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## MR. EDISON'S MESSAGE TO DOMINION

### 2YA

## Honours Edison



On Saturday evening last 2YA gave listeners a special "Edison night" on the occasion of the 81st birthday of Thomas Alva Edison. For the occasion a special personal message was received from the aged inventor to the people of New Zealand. This was spoken by him on to a gramophone record, this then being mailed to New Zealand and broadcast by 2YA to the New Zealand listeners. The evening's programme was made memorable by supporting speeches from Sir Frederick Chapman, ex-judge of the Supreme Court and president of the English Speaking Union, and Mr. W. L. Lowrie, American Consul-General, by his deputy for the occasion, Mr. F. W. Tufts. The items throughout were of American origin, and as a finale community singing was "put over" by a group of American residents who specially attended for the occasion. This original feature was very successful, the "amateurs" performing in quite good style. The evening as a whole was memorable and distinctive, and rebroadcasts by other stations were very satisfactory.

### A GENEROUS TRIBUTE.

SIR Frederick Chapman, president of the English Speaking Union, in his tribute said:—It is my privilege to address to you a tribute to Thomas Alva Edison. Not in all the world can you find another who so personifies persistent, unflagging effort and triumphant achievement as the great American Inventor whose eighty-first birthday is this evening being commemorated in New Zealand by the broadcasting of a programme specially arranged for the occasion. In this way does station 2YA, Wellington, New Zealand, do honour to one of the world's most brilliant and most useful citizens, at the same time rejoicing in the brotherhood of the English-speaking peoples which gives to the humblest New Zealander kinship with so great a genius. Not to inborn genius, but to hard work and hard thinking does the man himself attribute the wonderful discoveries with which he has blessed humanity; but, surely, behind his indomitable perseverance, his unquenchable thirst for knowledge, his unbending determination to secure the things he sought, his unparalleled record of successful achievement, there must have been the inspiration of genius coupled with an almost uncanny intuition. Think of it? Here is a man, rich beyond measure in the sum total of his amazing accomplishments, who, in his childhood days, is said to have been so unpromising as to be likely to prove a life-long care to his parents, yet who to-day stands out as the supreme embodiment of mental power and human utility. Happily he was blessed with a mother, loving, observing, wise—who knew and understood the son who was not as other boys, who sensed the dormant attributes of a strong personality, and who with loving care and able tuition guided him safely to the starting point of the distinguished career he was destined to carve out for himself. For him there has been no looking back. With tireless energy and dauntless courage he has marked the passing years with wondrous monuments of imperishable achievements, continually enlarging the world's indebtedness to his creative genius, and finding the joy of life not in the mere acquisition of that wealth which is the due reward of his successful labours, but in the facing and overcoming of seemingly insuperable difficulties. He has lived to conquer, and every one of his innumerable conquests has been a victory gained for the benefit of his fellow men. Could Roman Caesar or French Napoleon lay claim to so glorious a record?

### WHAT WE OWE TO HIM.

For what are we indebted to Thomas Alva Edison? Not in the compass of a brief address is it possible to enumerate in detail the almost countless items of our debt. Had he but given us the automatic telegraph system, the gramophone, and the incandescent lamp, 'twould indeed have been a surpassingly rich endowment, yet to these must be added the tens and the hundreds of mechanical, electrical and chemical inventions which are the creatures of his brain. Edison is eighty-one years of age, and still, with zeal and energy unimpaired, his daily work and pleasure lies in the ceaseless quest and practical development of new ideas. Time, as measured by the clock, is with him a matter of no moment. For him the hours of labour are limited neither by statute nor inclination. To him day and night are as one. His average of daily toil, even from early boyhood, is credited as sixteen hours, so that, as men measure the hours of work in these days it may be said of Edison that he has crowded the work of two long lives into one. May he be spared for yet more years to further enrich humanity and enjoy the well-earned fruits of his splendid labours.

### A COMMON KINSHIP.

May I, as president of the English Speaking Union, of Wellington, New Zealand, say something on my own part concerning that kinship to which brief reference has already been made. The institution which I represent this evening may be making but slow progress, but it is always making some. Statesmen may do much to unite in great common aims the nations and dominions which use our own language, but the real impulse towards united action must come from people like those here assembled and the institution in which they are interested. Community of language is a great bond even between peoples severed by political conditions. It is the platform on which we must lay out our plans for closer sympathetic union. Here we are gathered to do honour to the great name of a living American, but we unite in honouring his name irrespective of his particular allegiance because we recognise that his allegiance to humanity stands apart, though not above his citizenship.

### AMERICAN APPRECIATION.

IN the unavoidable absence of the American Consul-General, Mr. W. L. Lowrie, this tribute to Thomas A. Edison was read by Mr. F. W. Tufts, of

It is a far cry from my laboratory here in this Northern land, in its garb of ice and snow, to you in your land of sunshine and flowers under the Southern Cross, but science with its magic makes it possible for me to greet you with the spoken word, though thousands of miles apart. Surveying the progress of New Zealand in world affairs, it is difficult for me to realise that its establishment as a colony of the Mother country was practically coincident with the year of my birth. During my lifetime I have witnessed many changes, but nothing quite impresses me so much as the remarkable growth of New Zealand. From a handful of sturdy British emigrants who established the Colony in 1840, the population of the Dominion now totals nearly one and a half million. The scattered parts of the Colony have expanded into many thousands of acres teeming with agricultural activity—a remarkable monument to the grit and enterprise of those who have so rapidly developed the land. Your harbours filled with shipping carrying products to all parts of the world is another demonstration of growth. Not so long ago I saw some statistics issued by the United States Government at Washington revealing the amazing fact that New Zealand occupies the conspicuous position of enjoying the highest export trade per capita of any country in the entire world—a marvellous showing. This present day aspect of the country added to its agricultural and industrial life is a tribute to the dominant spirit of the people of the Dominion—all this practically in the span of a single lifetime. We here in the United States find much to admire in the growth of the simple school of the early pioneer days in Wellington, to the present splendid educational institutions with their realistic application of the democratic principle of unlimited opportunity for the youth of the land. Looking ahead into the future one feels secure in predicting a country alive with agricultural and industrial growth, its rivers giving an abundance of power development aiding its progress, and a people steadily and courageously fighting forward to make their land one of happiness and contentment. I am glad of this opportunity to greet you and to extend my cordial good wishes for the continued prosperity of your land and people.

Detroit, Mich., now resident in New Zealand:—

"The name of Thomas A. Edison is one which is spoken by every American citizen with a deep feeling of pride, honour, admiration and affectionate esteem. We are proud of his wonderful achievements, we honour him for the comfort, pleasure and happiness he has placed within reach of millions of people throughout the universe, we admire the wonderful spirit and ceaseless effort which has disclosed so many marvels of nature, and we hold him in affectionate esteem for his splendid character and for his fine patriotism as an American citizen.

"Genius has been described as 'an infinite capacity for taking pains,' but Mr. Edison's own definition is 'Two per cent. inspiration, and ninety-eight per cent. perspiration.' The story of his long life which we all trust may be continued for many years, is one of ceaseless hard work, extending often through sleepless nights until the result he sought has been accomplished. It is said that he never carries a watch, and that no clock is found in his laboratories. Hours mean nothing to this wonderful worker, and meals are frequently forgotten while he is following strange paths. His name is a household word throughout the universe, and he has become indeed an international character. A great many years ago, at a private exhibition of the phonograph in London, Mr. Gladstone, Prime Minister of England, spoke into the receiver these words addressed to Mr. Edison:

"I am profoundly indebted to you for not the entertainment only, but the instruction and marvels of one of the most remarkable evenings which I have been my privilege to enjoy. Your great country is leading the way in the important work of invention. Heartily do we wish it well, and to you, as one of its greatest celebrities, allow me to offer my hearty good wishes and earnest prayers that you may long live to witness its triumphs of all that appertains to the well-being of mankind."

"This greeting was given by Mr. Gladstone in the presence of a distinguished gathering, including some of the men who have achieved great things for the glory of the British Empire. Americans who are now enjoying the hospitality of your beautiful and prosperous country are most glad of this opportunity to join with the citizens of the Dominion in this tribute to Thomas A. Edison, whose life and works could be studied to advantage by everyone interested in worth-while achievements."