

Warren Hastings.

MACAULAY'S treatise on Warren Hastings is one of the best known essays of that gifted and versatile writer. It is safe to say that the personality of Warren Hastings would be almost unknown in our day but for Macaulay. This essay takes its place among Macaulay's most interesting productions. The author paints the character of Hastings quite successfully; it is true, however, that he sets forth many actions of Hastings with too much leniency. We are given a faithful portrayal of English rule in India — of the inner workings of the Indian Council, and the princely magnificence of the native princes. We are given a true account of English depredations and native intrigues.

Warren Hastings, the scion of an ancient and distinguished family, was born in 1732. He was the younger son of a younger son, if we may be permitted to use the phrase. His mother died a few days after his birth, so he was left dependent on his grandfather, his father being already dead. He attended the village school until he was eight years old. Then his uncle took charge of him and sent him to Westminster school. When he was seventeen his uncle died, having appointed a friend of his guardian of the boy. This friend desired to be rid of his unwelcome protégé, so Hastings was given a clerkship in the East India Company, and sent off to India. In 1761, after eleven years of studious industry and careful management spent in India, he became a member of the Indian Council. In this position he acquitted himself with honor.

In 1764 he returned to England. He had accumulated a moderate fortune, but this was soon lost by careless management. He acted very generously towards his distressed relatives. After four years spent in England he again obtained a position from the Company, and departed for India in 1769. In 1772 he was appointed Governor of Bengal. In this position he met the first great difficulty of his career. The native prince of Bengal, Reza Khan,—a Mussulman, and a man of integrity according to the Indian standard of morality, was subject to the English Governor. He had a rival in the person of Nuncomar, a Hindoo Brahmin, well known by his criminal intrigues. At