

or through the Dominions Department, will be represented on, or closely allied to, the Commercial Intelligence Committee.

6. The second department of the Colonial Office, which will be styled the Colonial or Crown Colonies Department, will deal with all the administrative and political work of the Crown Colonies and Protectorates which forms a great and growing charge; and the third, or General Department, will be also the Legal Department, and, in addition to the general routine business of the office, which is now transacted by it, and to all personal questions arising in the Crown Colonies, will deal with various matters common to all the Crown Colonies—such as currency, banking, postal and telegraph matters, education, medical and sanitary questions, pensions, patronage, and so forth. In connection more especially with this Department four standing committees will be established, viz., a Patronage and Promotions Committee, a Railway and Financial Committee, a Concessions Committee, and a Pensions Committee.

7. The permanent staff of the Colonial Office includes at the head of the office the Permanent Under-Secretary of State and four Assistant Under-Secretaries. The Permanent Under-Secretary of State will remain as now the permanent head of the whole office and the principal adviser of the Secretary of State. The four Assistant Under-Secretaries will be allotted as follows. Mr. Antrobus will take control of the Crown Colonies Department with its very heavy and important work. Mr. Cox will have control of the General Department; he will as a rule preside over the Standing Committees; and, as Legal Adviser, his services will, as now, be utilised in connection with all the departments. The Dominions Department will be under the control of the Senior Assistant Under-Secretary, Mr. Lucas, and with him will be associated Mr. Just, the junior Assistant Under-Secretary, whom I have nominated to be Permanent Secretary to the Imperial Conference. Mr. Lucas's long experience of Colonial administration in this office is supplemented by special knowledge of emigration questions: and he will bring to bear upon his new duties many years' close study of Colonial history. Your Ministers need not be reminded that Mr. Just was one of the Joint Secretaries to the late Conference: he has served in the Colonial Office since 1878, acted as Assistant Secretary to the first Colonial Conference in 1887, and has had personal experience of South Africa. He is, in my opinion, well qualified for the important post to which I have appointed him, and I am confident that on his part and on the part of those who will assist him every effort will be made to carry out the work of the Secretariat with efficiency and success.

8. Such is an outline of my proposals for rearranging the work of the Colonial Office. They are made in the strong desire to promote the interests of all parts of the Empire and to produce efficient and sympathetic treatment of the manifold questions that arise. I ask for, and I am confident that I shall receive, cordial co-operation from all concerned.

I have, &c.,
ELGIN.

Governor the Right Hon. Lord Plunket, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.

Enclosure.

[Hansard, vol. CLXXXI, pp. 1067-71.]

BUSINESS OF SELF-GOVERNING COLONIES.

THE EARL OF JERSEY: I desire to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies the Question which appears in my name, viz:—"If he is in a position to communicate to the House the steps for the better ordering of the business of the Self-Governing Colonies, and of the Imperial Conferences which at the recent Conference he stated to be in contemplation". In asking this Question, I will only say that at the recent Conference a strong desire was expressed that there should be some re-arrangement at the Colonial Office which would enable that Office to be in closer touch with the Self-Governing Colonies, and also to provide for the work of the Imperial Conferences. That matter was left with the noble Earl, the Secretary of State. It could not be left in better hands.