THE FUTURE OF THE INDO-BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

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The future of the Indo-British commonwealth by Josiah C. Wedgwood Wedgwood

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JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD WEDGWOOD

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JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD, D.S.O., M.P.

WITH A PREFACE BY

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The old pre-war British Empire is gone—in the sense of colonies or subordinate nations clustering around one master-nation. The British Empire itself is developing into a real League of Nations, a group of partner-peoples. The old nationalism was regimentation. The New World will be a world of individualism controlled by Britain and America.

GENERAL J. C. SMUTS,

Prime Minister of South Africa.

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PREFACE

I have the opportunity of reading the manuscript of this little book. I was so impressed with its outlook that I have asked leave to write a few lines on the subject.

To the whole of the diagnosis of the present state of affairs throughout the British Empire, I do not profess to commit myself. I do not know enough, and I do not think anyone can know enough, to be certain of all the ground. What interests me is the breadth of outlook, and a certain quality in the estimate of results, amounting to brilliance.

The author sees, as others of us do, that the great war has precipitated what was already in solution. There is now a definite residuum which was not distinctly observable earlier. This is likely, not only to increase, but to be of increasing importance. For the rest, that

from which the precipitation has come is growing clearer.

For alarm, I doubt whether there is any real cause at all. The process in operation to-day is one which has been as unavoidable as it has been natural. It is only if we are narrow-minded and try to interfere artificially with what we cannot safely endeavour to arrest, that danger is likely to arise. The age is one of a tendency which has become both obvious and universal. But it is taking effect within the limits of human nature—human nature, which is everywhere in the main the same, and which history has shown to be in the end dominating for good when not interfered with.

What we have to do is to cultivate in ourselves and in our neighbours the larger outlook upon our national lines. We all need more knowledge, intellectual and spiritual. Both fall within the forms of knowledge, and without both the world will remain incomplete.