

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM

THE FALL OF WOLSEY
TO THE DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA.

VOLUME I.

HENRY THE EIGHTH.

A

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VOLUME I.

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PREFACE.

THE occasion of my undertaking the present work was, as regards myself, an involuntary leisure forced upon me by my inability to pursue the profession which I had entered, but which I was forbidden by the law to exchange for another; and, secondly, the attitude towards the Reformation of the 16th century which had been assumed by many influential thinkers in England and on the Continent.

Goethe had said of Luther and Calvin that they had delayed the intellectual growth of Europe for centuries by calling in the mob to decide questions which should have been left to the thinkers. Our own Reformers, who for three centuries had been the object of enthusiastic panegyric, were being assailed with equally violent abuse by the High Churchmen on one side, and by Liberal statesmen and political philosophers on the other. Lord Macaulay had attacked Cranmer as one of the basest of mankind. It had become the fashion to