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1715-1789

A

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BALANCE OF POWER

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London

RIVINGTON, PERCIVAL, & CO.

1896

P R E F A C E

IN attempting to write the history of Europe in the eighteenth century, I have been compelled for want of space to omit to a great extent the history of the Papacy and Portugal, and to touch upon the internal history of France only so far as it reacted upon the foreign policy of Louis XV. and XVI. I have, however, endeavoured to give full prominence to the foreign policy of Dubois, Fleury, Choiseul, and Vergennes, to emphasise the full meaning of the diplomatic revolutions of 1717 and 1756, and to bring out clearly the disastrous effects upon France of her entry into the war between England and the revolted American colonies.

I have also devoted much attention to showing the close interdependence of Northern, Eastern, and Western politics, and have in consequence endeavoured to bring into clear light the first beginnings of the Eastern Question, the rise of Russia and Prussia, and the decay of Sweden, Poland, and Turkey.

For the valuable Appendices A, B, and C—the results of very careful investigations—I am indebted to the courtesy of the Rev. A. H. Johnson; while to Mr. H. O. Wakeman and Mr. A. N. Moberley I venture to express