

is an office of Prime Minister; as Mr. Gladstone says, "Nowhere in the wide world does so great a substance cast so great a shadow; nowhere is there a man who has so much power with so little to show for it in the way of formal title or prerogative." Like the Cabinet, the Prime Minister is unknown to the common law. His office has no legal existence but his actual official position is usually that of First Lord of the Treasury.

The duty of the Cabinet is to discuss all questions of public policy, the nature of measures to be introduced into parliament, the relations with foreign countries and the well-nigh innumerable matters that devolve upon the government of the nation. Its deliberations are held in private and the results of these deliberations are made known in its executive, legislative, and administrative actions. In the words of Mr. Gladstone, "The Cabinet is the threefold hinge that connects together for action, the British Constitution of King or Queen, Lords and Commons."

From the English Cabinet system as a base have been evolved the Cabinet systems of Holland, France, Belgium, Roumania, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and the British Colonies. At the present time this system of government is recognized as the principal system in the world.

Among the Cabinet systems of the continent, that of Belgium most nearly resembles the British system, differing only in this that the responsibility of the ministers to the King is more real than in England and he may direct and dismiss them with more freedom than the British Sovereign may. In the selection of ministers the same course is followed as in England and also the custom of appointing ministers without portfolio is adhered. This custom in Belgium as well as in England is utilized as a means of introducing into the government eminent persons whose support and experience the government desires to avail itself of, yet who would hesitate to assume the burden of a Cabinet portfolio.

The Cabinet system in France differs widely from that of England owing no doubt to the fact that the form of government is different. In France neither law nor custom requires a member of parliament appointed to the Cabinet to resign his seat and seek reelection. The custom in vogue in England and Belgium of appointing members without portfolio is not followed and ministers are regarded as being responsible to the Chamber of Deputies only. According to law, the ministers should be appointed by the President but owing to the circumstances that exist in this country