

Bermuda being the first of all British colonies to have a parliament (1620). Crown colony government had to be substituted in the nineteenth century, an attempt to facilitate independence through federation failed in the 1940s, and we arrive at the ministerial systems of today, obtaining in all the territories. Bermuda, the smallest of them all in area but by far the most populous, is almost, but—by its own choice—not quite, independent.

Before the author's "Historical Perspective" comes a "Regional Perspective", with an account of regional organisation and co-operation, including economic, political and defensive. A chapter on the authority to provide constitutions examines the reserve powers of "Her Majesty in Her Privy Council" to legislate under Act of Parliament as well as the prerogative (though it is perhaps a surprise to find that body, constitutionally always the appropriate UK legislating organ for the colonies, within limitations, described as the "executive"). This chapter contains also a useful account of the Common Courts in the West Indies. There follow chapters on the constitutions of the individual territories, on "Systems of Government", on "Decision Making" by Her Majesty's government and the governors (which includes an unusually full examination of the functioning of the governors), and on the protection of fundamental rights. The book concludes with some case studies illustrating the operation of the "system".

It is not possible in a short review to give an adequate account of the thoroughness and understanding displayed by the author in treating her subject. A preliminary table of background data shows the breadth of her approach. Perhaps Elizabeth Davies would consider extending her canvas still further, and make, region by region, similar studies—*mutatis mutandis* of course—of the countries which, unlike Bermuda, have chosen independence. She evidently has the "sail", and the finesse.

WILLIAM DALE

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