:** Arnold describes the period after the death of Louis XIV as a time of great intellectual and social ferment, marked by the rise of the Enlightenment.
- **The French Revolution:** Arnold provides a detailed account of the causes and events of the French Revolution, emphasizing its impact on French society and culture.

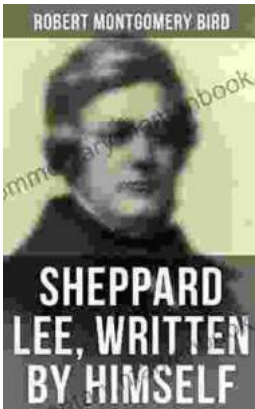
Matthew Arnold's *Critical Miscellanies*, Volume III, is a landmark work of literary criticism that offers a profound insight into France in the 18th century. Arnold's essay is a valuable resource for students of French history, culture, and literature. It is also a fascinating read for anyone interested in the intellectual and cultural forces that shaped the modern world.

Arnold's analysis of France in the 18th century remains relevant today. His insights into the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and the French Revolution continue to inform our understanding of these transformative events. *Critical Miscellanies*, Volume III, is a must-read for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of this fascinating period in history.

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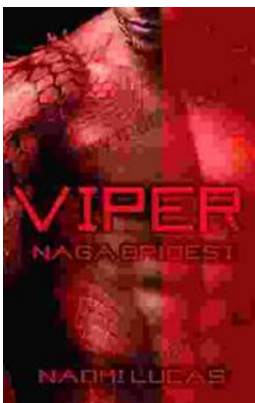


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