PREFACE TO THE TENTH EDITION

Any interpretation of the confused panorama of events, which has followed the Second World War, as purely a conflict of ideologies is fallacious. For neither those who adhere to the democratic way of life, nor those who uphold the police state and the one-party system, refrain from seeking co-operation with states which favour a different ideology from their own. "The more things change, the more they remain the same"; and the existing situation, which seems to baffle all efforts at pacification, is governed by the traditional factors that have dominated the European scene since the dissolution of the mediaeval Holy Roman Empire shattered the last pretence of a united Europe. During the past four centuries it has been a vital principle of British foreign policy to oppose any Power which, like a Colossus, bestrode the Continent of Europe and menaced our national security. Hence the struggle in the sixteenth century against Spain, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries against France, in the twentieth century first against Germany and now against Russia. Hitherto reliance has been placed mainly upon establishing a Balance of Power as the means of preserving equilibrium in the international order; and this device, coupled with new and terrifying instruments of war, is still viewed as the most potent deterrence to aggression.

The fact that the present-day policy of every country—in spite of revolutionary changes in façades and ideologies—pursues a well-trodden path, makes it impossible to interpret the trend of affairs in the world around us if we are content to begin our study of European History from the end of the Second or even of the First World War. We need to know something of the historic background of the principal protagonists, and of the conditions which in the nineteenth century moulded their development under the impact of a mighty force: the force of nationality. It is the purpose of this book to analyse and appraise the age in which were sown the seeds of two World Wars.
PREFACE TO THE TENTH EDITION

The design on which the present work is constructed, as explained in the preface to the original edition, has given rise to some discussion as to the best way of writing European History. Professor F. J. C. Hearnshaw, for example, in his *Main Currents of European History*, after quoting this preface, compares the different systems adopted by historians. I believe that students and general readers are more likely to obtain an intelligent grasp of European History when each country is treated as a separate entity, so far as is possible, although due regard must be paid to the working of forces which have affected the destinies of all. I recognize however that there is ample room for other methods, nor is there any necessity for adopting one to the exclusion of the rest.

I have continued this History in a sequel entitled *Europe 1914–1939*. It comprises an account of the momentous developments which bridge the two World Wars—the pioneer efforts to establish an international order based on the renunciation of war; the creation of totalitarian states resting on the domination of a single party in Soviet Russia, National-Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy; and the reaction against a world economy in which the nineteenth century had reposed its hopes for world peace.

E. L.

1 The two books are also combined in a single volume under the title: *Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (seventh edition).

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The traditional method of writing European History from the standpoint of international politics has been discarded in this volume in favour of a method of treatment which gives a concise and connected account—analytical rather than narrative—of the internal development of the chief European States after the fall of Napoleon. I venture to think that this latter method is more helpful for students and general readers.

E. LIPSON.