

of the Empire and which are partly to be attributed to the failure of Canadian Governments and Departments in the past to give careful study to the organization and coordination of their representation in London.

The constitutional aspect of this question seems to me very important. The great bulk of our dealings with the United Kingdom Government are conducted by correspondence between the Governor General and the Colonial Secretary. Originally the Governor General filled in some sense the capacity of an ambassador of the British Government in addition to his capacity as the representative of the King; but so far at all events as written communications between the two Governments are concerned this function has become less and less prominent, and today communications may for practical purposes be said to pass directly and automatically between the two Governments. It is important to note that the whole tendency is to conduct correspondence on the most important subjects directly with the Colonial Secretary. All this, of course, must inevitably lessen the importance of the functions and status, and, therefore, of the influence of the High Commissioner.\*

Ordinarily the representative of one country at the capital of another is the medium for the dealings great and small between his country and another. In our case the High Commissioner is shown the greater part of the correspondence, but except rarely he is not brought into active participation in the matters dealt with. This analogy to other countries is not suggested here for the purpose of pressing it or of arguing for a change now; doubtless this is the sort of point that will be considered by the Special Constitutional Conference; it is simply cited here to indicate the actual condition which must be kept in mind in considering the High Commissioner's Office and the question whether in existing circumstances anything more satisfactory could be achieved.

Another factor which perhaps militates against the effectiveness of the Office is the practice of conducting the most important discussions through visits of members of the Government to London. This admirable practice represents the best possible method of negotiations between Governments, and of

\* "On several occasions in discussing official matters with British officials I have felt that they were under the impresssion that Dominion Governments did not place much reliance on their High Commissioners' Offices and were not prepared to use them in important dealings. Of course these officials did not say this sort of thing in so many words but I felt clearly that this was one of their working assumptions. The result is naturally to weaken the position of the High Commissioners."