

Pope's Discontents

The successful creation of a new Department of External Affairs, as a fulfilment of the desires expressed in his brief to the Royal Commissioners in 1907, should have filled Pope with satisfaction. But no architect or builder is fully satisfied with his completed edifice. He sees, and learns by seeing, its defects or its shortcomings.

Pope was proud of the achievement for which the Government, urged by Earl Grey, supported by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and prompted largely by Pope, was responsible.

But he was a conscientious and sensitive man; and he could not fail to feel a number of discontenting factors.

Premises

The sad story of the official premises for his new Department has been related. In fact the struggle, during the summer of 1909, to gain suitable space in the East Block for his Department was so disappointing that Pope went off disheartened to the "exile" of Trafalgar Building for the next five years. Throughout that period he bore a smouldering sense of frustration and disappointment. He was, as he complained, relegated to quarters "over a barber-shop", after several earlier makeshift moves. He was excluded from his proper base in the East Block, among his associates and colleagues. This was an obstruction to efficiency of operation. It caused inconvenience and loss of time, and interfered with close discussion. While nursing this grievance, he continued to seek space in the enlarged East Block; but this, even