

Register August 15<sup>th</sup> 1905

## THE MAKING OF CHARACTER.

ELOQUENT LECTURE BY PROFESSOR JONES.

The lecture of Professor Henry Jones at the University of Adelaide on Friday night was a success immediately the distinguished visitor entered the room. A glance at the fine, intellectual face is enough. There are power, unwavering earnestness, courage in it, commanding admiration for the profound thinker. It is one of those typically strong faces independent of oral evidence. The freshness and colour seem to contradict the silvering hair, but this latter may be accidental. In any case, it is irrelevant, for Professor Jones has that magnificent mental equipment which does not reckon with age. The head has nobility, and is well poised; the eye piercing and direct. The whole personality, if one may judge it by the lecturer, is genial and dignified; culture and a disciplined vivacity are delightfully blended. His conviction is impressive. The oratory has the euphony and vigour, the inspiring fire of true Welsh emphasis. All the wealth of gesture is there—the tilt of the head, the palm of the hand brought down sharply on the desk, and the stamp of the foot when a point demands special attention from his hearers. Professor Jones does not play with words. He is too serious, too earnest, to indulge in verbal fireworks. The object is to stimulate the mental faculties of the audience and make them think. And so he keeps one busy reasoning and understanding, feeling the truth of it all the while he talks.

### —The Great Brotherhood of Letters.—

Every seat in the Prince of Wales Theatre was occupied. The gathering was thoroughly representative, and Professor Jones had a cordial reception. The Chancellor of the University (Sir Samuel Way, Bart.), who presided, was supported by the Treasurer (Hon. A. H. Peake) and the professors of the University. Sir Samuel Way said they were glad and proud to have Professor Jones as the lecturer on that occasion. (Applause.) He came as an ethical teacher, and also brought with him the genius and oratory of Wales, the learning of Scotland. (Applause.) Professor Jones, too, brought them in direct contact with the great brotherhood of letters on the other side of the world. He was sorry they had been unable to have the Elder Hall. That building was perfect for academical ceremonial, but lacked the acoustic virtues necessary for a lecture. A committee of professors had been asked to take the matter into consideration, and he hoped when Professor Jones visited Adelaide again they would have a large building. (Applause.)

### —The Primary Business of Statesmen.—

Printed words cannot convey any of the charm of Professor Jones's splendid effort. Divorced from the personality, the thinker behind them, they naturally lose much of their force and picturesqueness. Referring to his study of moral philosophy, the professor said, after all, he had not gleaned much from the long harvesting except the conviction of the extraordinary importance of the subject. The formation of character was the primary business of practical statesmen. (Applause.) National destiny lay in national character. If they deprived him of the conviction that character built up a nation and that the absence of it destroyed a nation, it would be living without any political principle at all. (Applause.) They could not look in any direction without finding out the paramount importance of character, and therefore, as a corollary the paramount importance of conditions under which it could be made.

### —The Patriotism of Australians.—

Professor Jones has no doubt about the loyalty of Australians; but he has something to say about the secret of national greatness. "May I be permitted to say that, as a people, you are proud of your country?" I think you are quite genuinely interested in its welfare, even although some show their loyalty in odd fashion by getting as much out of it as they can. (Laughter.) You are a people, so far as I can make out, with all the virtues of youth. I say nothing more. (Laughter.) You are vigorous, aspiring, apt, resolute, and, on the whole, a people anxious about the future. Your range of possibilities is yet defined. No one can foretell with

certainly the extent of the future attainments. Since I have been in Australia I have heard it said in public by a responsible person that the commerce and industries of the older world are to be transferred south of the equator, and that Sydney is to take the place of London. (Laughter.) I hope the mother country, with her many children hanging to her skirts, will be like most mothers—glad if her sons surpass their parents. (Laughter and applause.) You will have a pretty long job getting the better of your ancestors."

### —Seizing the Opportunity.—

The final conditions of national prosperity consisted of the magnitude of the people's opportunity and the magnitude of the power of that people to make use of the opportunity. That opportunity and that power must meet. "There is a plenitude of natural resources of all kinds in your land, sufficient, I should say, to satisfy your highest desires." Now, the opportunities were here in the time of our predecessors just as much as now—the gold was in the mountains and the soil quite as fertile. Yet they lived naked almost, in all senses, to the elements, and reaped not. There was something in the structure of the British people which made them invaders and possessors. It was essentially character. And that was acknowledged in our political conduct. Even with an extensive country, there was an objection to the incoming of coloured races, not because of the colour, he thought, for brown skin had its beauty, but because they distrusted the kind of character which a mixture of races was likely to produce. (Applause.)

### —How to Produce Character.—

The question of how to produce character was as little considered scientifically, deliberately, and carefully as any they could name. He wanted to see men and women devoting themselves primarily to the forming of noble character, and not leaving it to mere rule or accident. Was it not remarkable that they found that force so little investigated and so little understood, while the last century was unique from the point of view of understanding the forces of the physical world. Society was the most intricate piece of machinery in the world, and yet did they not neglect it? Here there were 380,000 parts, every one with individual wishes and desires, with a will, with freedom. There was a bit of machinery! They acknowledged the great truths about the priority of human character, but what more than that? Very little.

### —Reading the Signs.—

This was not as it ought to be, nor, indeed, as it could be. There were signs that the science of man was grappling with the problem. The time was coming when the fight between nations would be pressed upwards to high platforms. It was becoming more and more a battle of intelligences. Commerce and industry would belong more to the nation that knew, and that meant the educating, the mental and moral uplifting of men. He was afraid that too many liked to enjoy the benefits of technical education without the trouble of educating the man. (Laughter.) He wanted man to educate himself for his own sake. (Applause.) As far as he had learned about the Universities might he say, with all courage, that their main business should be to prosecute research and to create enquirers. (Applause.) In the elementary, and even secondary or intermediate schools, it was right that the people should be receptive and accept the doctrines of the teachers. It would hardly do for a boy in a grammar school to have original views—(laughter)—as to the declension of nouns and the conjugation of verbs. (Laughter.) The main business of a technical college was to apply the knowledge. He had often been asked how long a young man should stay at the University? His reply was until he had learned to learn. (Applause.) His observation might be hasty and superficial, but he thought they had men in Australia who were wasting their powers in teaching in the generosity of their zeal. He urged them to see to it that they gave them opportunity of research that they might be stimulating examples as great enquirers. (Applause.)

### —A Struggle of Intelligences.—

As he had said, the struggle between nations was becoming more and more one between intelligences. "You already stand among the first of the nations of the world in your natural opportunities. I won't predict your greatness myself until I am more certain than I am of the other factor—the power to seize that opportunity. I want to see evidence that the strength of the people will be turned in a greater degree to service to the great ideals that have hitherto formed the mighty nations of the world. Don't rely on the extent of your

territory. The great nations are not necessarily those with extensive borders. See to it that you produce character, and you will be so great as to satisfy those who love you most." Human nature was desperately complex. A wee man and a mean man would have a wee world and a mean world; a big man a big world. Man was the compendium and counterpart of reality. "Your character, my character, is an isolated affair. Morality is a very lonely affair. Every man has to obtain a virtue entirely by his own struggle. You may surround a child with opportunities, but you cannot do more. Our destiny is ours alone, and virtues cannot enter the soul by violence. A fact must become an idea; an impulse a desire. Man acts on the idea which he himself makes. He never acts purely from impulse. The problem of forming character is the problem of freedom. The motives we make, and the knowledge we possess, the ideas we set up, are all made out of materials provided for us."

### —Vote of Thanks.—

At the instance of Sir Samuel Way, the Treasurer moved a hearty vote of thanks to Professor Jones for his delightful lecture, and it was carried with acclamation.

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## THE MAKING OF CHARACTER.

LECTURE BY PROFESSOR HENRY JONES.

The Prince of Wales Theatre at the University was crowded on Friday evening, when Professor Henry Jones, of the Glasgow University, delivered the first portion of a lecture on the making of character. The Chancellor of the University (Sir S. J. Way) presided, and introduced the lecturer.

Professor Jones, who was received with applause, remarked that in his long search in the field of moral philosophy he was afraid he had not gleaned very much. The first and exclusive duty of the State, according to the greatest political philosophers of the world, was the making of character—the evolving of a good citizen. The national destiny lay in the national character. For his part he could not look in any direction without having evidence of the paramount importance of character, and therefore, as a corollary, of the paramount importance of understanding the conditions in which character was made. "For instance," he said, "I find myself in Australia amongst a people who are proud of their country, and I think are genuinely interested in its welfare, even though some show their loyalty in a different way, namely, by attempting to get as much out of it as they can. (Laughter.) These people, so far as I can make out, are confident of its future, but the destiny is not fixed as yet, and the range of possibility is not properly defined. I have heard it said by a responsible person in Sydney that the commerce and industry of the older world are to be transferred south of the equator—(laughter)—and that Sydney is to take the place of London. (Renewed laughter.) I do not feel disposed to dip into the realm of prophecy except to say that I hope the old mother country will be like most mothers—glad if her sons surpass the parent. (Cheers.) I might add also that I think you will have a pretty big undertaking to do better than your ancestors." (Laughter.)

### Opportunity and Its Use.

Continuing, the lecturer laid down the truth that in many cases the final conditions of national prosperity could be stated in very simple terms. These final conditions consisted, in the first place, in the magnitude of a people's opportunity, and in the second place, in the magnitude of the power of that people to make use of that opportunity. There could be no doubt that there was a plenitude of opportunity in this land of Australia, sufficient, he should say, to satisfy all just desires, but this factor alone must not be relied upon. He did not think even that it was the bigger one of the two, for after all an opportunity was not there unless it was made. (Cheers.) The main factor lay elsewhere. And why? In this case the opportunities were here in the time of the aborigines, yet they were unable to use them, simply because the factor was not present. This important truth was so well recognised that it seemed almost unnecessary to dwell upon it. Opportunities, apart