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MONUMENT OF IMPERIAL UNITY.

Plea on Behalf of Earl Grey's Scheme for The Dominion House in London by Dr. F. B. Vrooman Before Progress Club.

Need for More Efficient Imperial Life and Closer Unity is Vigorously Emphasised by Speaker.

The Empire is without a home. It is without monument or symbolism. It is without sign or emblem. There is no one thing upon the face of the earth symbolical of Imperial unity or Imperial dignity. We have neither song nor dream nor poem which a St. Christopher Wren might have wrought into some deathless form to stand in place of the great emptiness, and which, once and for all, and now and for all time, might utter the aspirations of the democratic Imperialism of the British race, and which might become the greatest imaginable factor in the creation and culture of the "Empire habit of mind."

This eloquent plea on behalf of Earl Grey's scheme of a "Dominion House" in London was made by Dr. F. B. VROOMAN yesterday before the Progress Club.

SENSE OF LOSS.

"It is impossible," he proceeded, "for any mere Londoner to experience the sense of loss, not to say of utter vacuity, which oppresses the average Imperial peripatetic when, for the first time (and, perhaps, for all times thereafter), he goes to his Imperial Mecca, as every right-minded, outlying Briton hopes to do at least once before he dies; and, failing this, some, I daresay, hope to do afterwards. How many have been the thousands and tens of thousands, and for how long a time have these denizens of the Outer Empire made these pilgrimages over land and sea, to the opaque atmospheres of their holy places, only with a sense of bitter disappointment, to wander helplessly and hopelessly looking for a shrine! We have gone to the Abbey, or St. Paul's, and have been subdued by the architectural emblems of a nation's aspirations—built in stone. We have gone to Westminster and have found the noble piles which stand as emblems of the gifts of Magna Charta, realised in representative government—that is to say, representative for the space of a few hundred miles from its storied walls. We have gone to the gray and smoky city and, with more or less awe, have looked upon the flat and smudgy building whose roof covers the boards of England, and we have been inclined to reverse the ancient saying of a good hook, and declare that 'where the heart is, there the treasure is also.' We have stood under the shaft of Trafalgar, and we have looked up to the mate figure of one whose voiceless message is that one battle on the sea won the Outer Empire for Britain, and that one ship

determined that battle, and that was the ship which held Nelson.

LORD GREY'S CONCEPTION.

"It is a significant oversight that before the brilliant conception of Lord Grey, no Briton had ever before dreamed the dream to enshrine in some form of imperishable beauty the adequate emblem of that larger dream of the British race which has found reality in the greatest political aggregation the world has ever seen.

"If the British Empire, then, is a reality, and if there is such a thing as Imperial unity, or if there ought to be, is it less than tragic that the world is confronted with the evidence of the Empire's loose-jointedness and of the inorganic juxtapositions of so many of its unrelated parts, and that there is no substantial and concrete evidence in the Imperial Capital of that organic unity which marks the direction and aim of our present development?

"Earl Grey describes the scheme for creating the building in Aldwych, and outlines his ideas of the form it should take.

"The Dominion House should rival in grandeur the Houses of Parliament. At one time, it appeared desirable that the building should culminate in a dome, for the dome is the architectural symbol of the Church and of the Empire. The idea of the dome of Empire resting firmly upon the foundation of the four self-governing Dominions was singularly attractive. Apart, however, from the inadvisability of erecting a new dome in competition with the noble dome of St. Paul's, a little reflection showed that, as the building should be devoted to practical purposes, and as a dome lends itself rather to contemplation than to economic use, the building might more advantageously culminate in a huge British central tower, like the Victoria tower at Westminster, which, 100 or 120 feet square, might rise from the centre of the roof.

"The roof might be a flat one, and it might be converted into a 2½ acres of roof garden, which, situated above the turmoil of the Strand, would become one of the greatest attractions of London. This central tower might be used for the purpose of an hotel, in which the official representatives of the Dominions might have preferential rights.

"Ambassadors are able to entertain and lodge Kings and Emperors at their official residence. The