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CONSERVATISM

PART I

PRELIMINARY

It is difficult to determine the extent and limitations of the subject of this book. Considered as the creed of the political party which is known by the name of Conservative, it may be made to cover all topics of political interest or partisan controversy. And these topics might be discussed with any degree of particularity, so as to extend this small volume far beyond its prescribed limits and to turn it into the likeness of an encyclopædia. Yet in escaping from this danger, political matters even of a controversial character must not be avoided if anything like a sufficient sketch of modern Conservatism is to be given. The reader must therefore be indulgent if, in the effort to reach the right mean between a vague and abstract philosophic treatise and the contentious particularity more proper to a newspaper, the book