

dutiful submission, the following message from the Government and people of the Union:—

“The gracious consent of His Majesty The King to perform the opening ceremony of South Africa House is very deeply appreciated by the Government of the Union of South Africa. And, while assuring His Majesty of the devotion of the people of this country to Him as their Sovereign, I desire to avail myself of the opportunity of expressing to Their Majesties The King and Queen our heartfelt gratitude for their gracious presence and participation on this occasion.”

It is a most happy circumstance that Your Majesty's Governor-General of the Union of South Africa and her Excellency the Countess of Clarendon, whose great devotion to duty and whose many qualities have earned them the admiration and affection of the people of South Africa, are present at this ceremony to-day. That three of Your Majesty's South African Ministers of State are so fortunately present on this occasion is also a matter of deep gratification.

It is a coincidence of much interest and significance, and of the most fortunate augury, that their presence as representatives of a country politically united for the first time in its strenuous history should synchronize with the throwing open of the doors of South Africa House to the world.

The new South Africa House may, therefore, in truth be described as the home in London of a united South African nation; the symbol of a happy and auspicious event in its people's history; and the visible reflection of the determination of Your Majesty's subjects in that Dominion to live in amity and complete accord.

These new offices of the Government of the Union of South Africa in London, happily to be declared open by Your Majesty to-day, are designed to discharge their many-sided functions in a worthy and appropriate manner and to maintain and expand those economic, social, and political contacts with Great Britain which have proved in the past of such great reciprocal benefit to both these member States of Your Majesty's Commonwealth.

It is a fitting tribute, therefore, to its architect, Sir Herbert Baker, that this edifice, on which he has lavished so much thought and affectionate enthusiasm, should stand, in its architectural design and in its historical conception, not only as a monument to South Africa's representation in London, but as a lasting expression of Sir Herbert Baker's own genius and of his deep and sympathetic knowledge of South Africa, its people and its history.

A full measure of praise is due to all those who assisted Sir Herbert Baker in his work and so loyally and conscientiously brought all their skill to the building of this house. I shall have the honour to present those gentlemen to Your Majesty.

And I may also be permitted to make full acknowledgement on behalf of my Government of the great generosity of a number of our public-spirited men and women and institutions who have donated many valuable treasures and works of art to the building.

In the name of the Government and people of South Africa, I have now the honour to request that Your Majesty may be graciously pleased to declare South Africa House open.

*To which Address His Majesty was pleased to return the following Gracious Answer:—*

It is with sincere pleasure that the Queen and I attend to-day a ceremony which marks the establishment of yet another of the great Dominion Headquarters at the heart of the Empire itself.

Our pleasure is the deeper since this fine building stands henceforth, as you Mr. High Commissioner tell us, for witness of a new epoch throughout all that vast sub-Continent which is now, indeed, the Union of South Africa. Most auspiciously, Lord Clarendon, your present Governor-General, Lord Selborne, Lord Buxton, Prince Arthur of Connaught and Lord Athlone are with us here to-day. Their combined associations with your country cover many years, and each of them has brought back from that association an abiding interest and affection. They could tell you that they are to be envied now: for it is not given to many to see with their own eyes the fulfilment of their cherished hopes.

We have already seen how the spirit and generosity of your people have beautified South Africa House with treasures drawn from your country's historical and truly strenuous past. Sir Herbert Baker's genius has housed these gifts in a building which renders the spirit of your land with a completeness that only insight and long devotion to South Africa could achieve. South Africans have good right to be proud of all that his work symbolizes of South Africa's force and future: and, above all, to be proud of the faith of the men who, in past years, planned and laboured and built for these ends.

History shows that all development comes out of the slow human processes of trial and error, of experiment and adjustment.

Only a few generations since, the handicaps of Time and Distance compelled the young Dominions to regard themselves as isolated. Great Britain, equally handicapped by the same limitations could not think of them otherwise. At the present time, men can reach every part of the Empire in a few days, or weeks at the most, instead of after weeks and months at the least. Their words reach to the ends of the earth in the same instant as they are spoken.

These things are now the commonplaces of administration. They mean that no Dominion—no section of the Empire—now stands alone. It can call directly upon the practical experience and the intimate unofficial advice of any of its peers to discuss and deal with problems as they arise.

The problems within the comity of our Empire are many and grave. Some of them have been solved by such far-seeing statesmanship as that of General Hertzog, your Prime Minister, who has set the seal of unity upon your Nation. Others are bound up with those issues whose urgency now draws the world to common council in London. To that great gathering South Africa has sent three of her Ministers, including my valued friend, the Statesman and South African Patriot—General Smuts—whose presence as Minister in Attendance I take for yet another happy omen.

It gives me great pleasure now to declare South Africa House open—a monument to concord and amity.