

CHURCHILL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

*The twenty-second Sir Richard Stawell Oration delivered at the
University of Melbourne on 8 October 1955*

In common with all of you, I remember the name and life and work of the late Sir Richard Stawell with deep respect. He was a man of high character, of clear mind, and with a deep sense of justice.

Great physicians are not always well-known to the public, nor is the quality of their work always properly appreciated. It is one of the splendours of the medical profession that its greatest men have not sought public notoriety, but have without restriction devoted their talents to the service of mankind, privately, quietly, their greatest technical achievements known only to their peers and their greatest human achievements known only to their patients and their patients' families.

When I was offered the honour of delivering the Stawell Lecture, I at first demurred on the intelligible grounds that there were so many more men who knew so much more about him; and that, in any event, I was not medical and could, therefore, not speak of his work with an informed and discriminating judgment. I was persuasively reassured by being told that the medical profession liked every now and then to listen to a speech by a layman, and that I could quite readily and acceptably speak upon a topic unrelated to medicine; except that, being in commemoration of Richard Stawell, it might properly refer to men of courage, character, ability, and consequence. Whether this concession to the laity was the product of that sadistic spirit which must occasionally invade the mind of even the most humane of medical men or was due to a desire to get away from 'talking shop', I am not to judge. But I have assumed the best in my own favour and have therefore undertaken to speak to you about 'Churchill and his Contemporaries'; all of them men who would have found so many matters in common with him in realm of the mind and of the spirit.

As you may know, I have for many years now been engaged in public life. Sometimes the people have been good enough to approve of that fact and sometimes their rapture has been modified. But by and large they have been generous to me, so that in the result I have been able, over a period of twenty years, to represent this country abroad on many occasions and to achieve the acquaintance and, in some cases, the close personal friendship of some of the great men of this era. There is a strange quirk in human nature which I commend, if that be necessary, to the consideration of the psychologists and psychiatrists among you. It is this. When we are very young and we read our history, we visualize the great men of the past as giants. Their very shadows appear to be enormous as they pass across the dim and distant landscapes of history. I have lived long enough and had sufficient experience to find that historic giants are quite human, that for the most part they are quite intelligible, that in many ways they think and behave just as we do, and that one must discern their greatness, not by standing with dumb amazement before them, but by trying to discover what special quality each of them has which marks him out for fame.

In the result, I have found both the great Churchill and his great contemporaries refreshingly human and indeed intelligible to people like myself, for the bulk of their time.

The idea of an incomprehensible genius which once obsessed my mind in contemplating the noble figures of the past has long since deserted me, except in the presence of eminent mathematicians, nuclear scientists, and second-year medical students. Genius in the current affairs of men usually expresses itself in the most comprehensible terms. The whole of my experience has indeed confirmed me in my very early belief that lucidity is one of the cardinal virtues and that people who understand their business can usually explain it reasonably clearly to normally educated and intelligent men. But I would not have you believe that this means that for me the romantic conceptions of youth have given place to a dry cynicism. About so many of the great I still remain in the frame of mind of Browning when he wrote that simple but moving verse:

CHURCHILL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES *cont'd*

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,
And did he stop and speak to you,
And did you speak to him again?
How strange it seems, and new!

This preliminary excursus is designed to persuade you that, if in the course of my later remarks I speak in somewhat positive terms about some of the famous men of our era, you are not to assume that I do not bow before them or profoundly admire their contribution to the welfare of man. Neither praise nor criticism from somebody like myself will, I trust, be regarded as impertinent; the truth is that, unless those of us who live on the plains but have occasionally visited (strictly as guests) the slopes of Olympus are prepared to set down some human remarks about great men, contemporary history, when it comes to be written, will be falsified by the propagandists and by those frequent biographers whose picturesqueness and dogmatism are in inverse ratio to their knowledge. And so, with your permission, I begin with the great Churchill himself.

You already know a great deal about him.

He has been a solider, a turbulent and frequently unsuccessful politician, a leader of 'lost causes and impossible loyalties', rejected at somewhat more than my own age, and ultimately the idol of the world. And all the time he has written; his books have been read across the world. His command of what I will call nervous English is unequalled in our generation. He has explained himself as few men have done. And yet his human qualities, without which his soaring imagination and command and eloquence could not have availed so much, are for most of us a deep mystery.

If I were to say to you that, as I have seen him, he has had the wisdom of venerable and embattled statesmanship, has been in action like 'an army terrible with banners', and, off duty, and sometimes on duty, has shown the chuckling spirit of a schoolboy, a remarkable capacity for political hostility, and a much more remarkable capacity for the most endearing personal friendship and goodwill; you would begin to see that the roots of his genius are deep in a soil which produces humour and understanding and good temper and bad temper and all those oddities which go to make up the English character and occasionally, as in his case, produce the most superb genius.

I have written and said so much about him in recent years that I must avoid repeating myself. I have known him from time to time for many years. I sat with him longest in the War Cabinet in the first part of 1941, when the German raiders came over every night. And since the war, in quieter but difficult days, I am honoured to say that I have enjoyed in large measure his personal association and friendship and goodwill.

His political opponents have frequently felt the lash of his tongue. But it has never been a crude lash. Indeed, I have sometimes felt that his victim in the House of Commons felt that it was a singular honour to be attacked by him. That is one of those inexplicable things that perhaps only a politician can understand.

Could I give you one illustration of the way in which his mind and body responded to the challenge of the war?

I am thinking of one week-end night at Chequers in about March of 1941 when General de Gaulle was in England and when Churchill, de Gaulle and I sat together at dinner in this famous old house in Buckinghamshire. De Gaulle was by common consent a brilliant soldier; but it is not easy for a brilliant soldier to become quite suddenly skilled in the politics of a French Resistance, in the

*This was before Mr Attlee's translation to the House of Lords and Sir Anthony Eden's resignation from office and Parliament. R.G.M.

**Now a member of the House of Lords

economics that go with politics, or in the tactful handling which, believe it or not, is one of the essentials of international relations. In brief, de Gaulle was physically as long as the average Frenchman is short; in place of the celebrated French *esprit*, he possessed a somewhat sombre appearance and smiled with difficulty. At the time of which I am speaking, his English was to say the least of it 'sketchy'; on the whole, conceivably inferior to my French. The conversations occurred in French. Winston's French is magnificent, but it is not French. '*C'est magnifique mais ce n'est pas le français.*'

I gather from my friends in London that the celebrated Birkenhead had once said of Winston's French: 'You know, I greatly admire Winston's French. It is the only French I have ever been able to understand and the odd thing is that the French appear to be able to understand it also.'

In this setting I was, I confess, being a little wickedly provocative. Every time harmony appeared to be breaking out I would throw in some vulgar observation about Dakar – a subject upon which Winston and I had exchanged conflicting cables and on which de Gaulle had somewhat turbulent views. It was a remarkable experience. We adjourned into another room. Churchill and de Gaulle walked up and down, delivering homilies at each other. I sat back with the comfortable feeling that I was witnessing a fascinating phase of history. By two o'clock in the morning, de Gaulle very sensibly decided to go to bed. I decided, for no reason that I can sensibly recall, to stay up.

The great man himself went to bed at three o'clock in the morning but before he did so he went into the little corner study at Chequers and rang up Bomber Command and Fighter Command to get the reports of the day. What he had to say to them on their reports was all compact of encouragement, rebuke, fire, criticism, what-you-will. Next morning I was hugging my pillow at some rational hour and arriving for breakfast reluctantly at nine o'clock, only to find that at seven the Prime Minister had received his despatches, had sat up in bed with some black coffee and a large cigar, and was busy dictating the directives of the day.

We do not see men like this in every generation, nor indeed does the world see too many in a century. I must confess that over the years, I have never known Winston to observe any of the rules of health. Yet his amazing mental fire must have been associated with a remarkable physical tenacity. The two things worked together, partly because they were born in him, and partly because, consciously or unconsciously, he cultivated them, using adversity to strengthen them.

The trite saying that 'the English lose the battles, but win the wars'; Philip Guedalla's epigrammatic explanation of the great Duke of Wellington's subsequent loss of nineteenth century reputation, that the English prefer their heroes to be slightly unsuccessful, to retreat gloriously to Corunna or die in the hour of victory at Trafalgar; these are not irrelevant. It is, indeed, part of the legend of our race to come from behind and to snatch victory from defeat. In my war-time association with Winston Churchill, I caught, paradoxically, a few echoes of this legend. Not that the great man was ever defeatist. Far from it. Never was there a leader more unwilling to contemplate a defeat or acknowledge a reverse. But I have seen him and heard him discuss a current situation, building up the intensity of the problem, breaking down wishful thinking; only to proceed from there literally to fight his way through the problem to a point at which all of us who were his hearers not only believed but knew beyond peradventure that, given courage and energy and endurance, victory was ours.

I could talk to you for a long time about him, about his charming and magnificent wife, and about his family. But I must resist this temptation because I must turn for a little to some of his contemporaries in order to disclose to you my deep-seated belief that great individual powers are not a freak of nature, but form part of a pattern of greatness in any country or generation. After all, even in the spacious days of great Elizabeth, Shakespeare was not a lonely figure in the superb renaissance of poetry and drama. If he had not lived at all, we would be reading the other Elizabethan dramatists much more than we do. Trees grow tallest in a tall forest, and so, believe me, Churchill has had great contemporaries. He has himself in a notable book written of some of them. If you go back home and

CHURCHILL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES *cont'd*

re-read Great Contemporaries you will find not the heartless cut and thrust of political controversy but great men written of justly, generously, and affectionately.

Birkenhead's place in history is no doubt a matter of controversy. Quite plainly his talents were greater than his achievements, and yet Churchill wrote of him the most splendid epitaph that mortal man could wish:

Some men when they die after busy, toilsome, successful lives leave a great stock of scrip and securities, of acres or factories or the goodwill of large undertakings. F.E. banked his treasure in the hearts of his friends, and they will cherish his memory till their time is come.

But let me for a few minutes go back before Churchill.

I have known six Prime Ministers of Great Britain. Two of them, Mr Attlee and Sir Anthony Eden, are still active on the political scene* and, therefore, though I could speak of each of them with deep admiration and affection, it would be an impertinence for me even to appear to sit in judgment upon them.

But three of them preceded Churchill – Ramsay MacDonald, Stanley Baldwin, Neville Chamberlain. Each in his day enjoyed wide popularity. Churchill, thank God, still does. But three of them went out of office, if not unhonoured, at least unsung.

Now I entertain what some of my friends regard as the eccentric belief that MacDonald, Baldwin, and Chamberlain were great men who rendered certain vital and abiding services to their people, and that Churchill, with all his genius to command and inspire, could not have done quite so much as he did, but for their work.

Each was at one time, no doubt, over-praised. But each has subsequently been over-condemned. It does little credit to our good sense that we should swing about so wildly in our judgments, treating today as mere folly our wild enthusiasms of yesterday. After all, if our superficial emotions are our only guide, we have no more assurance that we are right today than that we were wrong yesterday.

When I first met him, in 1935, Ramsay MacDonald was long past his best. He had become tired and old and addicted to rather vague and meaningless phrases. A leonine and handsome appearance, a fine pose and a rich voice, with occasional flashes of international insight, were all that seemed to remain of a man whose personality and force of character must have been great to lift him from a position of almost universal unpopularity and, indeed, opprobrium during the First World War to No. 10 Downing Street only a few years later.

My own contact with him was slight enough; a few meetings in London, a visit to Chequers; but I count his son, Malcolm MacDonald, now British High Commissioner in India, as a warm though now geographically distant friend. I remember Malcolm saying to me one day in London (I know he will not mind me quoting him):

You did not know my father at his best. I can recall him standing on the tail of a truck, by torchlight, speaking to a thousand miners with such power and appeal that the tears made white furrows down their faces. As a spokesman for the under-dog, as a denouncer of social and industrial injustice, he was tremendous and unforgettable.

It is easily believed. England was (and is) a traditionally conservative place. It was Ramsay MacDonald who, with fire and great political skill, brought the Labour Party from a small obscurity to the seat of government. He formed and led the first Labour Government. This (and here I state the point of my narrative) was not a mere accidental or transitory political triumph. It gave to organized

CHURCHILL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES *cont'd*

Labour, for the first time, a sense of power and therefore, inevitably for sensible men, a feeling of political responsibility.

It would surprise me if the future historian, battling his way through all the partisan records, did not come to the conclusion that but for the work of Ramsay MacDonald there might have been no instant place for a Socialist Ernest Bevin as Minister for Labour in a Conservative-led War Cabinet in the Second World War. The magnificent co-operation of 1940-45 proceeded from a consciousness in the industrial unions and among politically organized wage-earners not only of the necessities of their country, which they knew clearly enough, but also of their own national powers and responsibilities. The British National Government of 1940-45 gave a lead and direction more authoritative than could have been provided by one-party administration.

Stanley Baldwin's political reputation is today surrounded by clouds and darkness. The current picture of him is that of an indolent and not very gifted man, sucking at his pipe or inspecting his pigs, oblivious of the state of Europe or the rising menace of Hitler, ignoring the eloquent warnings of Churchill, allowing his country to go on, unaware and unprepared, to the very edge of the abyss.

Some of the lines in this picture are, alas, true enough. Some are fantastically wrong. I saw a good deal of Baldwin in those years. He was a plain and solid Englishman, of great personal friendliness and charm, an easy and indeed magnetic talker over the breakfast table, a supreme Parliamentarian in the House of Commons.

He was a poet at heart, a master of that kind of simple and moving speech which best expresses the underlying passion of the Englishman for his own countryside, its history, its form, its familiar colours and smells.

To me, England is the country, and the country is England. And when I ask myself what I mean by England, when I think of England when I am abroad, England comes to me through my various senses – through the ear, through the eye, and through certain imperishable scents ... The sounds of England, the tinkle of the hammer on the anvil in the country smith, the corncrake on a dewy morning, the sound of the scythe against the whetstone, and the sight of a plough team coming over the brow of a hill ... And above all, most subtle, most penetrating and most moving, the smell of wood smoke coming up in an autumn evening, or the smell of the scutch fires.

At more than one period of domestic political crisis, his conduct was cool, shrewd, and successful. The General Strike of 1926, trouble on the coal-fields, the unprecedented problems of the Abdication, were all handled by him with skill and a just understanding of underlying British opinion.

What was the secret of these successes, so sharply contrasting with his chronic failure to realize or deal with the menace arising in Europe?

The answer is that he was an Englishman of great character and talent, but a provincial Englishman. Europe mystified him; he was never attracted to its history or its problems; he probably illustrated to perfection the old and true proverb about the rural Englishman, that for him 'the Negroes begin at Calais'. Steelmaster Baldwin might be, by force of circumstances. But at heart he was of the English country; ready to recall his people to its beauties; possessed in rare degree of the faculty of invoking a sense of national unity. It was this sense of unity which defeated the General strike, which at one stage averted grave trouble in the coal-mines, which plucked out of the thorns of the Abdication the flower of an actually strengthened Crown.

CHURCHILL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES *cont'd*

The historian's balance may, for aught I know, weigh down against Stanley Baldwin. But the superb national unity with which Great Britain went to war against odds on 3 September, 1939, owed not a little to the man who had nurtured it in the deep and simple pride of his people.

Neville Chamberlain succeeded him at a time when the average Englishman still did not accept the inevitability or even the real probability of war. Chamberlain was the son of the great champion of Tariff Reform and Imperial Preference. His family and political background was industrial. But, as in the case of Baldwin, he was at heart a countryman. He would turn from the complexities of a Budget to a week-end whipping a remote stream, identifying obscure plants during some woodland ramble, or listening with joy to the song of a bird (and a bird he knew) in a hedged lane.

I could never understand why he was so little understood. 'He would have made a good Lord Mayor of Birmingham - in a bad year!' said the mordant Birkenhead. Yet, as I shall try to show, he rendered services to his country certainly no less remarkable than those of Birkenhead himself.

'A mere accountant!' said another critic. Yet on two occasions I sat in the gallery of the House of Commons and heard him deliver a Budget Speech with such clarity, point, and dramatic sense that I shall always regard them as among the greatest Budget Speeches I ever heard.

And what of Munich?

We might as well admit (in British countries at any rate) that, when the Prime Minister who had never flown took his Homburg hat and his folded umbrella and flew to Germany to come to terms with Hitler, nine out of ten of us, with an instinctive horror of war, said 'Thank God!'

Two years later it was hard to find a single human being who had not, so he said, disagreed with Chamberlain. The 'men of Munich' became marked men. The idol had not only turned out to have feet of clay but, oddly enough, had never, so it seemed, been an idol at all!

On 3 September, 1939, we listened, from across the sea, to the broadcast words of a declaration of war from a Prime Minister who saw his efforts in ruin about him. An hour later I was telling the people of Australia that we, too, were at war.

To most people the story of Neville Chamberlain came to be a story of ignorance of danger, of unawareness of Hitler's true character, of simplicity confronted by guile, of weak and uncertain action, of ultimate failure. Did Chamberlain, then, contribute nothing to ultimate victory?

The answer is that he gave us time, even at the price of humiliation. There had been, under the Air Administration of Philip Swinton, a concentration upon quality in the Spitfire and the Hurricane; great 'shadow' factories had been set up and equipped. The Battle for Britain had already been partly won. Let us remember that it was won not only by the superb dash, individuality, and courage of the pilots, but also by the superior speed, manoeuvrability, and fire-power of their aircraft.

If Chamberlain really believed that the risk of war was ended at Munich, and if all efforts at armament then slackened, Munich was an unqualified disaster and Chamberlain must be condemned. But I have never quite believed this. True, Germany obtained the Skoda Works and other great resources by the rape of Czechoslovakia. But Chamberlain inherited (except on the naval side and the development of fighter aircraft) a largely undefended nation. A year was worth a good deal. We were much stronger in 1939 than in 1938. And, apart from all this, the twelve months after Munich, with their grim and hateful record of treachery and aggression, did much to marshal the decent moral opinion of the world, to harden the spirit of resistance to tyranny and crime.

CHURCHILL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES *cont'd*

That is why I believe that the historian will say that Neville Chamberlain, in spite of his undoubted disposition to appease, to seek to solve the problem by postponing it, made his contribution to ultimate victory.

And then the great blows fell, and disaster was in the air, and Churchill, who in the opinion of his critics had been, up to that time, always brilliant but mostly wrong, was sent for.

Ramsay MacDonald. Baldwin, Chamberlain, could never have led the nation in war. That task was for one who understood danger and despised it, whose motto was 'action, action, action', who went down through the poetry and pride of his people into those elemental deeps of courage and defiance and sacrifice and cheerful fortitude which turned aside all attacks.

No English-speaking man or woman of our time will ever forget the thrill of hearing from time to time, over the radio, the voice of Winston Churchill, and of getting from that distant voice a new fire and a renewed bravery. It is hard to believe that there was ever a war leader like him.

But no man could be a great leader without a great people. He evoked and stimulated courage; he did not create it. He himself was and is an unrivalled benefactor to posterity. But those who went before him, with all their faults, made their own contribution to victory. Ultimate justice demands that we should occasionally remember it.

And, of course, there are others of whom I speak only as I have known them.

Lloyd George was, of course, for all practical purposes a retired and elder statesman when I first met him twenty years ago. But even in 1941, I went down to his farm at Churt and had a full day with him - to me one of intense joy. His silver mane blowing in the wind, his brilliant and penetrating eye, his personal charm and his mastery of language were all, even then, quite irresistible.

I am sure that his distinguished son, the Right Honourable Gwilym Lloyd-George, now Home Secretary in the United Kingdom Cabinet,** will not mind if I tell you a simple story which illustrates the whole matter. Gwilym in 1941 had invited me to lunch at one of the University Clubs in London, together with a couple of other men.

He said to me 'I believe you have been seeing something of my father.'

I said: 'Yes, indeed I have.'

'What do you make of him?' said Gwilym, with a twinkle in the eye.

'Well,' I said, 'in the last ten years, I don't think he has made a single political speech in the House of Commons or outside of it with which I would feel able to agree. Yet, after half an hour with him, if he said to me "Menzies, I want you to abandon everything that you are doing and follow me", I think I probably would.'

Perhaps the right way to put this matter is to say that the two great crisis leaders of our time have been Lloyd George and Churchill, and that each of them had a magnetic quality possessing almost physical force which drew men to them and enabled them to attain their most remarkable achievements.

One of Winston Churchill's older contemporaries is Lord Halifax, a former Viceroy of India, a notable Foreign Secretary, and British Ambassador to the United States when I passed through there in 1941. Halifax is a kind of man who can perhaps be produced only in his own country - but not for export. A tall man of rather sombre appearance, deeply religious and scholarly in ecclesiastical matters, he was nevertheless - or because of that fact - one who brought to international relations a dignity, a clarity of

CHURCHILL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES *cont'd*

mind, an innate sense of justice, which impressed the whole of his contemporaries and sustained on the highest level the greatest traditions of English public life.

A younger contemporary is Lord Salisbury, formerly Lord Cranbourne, known to a host of his friends as 'Bobbity' Salisbury. This may seem to you to be a strange pseudonym for one who has claims (which he does not make for himself) to be one of the wisest men of our time, but it arose in a simple way.

His famous grandfather was Robert; in the next generation, there was another Robert which inevitably became 'Bob' - a name which I trust you all treat with suitable respect - and therefore, in the third generation, some distinction had to be made and 'Bob' became 'Bobbity'.

There used to be a somewhat cynical saying that 'There are three generations from shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves' or, as I believe they used to say in Lancashire, 'from clogs to clogs'. The whole point of the saying is that it is seldom that genius, or even high talent, will be transmitted for very long.

It is therefore a stimulating thing to recall that when the first Queen Elizabeth came to the Throne a horseman went out through the mire and slush from London to Hatfield to tell the Cecil of those days that there was a new Queen. Only a few years ago, on better roads and by more modern transport, a messenger went out from London to tell the Cecil of these days - Robert Salisbury - that the second Elizabeth had come to the Throne. There is something magnificent and enduring in the Cecil blood.

The present holder of the family title has modesty, good sense, good judgment, high character, imagination, and a sense of responsibility so completely blended in him that I would think my life well spent if I had known only him among the great contemporaries of Churchill.

Before I conclude you might perhaps allow me to refer to two of Winston's great American contemporaries.

The first, of course, was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It is quite likely that the historian will say that in his declining health he was deceived at Yalta and at Potsdam. Perhaps he was, for his mind was friendly and generous, and towards the end, not easily prepared for cunning or indirect motives.

Of immense personal charm I can speak from conviction and experience. His courage was enormous. There can have been few men in the history of the world who came through a long and crippling disease ultimately to sit in one of the most powerful places of authority in the world.

It is not for people like us to attempt to estimate his ultimate place in history or the final measure of his intellectual parts. But there can be no doubt that in the very best sense of the word, he was one of the master politicians of this century. He knew his own people. He spoke intimately and easily across the wireless to his own people. He was always on our side in the war, but he knew better than anybody else how to handle his own public opinion so that his own great nation would at least not be against us; would certainly at least be the most helpful of neutrals; and would in due course be with us to the end.

His successor, Mr Truman, was written down when he became President. He appeared to the superficial onlooker to be just a man who had become President by the accident of Roosevelt's death. He answered most of his critics when, single-handed and against all odds, he retained the Presidency in 1948; but there will remain a perhaps vagrant idea that he was what the Americans would call a 'run-of-mine' politician who had not the personality or command of his more famous predecessor.

Well, I have had the opportunity of seeing a good deal of Mr Truman and of thinking a good deal about what, when he was President, he was called upon to decide and to do.

CHURCHILL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES *cont'd*

I think, therefore, that I should tell you, without any presumption, I hope, that he was and is a great man with qualities of the most essential and remarkable kind. He had many bitter decisions to take, including the crucial decision about the atomic bomb. He took his decisions and never swerved from them. And when his decisions had been taken and the political attacks followed and many newspapers assailed him, he stood to his guns, quite serenely, cheerfully, humanly. I don't think that I have met a more naturally friendly man. I don't think that I have met many men who behind their naturalness and friendliness possessed such pertinacity of mind, such determination to pursue the course seen to be the right one. I would venture to say that any man who possesses decision, courage, and endurance has great claims to honour in a world in which time-serving and being all things to all men are so frequently regarded as the marks of a superior political intelligence.

I have named only a few of Winston Churchill's contemporaries. I could have spoken to you for another two hours about twenty or thirty more. But I have mentioned those whom I have named because it is one of my profound beliefs that the greatest men are not lonely accidents but come out of a generation of great men who provide at once their stimulus and their foil.

The whole purpose of my speech to you tonight has been to endeavour to restore the balance. It will be a poor day for our race when any generation arises which is not able to say with a full heart and a true mind 'Let us now praise famous men'.