

upon his words and actions. He was intensely human, simple and natural in his tastes, gentle and kind in disposition. He liked best those things which contribute most to human happiness—the joys of home, the companionship of friends, the quiet of the countryside. Sandringham meant much more to him than Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle. In private and in public life he was highly honourable. He stood for rectitude. He had a profound sense of duty, and he revered truth and justice. Above all, he was “benignly vested with humility”; and he possessed that gift, which God alone can bestow, “a wise and an understanding heart.”

There is something which will appeal to all men in the incident narrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury to his congregation only a few evenings ago. His Grace told them of a conversation he had had with the late king at the time of the silver jubilee, after its celebrations were over. His Majesty said to the Archbishop, “I cannot understand it all”—referring to the overwhelming outburst of public tributes that he had received—“I cannot understand it all, for after all I am only a very ordinary sort of fellow.” There was something even more appealing, profoundly moving, indeed, in the words which we ourselves heard as we listened to the last of the king’s messages, the one given by His Majesty from Sandringham on Christmas day. Referring to the silver jubilee rejoicings and the personal link between himself and the people, which he said he valued more than all else, King George also said: “How can I fail to note in all the rejoicing, not merely respect for the throne, but the warm and generous praise for the man himself who, may God help him, has been placed upon it.”

It was the man thus revealed amid the trappings of royalty, and unspoiled by the pomp and pageantry of palaces and courts, which caused King George to be so deeply beloved. It was that which, in the words of His Excellency our new Governor General, will cause him to live in history as “a king who came closer than any other monarch to the hearts of his subjects.” I believe it may truly be said that there never was a better king.

Here may I pause to say that, while King George’s was a wonderful life, made great through real character, His Majesty was ever the first to acknowledge how much his power and influence for good was due to and enhanced by the beneficent influence of Her Majesty Queen Mary.

The life partnership of the queen meant everything to the late king. She was ever at his side in sickness and in health. Together

they shared, for forty-two years, the joys and sorrows of married life, and for over a quarter of a century, the great responsibilities of the throne. By untiring devotion to duty, and self-sacrificing lives, they ever sought to give expression to their love for the people and their desire to serve.

In her great sorrow, the queen may well be comforted by the knowledge of what, throughout his life and reign, her tender ministrations and loving companionship meant to the late king. There should be comfort, as well, in the thought that the love of the people for the king was inseparable from that of their love for the queen.

In her sorrow and loss, I think I may honestly say that there is felt, for Her Majesty Queen Mary, by every member of this house, a personal sympathy which it would be impossible to express in words.

Of the contributions made, to the period of his reign, by King George’s personality, and His Majesty’s personal endeavours, the most apparent was that towards the unity and good will of all parts of the great empire over which he reigned.

The contribution began with His Majesty’s early life at sea, and his subsequent visits to the outlying dominions and India. It was developed, after his accession to the throne, by the catholicity of His Majesty’s interests and his close identification with the varied activities of the people. It received heightened emphasis in his immediate contacts with members of the defence forces, at the time of the great war. It was a constant factor at all the great conferences in London.

This contribution found its widest and most intimate expression in the addresses King George made to his subjects at the time of His Majesty’s recovery from his severe illness six years ago, and as I have already indicated, in radio broadcasts delivered from time to time, and, more particularly on Christmas day, in the last two years. It was at these times that we all heard for ourselves His Majesty’s voice, and were made to feel the friendliness and tenderness of his nature. We gained a new consciousness of the nearness of our relationship to each other, because of our deeply cherished common relationship to him. We felt ourselves drawn together as members of one great family, as he sought to have us share with him the joys and sorrows of his personal life, and as he pictured to us his conception of empire in terms of the loyalties of home and the affection of family ties.

A second great contribution, a contribution closely allied to the one first mentioned, was that made towards the position and per-