

Introductory address
CECIL RHODES COMMEMORATION LECTURE : 29 JULY 1981

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIVERSITY IN GRAHAMSTOWN IN 1904 WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY A LARGE ENDOWMENT FROM THE TRUSTEES OF THE ESTATE OF CECIL JOHN RHODES. IN RECOGNITION OF OUR GRATITUDE, THE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTED THE RHODES COMMEMORATION LECTURE IN ORDER THAT HIS GENEROUS PROVISION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN. IT WAS LAID DOWN THAT THE LECTURE SHOULD BE DELIVERED BY A DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR ON A TOPIC OF NATIONAL INTEREST. ON PAST OCCASIONS WE HAVE HAD THE BENEFIT OF LECTURES OF A QUALITY THAT HAS ESTABLISHED THE REPUTATION OF THE SERIES.

TODAY WE HAVE AS OUR LECTURER A DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR IN PROFESSOR GEORGE SHEPPERSON. PROFESSOR SHEPPERSON HAS LECTURED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH FOR OVER 30 YEARS - ALMOST A WORKING LIFETIME FOR MOST PEOPLE - AND SINCE 1963 HE HAS HELD THE WILLIAM ROBERTSON CHAIR OF COMMONWEALTH AND AMERICAN HISTORY AT THAT UNIVERSITY. HE ALSO HELD APPOINTMENT AS DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS FROM 1974 TO 1977.

2

QUITE CLEARLY, PROFESSOR SHEPPERSON HAS A DEEP-ROOTED AFFECTION FOR EDINBURGH BUT IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN HE BE ACCUSED OF PAROCHIALISM. HIS INTERESTS EXTEND FAR BEYOND THE CITY'S LIMITS. HE IS A DEVOTED COLLECTOR OF DOCUMENTS RELATING, IN PARTICULAR, TO AFRICA AND AMERICA; HE HAS HELD VISITING PROFESSORSHIPS AND GIVEN LECTURES AT A NUMBER OF OVERSEAS UNIVERSITIES - ROOSEVELT AND CHICAGO IN 1959; MAKERERE COLLEGE IN UGANDA IN 1962; DALHOUSIE IN 1968 AND 1969; NORTHWESTERN IN 1966 AND 1972; AND THIS YEAR WE ARE VERY PLEASED TO HAVE HIM AT RHODES, NOT ONLY AS THE CECIL RHODES COMMEMORATION LECTURER, BUT ALSO AS A VISITING LECTURER IN OUR DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC HISTORY. WE LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING BOTH PROFESSOR SHEPPERSON AND HIS WIFE WITH US FOR SEVERAL WEEKS.

I SHALL NOT ATTEMPT TO LIST ALL PROFESSOR SHEPPERSON'S PUBLICATIONS: HE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO MANY LEARNED JOURNALS. HOWEVER, I SHOULD PERHAPS MENTION TWO OF HIS MOST PROMINENT WORKS:

'INDEPENDENT AFRICAN : JOHN CHILEMBWE', (THIS WAS PUBLISHED IN 1958 AND RAN TO A THIRD EDITION IN 1969); AND
'DAVID LIVINGSTONE AND THE ROVUMA', WHICH WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1964.

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT I NOW ASK PROFESSOR SHEPPERSON TO ADDRESS US. THE TITLE OF HIS LECTURE IS - 'CECIL JOHN RHODES : SOME BIOGRAPHICAL PROBLEMS'.

D S HENDERSON

29 JULY 1981