

and Indian Empire at the Paris Exhibition of 1878, led me, as President of the British Commission, to express a hope that an opportunity might soon occur by which Your Majesty's subjects in England would be enabled to witness the marvellous development which, under Your beneficent rule, their brethren and fellow subjects had attained throughout so many portions of the globe. It was, therefore, with the highest gratification that I accepted Your Majesty's gracious invitation to assume the Executive Presidency of this Commission, the appointment of which, by Your Majesty, has been the means of making this hope a reality. The invitations which we were empowered by Your Majesty to issue to the Colonial Governments and to the Government of India were forwarded towards the close of the year 1884, and from the answers received it at once became apparent that this undertaking had obtained warm and hearty sympathy throughout Your Majesty's Dominions. In Your Majesty's Dominion of Canada, throughout Your Australasian, African, West Indian, and Eastern Colonies, in Your Mediterranean possessions and elsewhere, grants were voted, Commissions formed, and Executive Commissioners appointed. That the work of preparation was undertaken with enthusiasm and attended with success is evident from the complete and varied collections which at present fill the buildings through which Your Majesty has just passed. The response received from the Government of India was also of the most cordial character. His Excellency the Viceroy caused, through the Revenue and Agricultural Department, instructions to be issued to every district of Your Majesty's Indian Empire for the collection of objects illustrative of the arts, manufactures, and resources of that great realm. These collections, which now adorn a large section of the Exhibition, have been supplemented by generous contributions from their Highnesses the Princes of India, by collections, the formation of which we ourselves have authorized, and by the contributions of private native exhibitors. We are desirous of bringing under Your Majesty's notice our deep appreciation of the hearty co-operation of the Colonial Governments in this Exhibition, and of taking this exceptional opportunity of stating how greatly we are indebted to the Commissions appointed by these Governments, and to the Executive Commissioners, on whom the superintendence of the entire work of installation has devolved. We further desire to record the valuable assistance which we have received from Your Majesty's Viceroy, from the Supreme Government of India, and from the various officials who have so ably and thoroughly carried out their instructions. Our grateful thanks are also due to the Colonial Governments, to the Government of India, to the Corporation of the City of London, to many City Companies, and to the firms and individuals who have contributed to the guarantee fund. The fact that the list of subscribers not only includes those whose interests are likely to be specially affected by the Exhibition, but also comprehends every class of the community, supplies a gratifying proof of the universal sympathy and interest which this undertaking has aroused. We venture to avail ourselves of this opportunity to convey to Your Majesty our dutiful and loyal acknowledgments of the interest which Your Majesty has been pleased to take in our labours, proved as it is by Your Majesty's presence here to-day; nor can I resist a reference to a similar ceremonial, presided over by Your Majesty but a few paces from this spot 35 years ago. On that memorable occasion, the first of its kind, the Prince Consort, my beloved and revered father, filled the position which I, following in his footsteps at however great a distance, now have the honour and gratification of occupying. Your Majesty alone can fully realize with what deep interest my beloved father would, had he been spared, have watched, as their originator, the development of Exhibitions both in this country and abroad; and with what especial pleasure he would have welcomed one having for its object the prosperity of Your Majesty's Empire, the interests of which he had so much at heart. In the Great Exhibition of 1851, Your Majesty's Colonial and Indian Possessions were indeed represented, but their importance was then but little realized, and their present greatness was at that time unforeseen. During the years that have elapsed since 1851 few greater changes have been wrought than the marvellous development of the outlying portions of Your Majesty's Empire. It is our heartfelt prayer that an undertaking intended to illustrate and to record this development may give a stimulus to the commercial interests and intercourse of all parts of Your Majesty's dominions; that it may be the means of augmenting that warm affection and brotherly sympathy which is reciprocated by all Your Majesty's subjects, and that it may still further deepen that steadfast loyalty which we, who dwell in the Mother Country, share with our kindred who have elsewhere so nobly done honour to her name."

His Royal Highness having delivered the Report to the Queen together with a Catalogue of the Articles exhibited and the Key of the Exhibition Building, Her Majesty read the following gracious Answer handed to Her by The Secretary of State for the Home Department (The Right Honourable Hugh Childers, M.P.):—

"I receive with the greatest satisfaction the Address which you have presented to Me on the opening of this Exhibition.

"I have observed with a warm and increasing interest the progress of your proceedings in the execution of the duties entrusted to you by the Royal Commission, and it affords me sincere gratification to witness the successful result of your judicious and unremitting exertions in the magnificent Exhibition which has been gathered together here to-day.

"I am deeply moved by your reference to the circumstances in which the ceremony of 1851 took place, and I heartily concur in the belief you have expressed that the Prince Consort, My beloved husband, would have witnessed with intense interest the development of His ideas, and would, I may add, have seen with pleasure Our son taking the lead in the movement of which he was the originator.

"I cordially concur with you in the prayer that this undertaking may be the means of imparting a stimulus to the commercial interests and intercourse of all parts of My dominions, by encouraging the arts of peace and industry, and by strengthening the bonds of union which now exist in every portion of My Empire."

The Lord Chamberlain then, by The Queen's command, declared "THE EXHIBITION OPEN."