THE NEW LIBRARY AND MUSEUM; THE OPENING CEREMONY

The new library and museum was formally opened at noon on Thursday, December 18, by His Excellency the Governor Sir William Robinson GCMG in the presence of a large number of ladies and gentlemen. Among those who attended were Dr. Whittell (Chairman of the Board), Professor Lamb, M.A., F.R.S., Mr. Rowland Rees, M.P., Ven. Archdeacon Farr, LL.D., Mr. T. King, M.P., Sir W. Milne, Sir Henry Ayers, K.C.M.G., Mr. W. Everard, Hon. Dr. Campbell, Bishop Kennion, Major Jervois, Rev A.T. Boas, Archdeacon Marryat, Mr. A. Hardy, M.P., Revs. F. W. Cox, H. J. Freeland, F. Williams, M.A., Mr. A. Adamson, Hons. GW. Cotton, M.L.C., WID. Glyde, M.L.C., L. Glyde, Dr. Deland, Hon. R.D. Ross (Speaker of the House of Assembly), the Mayor of Adelaide Mr. W. Bundey, Mr. Krichauff, M.P and others.

His Excellency the Governor arrived shortly after noon, and was accompanied by Miss Robinson, Sir Henry Wrenfordstey, Hon. J. Forrest, CMG., and Mrs Forrest, and the staff.

He was received by the Chairman of the Board, who, on behalf of the Board, requested the Governor to declare the building open to the public.

His Excellency, in reply, said:

“Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen, I think I need not assure you that it gives me very great pleasure to attend here to-day at the invitation of the Board of Governors for the purpose of declaring this new building open for the use of the public. I think I am right in saying that the foundation stone of this structure was laid by my predecessor, Sir William Jervois, on 7 November 1879, and I feel justified in stating from the knowledge which I possess of Sir William Jervois, and of the deep interest he took in all matters appertaining to the welfare of South Australia, that if he could have been here to-day to witness the progress of the building in which he took such great interest, he would rejoice as heartily as we all do at the stage of progress at which the building has now arrived.

The cost of this Wing has been £37,427, the estimated cost having been £36,385, so that the actual expense has not largely exceeded the estimated expenditure. The fittings have cost £6,470, making a total expenditure of £43,897, so that for this sum we possess a building of which I think the colony may well feel proud. I understand that the total estimated cost of the pile of buildings, of which this forms the western wing, was originally set down at somewhere about £100,000, and from the photographs which I have seen of the design of the total structure, I can say that when South Australia is able to afford the money to complete the pile the colony will be in possession of a set of buildings which will be highly creditable to it.

I understand that this Library contains about 23,000 books, which are now available for the free use of the public The Museum contains articulated skeletons, birds and insects, minerals, shells, and a valuable ethnological collection, while there is attached to it an Art Gallery, in which are many beautiful pictures. These form a nucleus of a gallery, which I trust will be largely extended in time and be the beginning of a very fine national collection of pictures.
There can be no doubt that the contents of the building are of a highly educational character. Education does not cease with one's school days, On the contrary, when a youth leaves school he has a great deal of his education before him, and it is a good thing for the people of South Australia that they have a library and such an institution as this to come to where they can find, if necessary, appliances to enable them to perfect their education. The books that help one most, in this respect are those which make us think the most, and that thought leads me to the suggestion, which I feel sure the Board; have not overlooked; that while light literature must, of course, be provided for those who wish to read it, that books of a more serious type, and of a more decidedly educational character, should form the larger part of such a collection as we expect to find in a library of this character.

Books are said by an eminent writer to be lighthouses in the sea of time. Never was a truer word written than that, and I cannot doubt that in opening this Library now for the use of the public I am opening a building which will do a great deal to improve the education of the people of South Australia, and that every penny of the money expended, not only in the erection of this fine building, but in the purchase of useful and valuable books, will be an expenditure for the best interests of the colony.

I have one suggestion to make, and it is on a matter which the Board may have had before them. Having come from Melbourne lately, where I witnessed the benefits of the change made in the Public Library on account of its being lit with electricity, I think it would be well as soon as possible if efforts should be made for the lighting of this Library by the same means instead of by gas. The galleries in Melbourne, prior to their being lit by electricity, were practically useless. The heat engendered by the gas was so great that people could not sit there of an evening. On the last occasion of my visit the Governors of the institution were kind enough to take me around the galleries. They were then lit by electricity, and the largest number of people they could accommodate were not sufficient to vitiate ' the atmosphere, but, on the contrary, the galleries were for the first time really brought into practical use by means of the adoption of this method of lighting. I am justified, therefore, in the light of practical experience, in suggesting to the Board of this institution that they will do well to consider the results that have been achieved in Melbourne.

I have only, in conclusion, to assure you again that I have great pleasure in declaring this building open for the use of the public, and in thus completing the work commenced by my popular and distinguished predecessor, Sir William Jervois, a few years ago. I have now great pleasure in declaring the structure open for the use of the public. "(Hear, hear.)

The company then walked round the new building and inspected the various objects of interest contained in it.