

AN INTERESTING BIT OF GLADSTONIANA.

In the early hours before the dawn of the solemn morning when Mr. Gladstone's coffin was silently laid in the ancient Hall of Westminster there were present at the sad ceremony some thirty or forty privileged persons, of whom, remarkable to say, one was a trustee and another an agent of the Sun Life of Canada. That of thirty or forty people—out of a nation of forty millions—assembled on such a unique occasion of universal mourning—that two of them should be more or less interested in the Sun Life of Canada struck me as a significant indication of the position which the Company has made for itself during its five years sojourn in the United Kingdom, and I could not refrain from mentioning the fact to the Secretary, Mr. T. B. Macaulay, who was making a hurried—much too hurried—visit to England at the time and who, knowing that I have long been a martyr to the affliction of *cacoethes scribendi*, asked me to make a note of the incident for the editor of *Sunshine*. And having introduced the name of Westminster Hall may I say a word or two about that historic chamber the building of which was begun by William Rufus, son of the Conqueror, over eight hundred years ago? Westminster Hall, in which, as some one has said, a battalion of infantry might manoeuvre with ease, has been closely associated with the “making of England.” Here Charles I was condemned to the scaffold and Cromwell invested with the insignia of sovereignty, and among the names of those who have been tried by the State under the roof of Westminster Hall were those of Lord Cobham, Sir Thomas More, Protector Somerset, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Robert Devereux, Earl of Somerset, Guy Fawkes, and Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford.

During the past few weeks England has been filled with the gloom of Mr. Gladstone's death, but as a fellow townsman of the illustrious statesman I should like to refer, for a moment, to the place of his birth, which is associated in my mind more recently with Mr. Robertson Macaulay, the President of the Sun Life of Canada, and the excellent Resident Secretary in Great Britain, Mr. Geo. E. Reid.

It was blowing a hurricane, the wind swirling round the corners of the streets and nearly carrying people off their feet, one Sunday evening last autumn when the President, Mr. Reid and myself set out to walk a distance of several miles through the city of Liverpool to its suburbs. I thought that the opportunity might be taken of showing my companions the house in which Mr. Gladstone was born, but on such a night I was almost afraid of suggesting the necessary detour. The President, however, notwithstanding the violence of the wind, which sometimes almost stopped one's breathing, cheerfully agreed to the proposal, and with his hands deep in pockets and collar up, and that elastic step of his, led on. The house where Mr. Gladstone first saw the light is a substantial plain red brick mansion at 62 Rodney Street, Liverpool, a street now given up entirely to the medical profession, indeed the house itself is in the occupation of one of the foremost physicians in the city. As we stood outside the house, a somewhat belated group on such a night, the reflection came to my mind that the President of the Sun Life of Canada, though a mere youth compared with Mr. Gladstone, had this in common—both men, I thought, have the habit, from time to time, of alluding to their growing years, yet of acting with the energy of youth. Nearly a quarter of a century ago Mr. Gladstone retired from public life on the score of increasing infirmities, but retirement was no place of rest for such a mighty soul, and soon he