

so many writers and statesmen, and the sweet smiles of so many noble matrons.”*

The trial dragged on for seven long years. In its early stages attendance thereat was the fashionable function of high life. As much as fifty guineas were paid for a single admission ticket. The interest waned till the whole thing became an insufferable bore. Many who took part at its beginning had themselves gone to the Great Assizes before its close. “Of one hundred and sixty nobles who had walked in procession on its opening day, before its close sixty had been laid in their family vaults.” Only twenty-nine peers voted. On most of the twenty-two charges made against the great governor of India he was unanimously absolved. Only six voted against him on any of them. “He was called to the bar, informed from the woolsack that the Lords had acquitted him, and solemnly discharged. He bowed respectfully and retired.” He was, however, a ruined man. The expenses of his defence were over fifty thousand pounds. He lived thirty-three years in retirement, and died in 1819 in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

“Only one cemetery,” says Macaulay, “was worthy to contain his remains. In that temple of silence and reconciliation, where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried, in the Great Abbey which has for ages afforded a quiet resting-place to those whose minds and bodies have been shattered by the contentions of the Great Hall, the dust of the illustrious accused should have been mingled with the dust of the illustrious accusers. This was not to be. Yet the place of interment was not ill chosen. Behind the chancel of the parish

church of Daylesford, in earth which already held the bones of many chiefs of the house of Hastings, was laid the coffin of the greatest man who has ever borne that ancient and widely extended name. He had at length gone down to his grave in the fulness of age—in peace, after so many troubles; in honour, after so much obloquy.”

Far happier was his fate than that of Lord Clive, the merchant’s clerk who founded an empire where the foot of an Alexander had faltered, who after winning dizzy heights of fame, had ingloriously perished by his own hand before he had completed his fifth decade. From early youth, says Macaulay, he had been subject to fits of that strange melancholy “which rejoiceth exceedingly and is glad when it can find the grave.” Twice had he, when still a writer in Madras, attempted to take his life. The clouds which had long gathered round his mind closed in thick darkness. He gave Britain an empire, she gave him a title and an early grave.

The great Hall of William Rufus is to-day the noble vestibule of the Houses of Parliament, and as the members of the Government traverse its long extent between a double row of marble statesmen, the busts and statues of those who likewise once walked this way in flesh and blood, they pass over a bridge whose archways are the centuries which have spanned the history of their country. The Palace confers dignity upon the Hall, and the Hall confers antiquity upon the Palace.

To Americans and to Englishmen alike it is common ground. Within these walls and beneath this roof the foundation stones of the Constitution of the United States, as well as the foundation stones of the British Empire, were laid. It is as

* Abridged from Macaulay’s essay on Warren Hastings.