

INDIA, THE DOMINIONS, COLONIES, PROTECTORATES, AND DEPENDENCIES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

In the following pages the various sections of the British Empire outside Gt. Britain and Northern Ireland are arranged in alphabetical order under the divisions of the world to which they belong:—1. Europe; 2. Asia; 3. Africa; 4. America; 5. Australasia and Oceania.

The term 'Dominion' is used officially as a convenient abbreviation of the complete designation 'self governing Dominion.' The Dominions are Australia, Canada, Irish Free State, Newfoundland, New Zealand, and South Africa.

The Imperial Conference of 1926 defined the Dominions as 'autonomous Communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or foreign affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.' The Conference further laid down that, as a consequence of this equality of status, the Governor-General of a Dominion 'is the representative of the Crown, holding in all essential respects the same position in relation to the administration of public affairs in the Dominion as is held by His Majesty the King in Great Britain,' and that 'it is the right of the Government of each Dominion to advise the Crown in all matters relating to its own affairs.' The Conference also recognised certain treaty-making rights as appertaining to the Dominions.

The term 'Colony' is an abbreviation of the official designation 'Colony not possessing responsible Government,' and includes all such Colonies whether or not they possess an elective Legislature, but does not include Protectorates or Protected States. The term 'Crown Colonies' is properly applicable only to those Colonies in which the Crown retains control of legislation.

Under the recent Peace Treaties certain ex-German and ex-Turkish territories are administered by parts of the British Empire under mandates approved by the League of Nations. These territories include Samoa, New Guinea, Iraq, Palestine, and parts of the former German Colonies in Africa.

Up to July, 1925, all sections of the British Empire outside of Great Britain and Ireland were dealt with by the Colonial Office. In that month a new Secretaryship of State, for Dominion Affairs, was created, and as a result the Dominions Office was set up, to take over from the Colonial Office business connected with the self-governing Dominions, the self-governing Colony of Southern Rhodesia, and the South African territories (Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate, and Swaziland), including business relating to the Imperial Conference.

The Colonial Office now deals with the administrative work of the Colonies, Protectorates, and Mandated Territories other than those for which the Dominions Office is responsible. It contains seven Departments—the West Indian, Far Eastern, Ceylon and Mauritius, East African, Tanganyika and Somaliland, Nigeria, Gold Coast and Mediterranean—dealing with the affairs of various groups of Dependencies; a Middle Eastern Division, which was established in March, 1921, to conduct business relating to Iraq, Palestine, Aden, and Arab areas under British influence; and a General Department, which is concerned with correspondence of a general and miscellaneous character including questions of promotion, postal, telegraph, and copyright matters, international conventions and commercial treaties, Letters Patent and Commissions, etc.