

Pope's Appointment

The creation of a new Department, or even sub-Department or dependency of an older and larger one, naturally implied the need of a permanent head. If there was not to be a separate Minister to head it, there was to be a separate Deputy Minister. The new statute provided that there should be a special Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, - a person who would administer the Department, on behalf of its official head, - a Minister who, as Secretary of State, was already burdened with his major Department and with his Cabinet and Parliamentary duties. All this was obvious and was expressed in the debate on the 1909 External Affairs Bill.

The essentiality of a Permanent Under-Secretary was stressed by both Mr. Aylesworth, Minister of Justice, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Mr. Aylesworth said: "You will have then a gentleman appointed to be the permanent Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. As time goes on he will become saturated, I hope, with the atmosphere or the spirit of that department. His usefulness will, of course, increase with time, and if we can secure, as I think we may very possibly be able to secure in the original appointee to that position if this measure becomes law, a gentleman of experience, expert, able in the discharge of just such duties, so much the better, because we shall have a good foundation laid whereupon to build." (1)

Sir Wilfrid went into even greater detail. He said:

(1) House of Commons Debates, March 4, 1909, p. 1995.