

questions with which they were called upon to deal, I instituted, with the cordial approval of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the system obtaining at the Foreign Office, of confidentially printing and afterwards binding together such despatches as dealt with important diplomatic questions, for the convenience of the Ministers and of the Departments especially concerned. The system has worked well. I send herewith one of these volumes for inspection. Mr. Rowell will observe that a busy Minister, with the aid of this volume, could get a very fair idea of what has taken place in regard to the important question to which (it) relates, in the course of a few minutes. Under the old system I do not see how he could even do so, for the papers were nowhere in one place (except the Privy Council Office) and nowhere at all under one view. To get together all the despatches on any one important subject would be a difficult task at the date when this Department was instituted, and at the present day when the number of despatches has increased more than ten-fold since 1909, a well-nigh impossible one. Various Ministers, including Sir Robert Borden, have expressed to me their appreciation of the present system. Sir Wilfrid Laurier told me on several occasions his only regret was that the Department of External Affairs had not been started ten years earlier than it had been. (1)

This series of Confidential Prints was continued as time, staff and facilities permitted; but apparently was interrupted during the latter part of the First World War, because of the pressure of other duties and an inadequacy of senior staff. In the Department's Annual Reports, Pope referred to the extra war-time work which prevented the continuance of certain other work. In the Annual Report of the Department for 1914-15, signed by Pope on July 30, 1915, he wrote: "Canadian cooperation in the necessary military measures and the number of new questions of administration naturally arising from a state of war involved a very great increase in the correspondence passing through the department, though the consideration of other matters

(1) Borden Papers. O.C. 552. Public Archives.