

## PREFACE

It is never worth while to publish writings which need not have been given to the world, and then to offer an apology for their publication. I do not seek, therefore, to excuse myself for writing this book. I will only say that nearly at the same time two firms of publishers applied to me for my memoirs, and soon afterwards the head of a third firm expressed his willingness to issue them. It has been a pleasure, not wholly free from sadness, to revive so many old associations. The experience of most people who have lived some time in the world is, I suppose, that they form, more or less unwittingly, certain conclusions which they themselves hold strongly, perhaps too strongly, and which they think may be of some use to others. If among my own conclusions there are any which may be felt to suggest or emphasise the true course of public duty or wisdom, I cannot be sorry that I have made them known. But when I had finished the book, it was found to be a good deal longer than I had promised or the publishers had expected, and a part of the "Reflections" has, therefore, to my regret, been omitted. It will perhaps appear some day in another form.

I know how difficult it is to use frank language without giving pain, especially in reference to con-