

SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

June 29, 1904

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT, LORD REAY

I do not propose on this occasion to deliver anything in the nature of a lengthy address, such as I had the pleasure of delivering to the Academy at our First Annual General Meeting, held on June 26 of last year. On this, the Second Annual General Meeting, I think it will suffice if I very briefly epitomize the chief events in the second year of our corporate existence.

The Session which is now drawing to a close has called forth our energies and tested our strength to a degree that might have caused anxiety even to an institution of longer standing. I need hardly say I allude to the duties which fell upon the Academy in connexion with the historic first meeting in London of the International Association of Academies. It is not for us to dwell upon the part played by the Academy, more especially towards the Section of Letters, which, had not the Academy been called into existence, would have fared as a stranger in a strange land, with none to show it hospitality, and no congenial welcome; though be it remembered that we, in common with our guests, owe a deep debt of gratitude to the distinguished directing Society, that great Academy of Natural Sciences, the Royal Society of London, to whose generosity we desire to pay our due tribute of thanks. Our guests have testified, with that real sincerity which is so encouraging, to the services rendered by the Academy, and to the manner in which it has discharged its duty, in the full consciousness of its responsibility, as the national and imperial representative in England of humane learning. I think, without any exaggeration, the Academy may claim that before its third anniversary it has justified its being.

It will, I know, be a source of gratification to our friends abroad to learn that we have this day, for the first time, put into force the power granted us by Charter and enrolled, as the first Corresponding Fellows of the Academy, representatives of the constituent Academies of the Association, thus fittingly commemorating the first meeting in London of the International Association of Academies.

The Report of the Section of Letters is at present being prepared by the Secretary, and will no doubt in due course be in your hands; but I may refer to the proposals initiated by the Academy. Sir Richard Jebb's proposition for a new Greek Thesaurus evoked much interest, and resulted in the appointment of an international Committee, from whose deliberations there can be no doubt much good will result. Professor Rhys Davids carried his resolution anent the new Pali Dictionary, and won the enthusiastic gratitude of the Section for his services in the matter.

It is to be hoped that the Academy will be able to do its duty in promoting some of the great international enterprises in which the Empire is eminently interested, as, for example, the projected Encyclopaedia of Islam, and the critical edition of the Mahābhārata, to mention merely two of the projects in hand.

The three years which will intervene between now and the next Meeting of the Association, to be held in Vienna, must be years of strenuous endeavour for us. Let us hope that by that date we shall be more fully equipped than we are now to meet our responsibilities. May I also express the hope that by that date that other great branch of the English-speaking Race—the great American people—may be represented among the Academies of the world by a constituent Academy in the Section of Letters. We send this message to our kinsfolk across the Ocean, and nothing would give greater satisfaction to the British Academy than to help to bring about the much-to-be-desired consummation.

To come now to the internal history of the Academy during the last twelve months. There have been Meetings of the Council, of the Sections, of Special Committees, and of the General Body, and much good work has been done in the various departments. Perhaps the most important Meeting was that held on December 9, to discuss the specific mode or modes by which it is proposed to attain the general objects of the Academy. The valuable statements submitted on that occasion, and the spirit which prevailed in the Meeting, strengthened the conviction that great work could be carried through by the Academy when adequately financed. A digest of the Statements submitted would, I venture to think, dispel any doubt which might exist in any one's mind as to the need of corporate endeavour in the department of Literary Science. A Special Meeting was held on February 12, being the Centenary of the Death of Emanuel Kant, on which occasion an Address was delivered by Dr. S. H. Hodgson (Fellow of the Academy). In accordance with the suggestion of Professor Campbell Fraser, it

was appropriately decided at that Meeting to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Death of Locke in October next, when Professor Campbell Fraser, whose *Biographia Philosophica* has brought him nearer to us than his more abstruse speculations, will contribute a Paper on some aspects of Locke's Philosophy. Papers have also been read by Dr. A. J. Evans (Fellow of the Academy) on 'The Pictographic and Linear Scripts of Minôan Crete and their relations'; by Dr. F. G. Kenyon (Fellow of the Academy) on 'The Evidence of Greek Papyri with regard to textual Criticism'; by Professor Rhys Davids (Fellow of the Academy) on 'Oriental Studies in England and Abroad'; and by Professor I. Gollancz (Secretary of the Academy) on 'Shakespeariana, 1598-1602.' These Papers will in due course appear in the first Volume of our *Proceedings* now printing at the Oxford Press. The Volume will be brought down to the end of the present year. The *Proceedings* will contain notices of those whose loss we have so much cause to deplore, those whom we have been privileged to number in our brotherhood. Though they have stayed but a little time with us, their memory is endeared to us all, and it is some comfort to know that they were included in our Roll of Honour. Since our last Annual Meeting we have lost from our band of workers the conscientious and sympathetic Historian, Mr. Lecky; the modest and ever-helpful Archaeologist, Dr. A. S. Murray; the versatile Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, Dr. George Salmon; and the great critic and richly endowed man of letters, Sir Leslie Stephen. May their example be an incentive for us all! As we look back and think of those we have lost, we are saddened by our sense of loss; but the future is full of bright promise; for the faith is with us that England will ever continue to give to the world truly gifted workers in all the branches of human knowledge; the long line of those who hand on the torch of Learning from generation to generation will not fail!

I need say no more to-day, lest I stand too long between you and our distinguished colleague, whose words I feel sure you are anxious to hear. I have much pleasure in calling on Sir Richard Jebb to address us on the subject of 'Bacchylides.'