

into the meaning of the Gospel, and its bearings on human duty and destiny, did not remain stationary. How they attained to a more catholic view of the relation of the Gentiles to the Gospel and to the Church must form the subject of a special discussion. Apart from this subject, where their progressive enlightenment is so conspicuous a fact, there can be no doubt that from day to day they grew in knowledge. If we were in possession of earlier writings from the pen of the Apostle John, we might expect that marked differences would appear between them and the Gospel and the First Epistle, which were written when "the Son of Thunder" had ripened into the octogenarian apostle of love. The Apocalypse, so far as the style of thought is concerned, whatever judgment may be formed on other grounds, may quite conceivably have been written two or three decades prior to the date of the Gospel

by the same author. When the earliest writings of Paul, the Epistles to the Thessalonians, are compared with his latest writings — with the Pastoral Epistles and the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians — we not only find perceptible modifications of tone, but, in the later compositions, we find also views on the scope of the Gospel — what may be termed the universal or cosmical relations of the work of redemption — such as do not appear in his first productions. As a minor peculiarity, it may be mentioned that when he wrote to the Thessalonians he seems to have expected to be alive when the Lord should come in his Second Advent, while in his latest epistles this hope or expectation has passed out of his mind. As the Gospel and the First Epistle of John are the latest of the Apostolic writings, it is permissible to regard them as the fullest and ripest statement of the theologic import of the Gospel.

*George P. Fisher.*

## PROFESSOR JAMES BRYCE, M. P.,

AUTHOR OF "THE AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH."



BY common consent, no Englishman of the present generation knows America so well, or has formed so just and far-seeing an impression of her institutions, as James Bryce. His personal acquaintance with the United States is limited, notwithstanding, to three holiday visits paid to this country in the intervals of professional activity. Mr. Bryce has many friends on both sides of the Atlantic, but, politician and author as he is, he shrinks with unusual timidity from any personal approach of the interviewer. His private life is little known because he has declined to permit it to be observed; and in giving some small sketch of his career we have been obliged to content ourselves with barren materials. The author of "The Holy Roman Empire" and "The American Commonwealth" is too modest to allow even his friends to persuade him that they wish to know something of his inner life or of the development of his intellectual powers. If this sketch of his career is slight, let it be appreciated that Mr. Bryce has not merely contributed nothing to make it fuller, but has done all that lay in his power to persuade us that it was altogether needless and superfluous.

James Bryce was born at Belfast, in the north of Ireland, of a Scottish father and an Ulster

mother, on the 10th of May, 1838. His father being an LL. D. of Glasgow, it was natural that he should receive his early education, first at the high school and then at the university of that city. He early showed a vigorous understanding and a rare power of application, gained a scholarship at Trinity College, Oxford, and began that connection with the latter university which has lasted now for nearly thirty years. Mr. Bryce, who is many things besides, is primarily and characteristically an Oxford don. He carries about with him a flavor of scholastic life into all his practical concerns, and is now perhaps the most complete specimen of the English university politician. He took his bachelor's degree, and was elected a Fellow of Oriel, the college which Newman and the Tractarian movement had long before made famous, in 1862. He now settled down, at the age of twenty-four, into an Oxford don, whose peculiar existence entails a feverish round of lectures and committees, board meetings and council meetings for eight months of the year, and leaves the remaining four open for extensive travel. Mr. Bryce, whose physique has always been sturdy and active, early became a mountaineer, and some of the more remarkable of his adventures have found their way into chronicle.

His literary life opened in 1864, when he published a prize essay on "The Holy Roman Empire." This was a little volume of a kind

such as is seldom heard of outside the walls of the university. Such essays are commonly found to be, if erudite, yet second-hand, and if elegant, yet juvenile and unimpressive. The volume of the young Fellow of Oriel was an exception. Rarely has the earliest production of a writer in prose attracted or deserved so much notice. It was exceedingly novel in theme; it was sound in matter and brilliant in style; and what was intended for a board of examiners found its welcome in the general world of readers. The object of "The Holy Roman Empire" was to describe that institution or system from a new point of view, as the marvelous offspring "of a body of beliefs and traditions which has almost wholly passed away from the world." The book is, nevertheless, rather a narrative than a dissertation, and with what may be called the theory of the empire is combined an outline of the political history of Germany and of some phases of medieval Italy. This treatise enjoyed a genuine and even a sustained success, and to the fourth edition, which appeared in 1873, the author made great additions, with a supplementary chapter on Prussia. "The Holy Roman Empire" has been translated into German and Italian; the latter version was made by the distinguished historian, Count Ugo Balzani.

The eminent success of this first effort led many of the young scholar's associates to believe that history would be the ultimate aim of his ambition. Yet the readers of "The Holy Roman Empire" might have perceived that its author approached history mainly from the point of view of a jurist. In fact, his design was to make himself a proficient in the practical and theoretical study of the law, and to this end for the next two years he worked hard, both at Oxford and at Lincoln's Inn in London. At the unusually early age of thirty-four his ambition was rewarded by a chair in his own university—that of Civil Law. The Regius Professorship of Civil Law at Oxford is one of the oldest in Europe, dating from 1546, and it is this ancient and honorable office which Mr. Bryce has now held for nearly twenty years. His first act on receiving the appointment from the Crown was to start for his earliest visit (1870) to the United States. For the next ten years the career of Bryce was that of an active and laborious university professor, and he was visible to the world at large only on occasion of his adventurous vacation rambles, of which he gave several public accounts. He became an active member of the Alpine Club; in 1871 he climbed the Schreckhorn, as in 1867 he had scaled the Maladetta. One year he visited Spain; on another occasion he ran through Transylvania and Poland; in 1873 he published, in the "Cornhill Magazine," his

"Impressions of Iceland," an article which attracted an unusual amount of attention. By far the most interesting and unique of his traveling experiences, however, is still his tour in western Asia, in 1876.

In company with a relative, Mr. Bryce proceeded to Russia in the summer of that year, visited the fair of Nizhni Novgorod, and towards the end of August sailed down the Volga towards the mysterious East. It was not a happy moment for an Englishman to choose for a visit to Russia. The Russian natives were greatly exasperated against the English, whom they looked upon as abettors and accomplices of the Turk; the Bulgarian massacres of May not having yet produced the English indignation meetings of September. Nevertheless, the travelers were, on the whole, treated generously and kindly. They passed through to the extreme south of the country, crossed the Caucasus, and entered Transcaucasia under the very shadow of the highest mountain of Europe, Mount Kazbek. From the city of Tiflis they proceeded, in September, through Armenia to the town of Erivan, and from that point performed a feat in alpine traveling which was really remarkable and at that time unprecedented in local annals—the ascent of Mount Ararat. It had even become almost an article of faith with the Armenian Church that the silver crest of this exquisite mountain was inaccessible. Mr. Bryce set out to conquer these virginal snows on the 11th of September, 1876, under the escort of six Cossack troopers, and beneath such tropic heat as he had never before endured. One by one his Slavonic attendants, as well as his Kurdish guides, forsook him, and at a height of 13,600 feet the English mountaineer found himself ascending alone. He accomplished the ascent, of which he has given an account which is the most eloquent and most picturesque piece of prose in his writings. Two days afterwards an Armenian gentleman presented him to the Archimandrite of Etchmiadzin, and said, "This Englishman says he has ascended to the top of Massis" [Ararat]. The venerable man smiled sweetly. "No!" he replied, "that cannot be. No one has ever been there. It is impossible." From Erivan the travelers returned to Tiflis, turned east to the Black Sea at Poti, and took steamer along the northern coast of Asia Minor to Constantinople. Mr. Bryce's account of this interesting journey was delayed by a domestic sorrow—the death, as he put it, of "one whose companion he had been in mountain expeditions from childhood, and to whom he owes whatever taste he possesses for geographical observation and for the beauties of nature." Late in 1877 was published the volume called "Transcaucasia and Ararat," which combined notes of the journey with

copious topographical observations and political reflections.

In 1880 a change came over Professor Bryce's manner of life. He had long taken a warm and liberal interest in public affairs, and he now became a practical politician. He entered the House of Commons as member for the Tower Hamlets, a constituency which he continued to represent for nearly five years and which he has been able to address in German. In 1885 he was elected for the Scotch borough of South Aberdeen, and was reelected, unopposed, to serve in the present Parliament. During Mr. Gladstone's last brief period of power Mr. Bryce held office as Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. But before this he had given his close attention to the study of American institutions. In 1881 he made a second and in 1883 a third visit to the United States. In 1884 he began to write that compendium of well-arranged information which, under the title of "The American Commonwealth," was published in 1889. In 1888-89 Mr. Bryce visited India, his book being issued during his absence. An account of his activity as a professional politician would hardly be in its right place in so slight a sketch as the present. But it is only right to give him special credit for his activity in bringing before Parliament the importance of the question of

preserving common rights, in which he has done eminent service. He is prominent, also, as a defender of the rights of literary property, and as a parliamentary representative of that important institution the Incorporated Society of Authors. He was in the chair at the dinner given by that body to the authors of America in 1888, when Mr. James Russell Lowell made one of his finest speeches. In politics Mr. Bryce is a Liberal of the advanced, but not revolutionary section. He has kept very closely in touch with Mr. Gladstone, and is one of those Liberal politicians, now becoming a small body, who have never swerved to the right or to the left in their personal allegiance to the leader. He has even accepted the principle of home rule for Ireland. At various points, but particularly in his convictions in regard to the Eastern question, Mr. Gladstone has found, perhaps, no follower who has given the subject so much study and yet whose judgment is so identical with his own as Mr. Bryce. Historian, jurist, politician, traveler, university reformer, there can be no question but that James Bryce has dissipated his extraordinary talents over too many widely divergent provinces of mental action to attain the credit he might have conquered in any one, but in his versatility—and he is sound even in versatility—he is one of the most "all-round" men of his generation.

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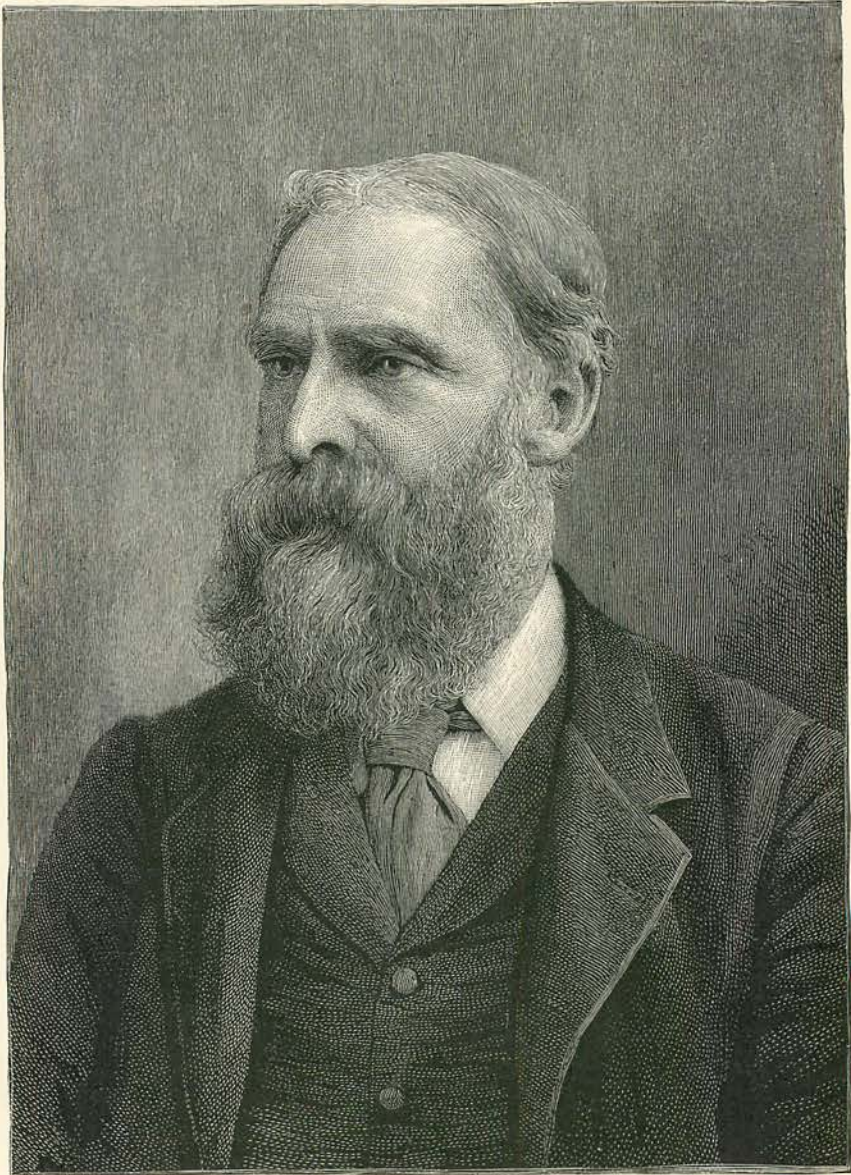
## TOPICS OF THE TIME.

### Ballot Reform Practically Accomplished.

THE complete success of the new Massachusetts ballot act, at its first trial in the election of last November, made it certain that what had previously been known as the Australian system was destined within a few years to become the American system. As Mr. Henry George, who witnessed the working of the new law in Boston, said, after the election was over, "The new system more than fulfilled every anticipation of its friends, and falsified every prediction of its enemies." This was a terse statement of what had happened. The first trial had swept away at a single stroke every argument which had been raised against the Australian method. It had previously been said by the opponents of it, whenever they were told that it had been in successful operation in Australia for thirty years, in England for eighteen years, and in Canada for sixteen years, that the experience of those countries furnished no evidence that the system was adapted to American needs; that the multiplicity of candidates at our elections would lead to such long and complicated ballots that the voter would take so much time in marking them, and would get so confused by the number of names, that either the election would be defeated, or large numbers of voters would be disfranchised.

This argument of "complications" and "confusion" was advanced persistently and in countless forms, but at bottom it was always the same; the system was too involved, too "theoretical" and "visionary" for practical American needs.

When it succeeded in municipal elections in Louisville, Kentucky, and in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the opponents of it said that those were no tests, since only local candidates were chosen. When in October last it had its first trial in the first election which Montana held as a State, and succeeded again, these opponents said that this could not be regarded as a test, because Montana was a sparsely settled community, and there was no need of haste in depositing or counting the votes. When at the same time it was tried in the chief cities of Tennessee, where there was a large illiterate colored vote, and again succeeded perfectly, the old argument of a simple municipal ticket was advanced as sufficient to meet the case. When a modified form of the system was tried in the same month in Connecticut at a State election, and like all previous trials proved successful, it was said that the reason was that this was not the "complicated" Australian plan, but a simple method which had been advocated by the opponents of the Australian plan as more practicable. They overlooked the fact that more defects were discovered in the working of this "simple" law than had



ENGRAVED BY T. JOHNSON.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY J. D. HILTON.

James was true  
J. Bruce