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PREFATORY NOTE

THE papers comprised in these volumes were most of them given originally as lectures in the Sunday Afternoon Course at the South Place Institute, Finsbury, from 1895 to 1898, with the object of affording trustworthy information concerning the various colonies, settlements, and countries scattered over the world which go to form the whole known as "The British Empire." It was thought that a wider and deeper knowledge of the growth, present condition, and possibilities of each integral part of our Empire would tend to strengthen the sympathetic, material, and political ties which unite the colonies to the mother country.

The generous response to the invitation to lecture was very gratifying; travellers, natives, and those to whom had been given the onerous task of governing the various provinces of our Empire, vied with one another in their willingness to impart the special knowledge which they had acquired.

The lecturers were asked, when possible, to give a short account of the country prior to its incorporation, its colonial history, the effect of the British connection on the country and the natives, and the outlook for the future. To these topics were added the conditions for colonisation, of trade and commerce, the state and local government, and the laws of the country, especi-

ally where there was any great difference from those of the United Kingdom.

The task has demonstrated the many and various interests contained in this vast subject, and has far exceeded the original limit. It is, however, hoped that the wider public to which the articles now appeal will be as sympathetic as the original audiences.

WM. SHIOWRING,
Hon. Sec. Institute Committee.

SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE,
FINSBURY, LONDON, E.C.

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