

There was, in fact, no resolution of H.M. Government to make a complete separation of the Departments of the Colonial Office. What did occur was the division of the Colonial Office, under the single Secretary of State for the Colonies, into two "departments", one for the self-governing dominions and one for the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, the former to be under a separate Assistant Permanent Under-Secretary of State. (In form, this resembled the division, in Canada in 1909, of the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada into the Secretary of State's Department and the new Department of External Affairs, under separate Under-Secretaries).

No evidence has been found in Laurier's correspondence, to confirm Earl Grey's assertions that Laurier actually advocated either the partial bisection or a complete separation. He repeatedly said that the existing arrangements of the Colonial Office were amply satisfactory.

1909-10

Nevertheless, Earl Grey adhered to this impression of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's opinion. He himself ignited from that spark, and in 1909 began to carry the torch for Laurier. In his own enthusiasm for increasing Dominion prestige and for the autonomy which he foresaw was developing, he ardently endorsed the idea of a separate Dominions Office; he argued in its favour in his private letters to London, and he repeatedly urged Sir Wilfrid Laurier to submit it as an item of agenda for