

MR. JAMES BRYCE.

There are few South Australians not acquainted, by repute at least, with the "greatest living Englishman," as one of his most recent eulogists has called him, who will be our guest to-day. As the panegyrist admits, the description is not likely to be challenged, except by stern and unbending Scotchmen, who may grudge their fellow-subjects south of the Tweed the right to claim Mr. James Bryce as an Englishman at all, seeing that he is a Scotchman by birth and early training. Mr. Bryce might himself prefer to be known rather as what he really is, a citizen of the Empire, and perhaps be still better pleased if to this designation were added that of an ardent humanitarian. All this he is and more. A brilliant litterateur and historian, he is also an eminent statesman, and as the accredited representative of his country in the capital of one of the chief nations of the world at a peculiar crisis in its political fortunes, he has astonished even his warmest admirers by his tactfulness and skill as a diplomatist. Absolutely devoid of self-seeking and ostentation, and keenly in sympathy with every phase of the democratic movement, it is easy to perceive why Mr. Bryce has answered to the political ideal of the American people, among whom his later years have been spent, as few have done or could do. Nowhere does indisputable greatness find keener admiration than with the democracy of the Western Hemisphere, perhaps because it is a democracy. Need it be added that the qualities which have made Mr. Bryce popular with our trans-Pacific kinsfolk are precisely those which have ensured him a warm welcome in these younger lands, with which, fulfilling a long-cherished desire, he is using a well-earned holiday to acquaint himself personally?

Mr. Bryce is a litterateur and a publicist of whom it is impossible to speak except with respect. His character, consistency, and learning add weight to his every word. Coming from the literary man's study into the tempestuous atmosphere of the House of Commons, he soon rose to be one of the most effective debaters in the whole assembly. Though belonging to the school of Gladstone, Bright, and Morley, he brought to the Liberal Party in the way of original ideas far more than he ever got from them. He was a Home Ruler before Gladstone, whose earlier coercion policy he actually opposed. As shown by his opposition to the Boer war, he has never been afraid of holding strongly and avowing emphatically views that were unpopular. Nor was he ever cowed by the accusation of being, like Morley, something of a doctrinaire. He glories in being what Napoleon called an ideologue; but he has also lived the "strenuous life," the life of action, and always with a distinct perception of the ends he had in view. It was not the glamor of office that lured him to the Treasury benches, but a belief that he could utilise in the administrative field the knowledge he had acquired as a student of past ages and of many countries. The lesson he has derived from history, ancient and modern, is that it is no more possible for communities than for individuals to live by bread alone; that "without a vision the nation perisheth." Always his appeal has been to the public conscience. As much to the nation as to the individual "the wages of sin is death," has been the first article of his political creed since he addressed himself in early life to the task of describing with an insight rare in an historian the downfall of the Holy Roman Empire. Humanitarian as Mr. Bryce has been, he has never been the victim of party passion or of his own predilections. In his famous essay he readily recognises that while the mediaeval imperialism had, even in its own time, grave objections, and that while there brooded over all the shadow of a despotism, "it was a despotism not of the sword, but of law; a despotism not chilling and blighting, but one which, in Germany at

least, looked with favor on municipal freedom, and everywhere did its best for learning, for religion, for intelligence; a despotism not hereditary, but one which constantly maintained in theory the principle that he should rule who was the fittest." But not less emphatically does Mr. Bryce point the moral of the failure of the attempt of Continental States to revive the Holy Roman Empire after its death in 1806, when it was killed by the rise of the spirit Bonaparte at first represented and then betrayed. A despotism, however well intentioned, can no more exist in a world of changed ideas than could an iceberg in the Gulf Stream.

Our visitor then is first and foremost an apostle of Democracy, and, unlike some who render it the mere homage of lip service, he believes that it is a form of government that will endure, surviving the drawbacks of which he is too able a thinker not to be conscious, and too much its friend not to indicate whenever occasion offers. His "American Commonwealth" is a masterpiece of research and comprehensive insight. But it is also a model of candid criticism. It is a tribute to the American people that they should have welcomed and made much of a British Ambassador who did not hesitate to recount their failings as well as their virtues. But inability to recognise and appreciate intellectual eminence was never among those failings, and the American people saw very clearly that even his strictures on the corruption rampant in their high places sprang from his very sympathy with their form of government and belief in its capacity to slough off all excesses. Like Swinburne, Mr. Bryce could say of the Democracy, "Me, not thy winds and storms nor thine own aim dismay." His presence in Washington has changed for the better the relations between the Anglo-Saxon peoples, and it is not his fault that war between them has not yet been rendered by an arbitration treaty of adequate scope theoretically, as it is now practically, impossible. It was universally thought a bold stroke on the part of the late Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman—though it has long been a regular practice in America—to go outside the narrow caste of diplomacy for a representative of Great Britain at Washington, but all are agreed that it has been justified a thousandfold by Mr. Bryce's appointment. As stated lately by Sir Edward Grey, in reply to an unjustifiable charge that the British Ambassador had exerted himself unduly in the matter of the Canadian reciprocity treaty, Mr. Bryce has added the "crowning success and distinction of being a great ambassador to a career already successful and distinguished." This is a great tribute to have been paid to any man during his lifetime, but it will be endorsed by all—and they are many—on this side of the world who have followed with admiration Mr. Bryce's career, and have read his written and spoken appeals to the Anglo-Saxon people to join in a closer friendship and, perhaps, alliance, whose advantages would not be confined to the contracting parties, but would be enjoyed by the whole world. Macaulay, describing the effects of Frederick the Great's policy, shows how they were felt in the most unlikely spots, and similarly the remotest peoples may live to bless the day of an Anglo-Saxon alliance, which the labors of Mr. Bryce have brought sensibly nearer.

The Right Hon. James Bryce, British Ambassador at Washington, will arrive in Adelaide from Melbourne this morning. He is one of the great men of the present age, and has achieved fame as a scholar, diplomat, statesman, orator, lawyer, and man of letters. He has also won distinction in science, classics, history, and jurisprudence. Prior to going to Washington he rendered great service in the House of Commons and the Cabinet. He is a member of the Privy Council, a Fellow of the Royal Society, Doctor of Civil Law, and for 23 years professor of civil law at Oxford University, and has had honorary degrees conferred upon him by universities in England, Scotland, and other countries. He also holds the Order of



Mr. Bryce.

Merit. The Mayor of Adelaide (Mr. Javington Bonython) with a number of citizens, will tender him a civic welcome in the council chamber at 11.30 a.m. to-day. On Friday in the Elder Hall, at 8 p.m., a special congregation will be held, when Mr. Bryce will be admitted *ad eundem gradum* to the degree of Doctor of Laws. There will be several other candidates. The degree of Bachelor of Arts will be conferred in absentia on the Rev. Absalom Deans, who finished his course in Western Australia. The degree of Bachelor of Laws will be conferred on Mr. Edgar Robinson, also in absentia for the same reason. The honors degree of Bachelor of Science will be conferred on Mr. G. E. M. Jauncey, and possibly other degrees will be conferred. His Excellency the Governor will be present. After the conferring of degrees an address will be delivered by Mr. Bryce. The distinguished visitor will be the guest of his Excellency the Governor during his stay in Adelaide.