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powerful Colony as Ceylon; such great progressive commercial communities as the Straits Settlements with the Federated Malay States; such ancient Colonies as Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados, which have been self-governing and in some respects are so still; all these would probably resent being lumped together with the new Protectorates, in what might be regarded as an inferior category.

I mention these points, though I refrain from dilating on the subject at the length which it may seem to deserve, and my principal object is to ask you, while going rather more fully into the subject, not to commit us in any way. The particular point has not, so far as I know, been before the present Government, but I certainly could not foretell approval from them for it, and so far as I am myself concerned, I should need a good deal of convincing that such a step, quite apart from questions of expense or of the multiplication of Offices, is anything but premature in the existing circumstances of the Empire. (1)

Earl Grey replied to this in a further letter to Crewe, dated April 8th:

With reference to the suggested divorce between the Crown Colonies and the Self-Governing Dominion sides of the Colonial Office - Sir Wilfrid Laurier confided to me on his return from London that in his opinion the policy of two necks to one bottle, under the roof of the Colonial Office, was not sufficient. He favoured two bottles - each bottle in a cellar of its own, with its separate butler. This suggestion did not proceed from any feeling of dissatisfaction with the action of the Colonial Office. It was the fruit of further consideration by him of the entire question.

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The housing of all the London Agencies of the S.G.D's under one roof, is neither a substitution for, nor necessarily even a tentative advance towards the creation of an Imperial Council, but simply an arrangement more conducive to unity of organization throughout the Empire.

If Sir Wilfrid were to think that the adoption of any such plan as we are discussing would lead to an Imperial Council, then good-bye, a long good-bye, to any hope of Sir Wilfrid moving in this direction. (2)

(1) Grey of Howith Collection. Vol.15 Folder 34. (Document 004152-56).

(2) Grey of Howith Collection. Vol.15. Folder 32. (Document 004181-3).