

Lord Chelmsford eighty-five. Lord Eldon and his brother, Lord Stowell, have already been mentioned. Of fourteen Judges who held the office of Lord Chancellor during Queen Victoria's reign the average length of life was over seventy-nine. One, Lord Halsbury, still survives and is strong of body and clear of head at eighty-six. It is promised to those who serve the higher law that "length of days, and long life, and peace" shall be added unto them. May we not believe, from the facts here briefly recorded, that the scriptural promise has been given a wider application?

Looking somewhat more deeply, a study of their lives leaves the conviction that, with rare exceptions, they owed their promotion, not to mere chance circumstances, but to their appreciation of the difficulties of their calling and to the perseverance and industry which they applied in overcoming them. Native mental gifts played their part, but of their success the language of Lord Campbell, in speaking of Lord Hardwicke's great achievements, may be used, that "like everything else that is valuable, it was the result of earnest and persevering labour." The account of Lord Mansfield's great exertions to prepare himself for his legal career would cast a damper over the spirits of most young men looking to the law as the avenue to success and distinction. The statement is made of Lord Eldon that so thorough and comprehensive had been his preparation that before he had ever pleaded a cause he was fit to preside on the bench. Lord Nottingham, Lord Somers, Sir Edward Sugden, indeed all who won real distinction, laid out their lives on the same principle and reaped the fruits of it.

Such preparation must have preceded true success; but any real knowledge of the history of English Judges will impress one with how well in almost all respects the great majority measured up to a high standard of judicial fitness—in natural ability, in knowledge, in independence, in general judicial demeanour, in the labour and practical skill necessary for the thorough and efficient administration of the large duties they were called to fulfill. Individual faults have been recorded. Occasionally a poorly fitted or even incompetent selection was made. Owing