

# **OUR RICH INHERITANCE**

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Our Rich Inheritance by James Freeman Jenness

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**JAMES FREEMAN JENNESS**

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# Our Rich Inheritance

By  
James Freeman Jenness



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To those  
in every place and of every time who are  
minded to make the most of  
life with its gifts and  
opportunities

## “All Things Are Yours”

*All times are thine : the fruitage of past years  
Lies mellowed at thy feet for thee to taste ;  
The present, with fleet hours, is all in haste  
To open wide its fields of golden ears.*

*The future is thine own, the years to be,  
On, and still on, till time shall be no more,  
Till, free from mortal clay, upon the shore  
Of heaven, thou claimest immortality.*

*All earth is thine, from east to farthest west,  
Thou layest tribute on each clime and zone ;  
And harvest ripen where thou hast not sown,  
As fields and ocean give to thee their best.*

*The very winds breathe music, and the birds  
Ripple the air with melodies so sweet,  
Thou art entranced, and ask them to repeat  
The song that is too deep for human words :*

*While countless flowers, in purple, blue, and gold,  
On cups and bells their silent anthems ring,  
And censers of the rarest perfume swing  
Like the robed acolytes or priests of old.*

*All grace is thine, all promises, all power,  
Omnipotence itself if there is need ;  
Who leans on man leans on a broken reed,  
Who leans on God is conqueror every hour.*

*All heaven is thine, up to its highest throne ;  
The harp, the alleluia, and the psalm,  
The robes all white, the golden crown, the palm —  
All, all are thine, since Christ is all thine own.*

HENRY BURTON.



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## Our Rich Inheritance

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**I**MAGINE a child, born in a hovel of poverty, suddenly transported to a home of wealth. So far in his experience, home had been a place of small dimensions, few comforts, and fewer pleasures. A broken table, some rickety chairs, and a tumble-down bed were the only articles of furniture which he had known. A dilapidated doll, an empty spool, and a few articles of household use which had been left within his reach were his only playthings. Now he is placed in a house with a dozen rooms, any one of which is larger than the whole tenement which his mother had called "home." Furnishings more beautiful than any he could have imagined are in the rooms. And one of these rooms, to his mind the best of them all, because of what it contains, is all his own. Everything his childish heart could wish is in that room. There are horses and dogs and carts and cars and wheelbarrows. There are dolls and picture-books and soldiers and jumping-jacks and automobiles. There is a big seat by

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the window upon which he may climb when he is tired of play, and look out upon the garden. And there, in the snugest corner of all, is a little bed, white enamelled, with brass trimmings and covers of snowy whiteness, and no one in all the wide, wide world to sleep in it but himself. Then he is told that not only this beautiful room with its many provisions for his comfort and pleasure, but the great house with its rich furnishings, the stately grounds and broad fields and wooded hills which surround it, and almost countless wealth besides, are his to use and enjoy as he will as long as he lives. What conception can be formed by such a child of the value and usefulness of his new possessions? He is dazed and blinded by the grandeur and immensity of it all.

So the soul which is born in the poverty of sin and suddenly transported into the rich inheritance of the children of God is lost in bewilderment, unable to rise to the sublimity of the thought that all things which the omnipotent Creator has made are his to use and enjoy as long as he lives. But, though the great truth grows but gradually upon him, the soul that becomes acquainted with the plans and purposes of the Father for His children will one day know that he is the heir of all the

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ages, that all things, whether of the past or present or future, are his.

What a well-nigh limitless heritage have we received from the past! Think of what nature in days gone by has stored up for our use to-day. Ages ago there were great, giant trees with branches towering up well toward the sky, and perchance the merest shrub may have grown as high as the famous "big trees" of California. Ferns as high as cedars grew among the trees and on the sides of the hills. The floods came and the winds blew, and those giant ferns and more than giant trees one after another fell to the earth and lay there still where they had fallen. Other floods came and other winds blew. Earth and rocks were washed upon the bodies of the giants, the débris of centuries buried them deeper and deeper below the surface, generation after generation of men who knew not what was beneath their feet passed over the spot. Heat and pressure did their work. And to-day men dig into the bowels of the earth and find the well-nigh priceless fields of coal for use in the generation of heat and light and power.

In those same early days the forms of mammoth beasts and reptiles stalked and glided over