

XIII.

From Sir Robert Thorburn, formerly Prime Minister, Newfoundland:—

From the foregoing remarks you will readily infer that I have arrived at much the same conclusions as yourself, as to the best means of establishing, on a sound basis, the much-to-be-desired federation of the Mother-country with the Colonial Empire, in the accomplishment of which an "Intelligence Department" seems to be of primary importance.

Group B.—Judges of Supreme and other Courts.

I.

From Chancellor the Honourable Sir J. A. Boyd, K.C.M.G., LL.D., President of the High Court of Justice of Ontario:—

I favour any method or movement which will bring or tend to bring the Mother-country and her outlying members into closer and more sympathetic relations. The scheme suggested by you of a system of telegraphic ocean cables whereby intercommunication may be had amongst all parts of the Empire, with the maximum of speed and the minimum of expense, recommends itself as furthering greatly this end of bringing all parts into closer touch with the centre, and the centre with all the parts. Besides this, let all other means be used to dispel the common ignorance of each other now so greatly prevailing, and to bring in mutual knowledge and confidence which will follow better acquaintanceship. Care being taken on all sides to avoid any revolutionary jar, the future appears full of promise for the steady growth of a closer and more intelligent union between England and all English-speaking colonies, which shall shape for itself that outward form best fitting and expressing the living political organism which it embodies.

II.

From the Honourable D. C. Fraser, Judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia:—

I agree fully with your proposals. Full information, with a free and continued opportunity of continuing it and increasing it every day, is not only the right step to take at first, but the only one that will lead to permanency. Information about each other—more direct intercourse—exchange of products, and higher views of what is best for the Empire will enable men who now can see no further than the small interests surrounding themselves to desire closer relations.

III.

From the Honourable Robert N. Hall, Judge of the Court of Queen's Bench of Quebec:—

The addresses of Sir Frederick Pollock and Mr. Drage, while extremely interesting and entitled to every attention, impressed us here, as they evidently did you, with an idea that the details of his scheme were a little premature.

I was pleased to learn that Sir Frederick Pollock had decided—influenced doubtless by your views—not to attempt at present to press his plan for an Imperial Council, but to secure some less formal organization to keep the Imperial authorities better informed as to colonial views and requirements. With this we can all concur, and sooner or later Sir Frederick's original scheme may appear to be both opportune and practicable.

IV.

From the Honourable D. L. Hanington, Judge of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick:—

I have always strongly favoured the idea of Imperial Confederation, and, while at my time of life I may not see it an accomplished fact, yet I firmly believe the trend of public opinion is strongly in that direction, and the fiscal, trade, and prudential condition of the peoples of the Empire are fast inducing active steps for its accomplishment.

It seems to me that the time has not yet arrived for the proposal of any definite form which the subject shall assume. Your suggestion, an Intelligence Department, is one that can at any time now be brought into active operation, and would, I think, be a step in the march forward to the grand result. The public mind, both at Home and in the colonies, will have to be educated to the necessity of a united Empire. Any means to that end is desirable. That it will be so educated by experience, and in fact by compulsion of events, I have no doubt.

V.

From the Honourable Justice Thomas Hodgins, Esq., K.C., Master-in-Ordinary, Supreme Court of Judicature of Ontario:—

I fear we have not sufficient information on the practical working details of the Imperial Intelligence Department to enable us to express any settled opinion as to its practicability and general usefulness. It was, you may remember, expected that the Canadian Associated Press would supply in a condensed form information about public and colonial affairs in Great Britain of special interest to Canadians, but their supply has been disappointing. So the proposal of some English newspapers to publish interesting items of news on Empire, colonial, and foreign affairs for colonial readers has been equally disappointing. Both give us what may be classed as trivialities. Neither seem to be controlled by broad-minded managers, who have an intelligent appreciation of the colonial desire for Home news, or Empire relations and policy. These experiences may not be reproduced in the proposed Imperial Intelligence Department, but they are warnings which claim consideration.