

Such a criticism, however, completely ignores the historic situation. The rapid evolution of the oversea Dominions during the last fifty years has involved many complicated adjustments of old political machinery to changing conditions. The tendency towards equality of status was both right and inevitable. Geographical and other conditions made this impossible of attainment by the way of federation. The only alternative was by the way of autonomy; and along this road it has been steadily sought. Every self-governing member of the Empire is now the master of its destiny. In fact, if not always in form, it is subject to no compulsion whatever.

But no account, however accurate, of the negative relations in which Great Britain and the Dominions stand to each other can do more than express a portion of the truth. The British Empire is not founded upon negotiations. It depends essentially, if not formally, on positive ideals. Free institutions are its life-blood. Free co-operation is its instrument. Peace, security, and progress are among its objects. Aspects of all these great themes have been discussed at the present Conference; excellent results have been thereby obtained. And, though every Dominion is now, and must always remain, the sole judge of the nature and extent of its co-operation, no common cause will, in our opinion, be thereby imperilled.

Equality of status, so far as Britain and the Dominions are concerned, is thus the root principle governing our inter-Imperial relations. But the principles of equality and similarity, appropriate to *status*, do not universally extend to function. Here we require something more than immutable dogmas. For example, to deal with questions of diplomacy and questions of defence, we require also flexible machinery—machinery which can from time to time be adapted to the changing circumstances of the world. This subject also has occupied our attention. The rest of this report will show how we have endeavoured not only to state political theory, but to apply it to our common needs.

III. SPECIAL POSITION OF INDIA.

It will be noted that in the previous paragraphs we have made no mention of India. Our reason for limiting their scope to Great Britain and the Dominions is that the position of India in the Empire is already defined by the Government of India Act, 1919. We would nevertheless recall that by Resolution IX of the Imperial War Conference, 1917, due recognition was given to the important position held by India in the British Commonwealth. Where in this report we have had occasion to consider the position of India we have made particular reference to it.

IV. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS PARTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Existing administrative, legislative, and judicial forms are admittedly not wholly in accord with the position as described in Section II of this report. This is inevitable, since most of these forms date back to a time well antecedent to the present stage of constitutional development. Our first task, then, was to examine these forms with special reference to any cases where the want of adaptation of practice to principle caused, or might be thought to cause, inconvenience in the conduct of inter-Imperial relations.

(a) *The Title of His Majesty the King.*

The title of His Majesty the King is of special importance and concern to all parts of His Majesty's Dominions. Twice within the last fifty years has the Royal title been altered to suit changed conditions and constitutional developments.

The present title, which is that proclaimed under the Royal Titles Act of 1901, is as follows: "George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India."

Some time before the Conference met it had been recognized that this form of title hardly accorded with the altered state of affairs arising from the establishment of the Irish Free State as a Dominion. It had further been ascertained that it would be in accordance with His Majesty's wishes that any recommendation for change should be submitted to him as the result of discussion at the Conference.