

D 33054

Mr. Baldwin

Extract from Mr. King's Speech at
Empire Societies Dinner (The Secret of Empire Unity)
LONDON, ENGLAND, May 24, 1937.

Thanks to Mr. Baldwin

My next word must be one also of thanks—very deep and heartfelt thanks—to the Prime Minister for honouring this banquet with his presence, and for the inspiring address he has delivered in proposing the toast to the Commonwealth. The presence of the Prime Minister at any time would have made the occasion a memorable one; doubly significant in virtue of the theme to which he has addressed himself. To-night, however, Mr. Baldwin's presence, and his words, have had an impressiveness which are all their own. As we saw him rise, as we listened to what he said of the great experiment of Empire, as we watched him resume his seat, we were conscious of much more than his innate modesty and quiet dignity, the simple directness of his words, and the nobility of his thoughts—to all of these we have long become accustomed. We knew that we were witnessing one of these moments in a great career when all that has contributed to its greatness—character, courage, vision, wisdom, service, sacrifice—were finding expression in utterances which would become a part of our literature and of our history.

His Services to the State

We have just listened to what may be one of the last, if not the last, of the speeches which Mr. Baldwin may deliver before asking His Majesty to permit him to be relieved of the office of Prime Minister. Recalling this fact, it is difficult to refrain from speaking at length of Mr. Baldwin's services to the State in the high office he has held, with so true an appreciation of the problems of the people, and so great fidelity to the highest interests of the Crown. Fortunately, Mr. Baldwin's public career is so well known, not only in the United Kingdom, but throughout the Empire, that any attempt at appreciation is quite unnecessary. Notwithstanding, as the one who has been asked to reply to this toast, on behalf of the Dominions, I may, perhaps, be permitted to say to Mr. Baldwin, in public, what I was privileged to say to him personally, as we stood together at St. Stephen's Porch, and recalled the scene in Westminster Hall, where, only a few months ago, he addressed, in deeply moving sentences, the members of the Canadian Legion returning from their pilgrimage to Vimy. I spoke of