

the next Conference in 1911, and to take the lead in advocating this reform at the Conference. But to Earl Grey's enthusiasm, Laurier evidently remained very cool. The following correspondence of Earl Grey with Lord Crewe and with Sir Wilfrid Laurier is of great interest.

On March 11, 1909, he wrote to Crewe:

I have not yet been able to obtain from Sir Wilfrid Laurier any official reply to your despatch asking if Canada has any suggestions to offer for the consideration of the Imperial Conference of 1911.

I have pressed him more than once to give expression in the shape of a Minute of Council to his view that the business of H.M. Government with the Self-Governing Dominions should be conducted through a separate Department with a Roof and Minister of its own. If this idea of his were to be adopted by the next Conference and by H.M. Government, we should have a Colonial Minister for the Crown Colonies etc., and an Imperial Minister for the Self-Governing Dominions.

I have discussed with him the desirability, in the event of his suggestion being adopted, of throwing the London Offices of the High Commissioner of Canada into the building of the new Imperial Office. If you could house under one roof all the London establishment of the Self-Governing Dominions, the Imperial Minister would be in a most favourable position for enabling him to lead a movement towards the establishment of Unity of Organization in all the self-governing parts of the Empire. I doubt whether Sir Wilfrid will include this recommendation in his suggestions, as he at present considers it would come up as a natural corollary to his motion to make a more complete divorce between the Colonies and the Dominions than the present half-hearted separation. (1)

On March 25th he received a reply from Lord Crewe, part of which read:

The latter part of your letter has caused me some surprise, because it seems to indicate a remarkable change in the attitude of Sir Wilfrid Laurier as compared with that taken by him at the Conference in 1907. At that time, Deakin and Jameson,

(1) Grey of Howith Collection. Vol.15. Folder 32. (Document 004141).