GOVERNMENT
IN GREAT BRITAIN,
THE EMPIRE, AND THE
COMMONWEALTH
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

(The new House retains the form of that destroyed by enemy action on 10 May 1941)
GOVERNMENT
IN GREAT BRITAIN,
The Empire, and
The Commonwealth

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*This map is available for download from www.cambridge.org/9781107587052
PREFACE

The purpose of this book is to describe the main features of government in Great Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth, to show the influence of tradition, precedent and proper procedure, and to illustrate the fluidity of the constitution. It is hoped that the book will make clear the duties and responsibilities of democracy as well as its privileges.

In part I, which is the work of L. W. White, the emphasis throughout has been on present-day practice. It has been possible in this part to include only such references to the historical development of institutions as are essential to an understanding of the position to-day. In part II, which has been written by W. D. Hussey, the approach has necessarily been different, and the constitutional development of the British Empire from its beginnings in the seventeenth century down to the present day is described. This part relates how English representative institutions were carried overseas and adapted to the needs of government of the colonies. The institution of Crown Colony government is also described and its development is traced from non-representative forms to those leading finally to self-government. Because of the limitations of space, emphasis throughout part II has been on general principles rather than on detailed descriptions of constitutions; constitutional change to-day is so frequent that accounts of constitutions quickly become out-of-date.

The authors, who have collaborated closely in the planning and writing of this book, acknowledge with gratitude the assistance they have received from many friends, especially on special points and technicalities regarding the courts of law, local government and parliamentary procedure. They are particularly indebted to Mrs Marjorie McIntosh of the Department of Social Studies at Bedford College, University of London, who read the manuscript of part I and made many valuable suggestions, to Mr N. H. Brasher who read the proofs and gave much help, to Mr E. W. Woodhead, County Education Officer of Kent, and to the Borough Treasurers of Croydon and
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Bromley. Thanks are also due to H.M. Stationery Office, the Home Office, the Central Office of Information and The Times for permission to quote from official documents and to use diagrams. The authors have, as is inevitable, made much use of many of the works mentioned in the book list.

Finally, the authors wish to thank the publishers for their patience and forbearance during the long period this book has been in preparation, and for their helpfulness at all times.

L.W.W.
W.D.H.

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