

as well as any expert practitioner in Mr. Justice Barnes' Court; as a commercial lawyer he hardly had a rival; he was a match for the Old Bailey advocate in the technicalities of the criminal law or the rules of evidence; in bankruptcy he was as much at home as the judge in bankruptcy himself, and needless to say he was a master of the common law under which he was nurtured. And to this versatility Lord Esher has added a quality without which learning may avail little for the administration of justice; he has been ever "rich in saving common-sense." He once declared that the business of a judge is to find a good legal reason for the conclusions of common-sense, and this dictum is the key to the success of his judicial career. He has never been one of the Pharisees of technicality who think that man was made for the law, and not rather the law for man; he has ever striven to mould the law to meet the exigencies of business and the changes in civil society. His shrewdness, his knowledge of the world, has enabled him to see what justice required, and he has bent all the resources of his fine intellect and his legal learning to do that justice.

This freedom from technicality, this readiness to welcome reforms and loyally carry them out, is the more remarkable and the more honourable when we remember the system and the traditions under which Lord Esher was trained; that his career reaches back to the days when "right and justice and substance," as Lord Russell of Killowen lately said, "were sacrificed to the science of artificial statement," the pseudo-science of special pleading; to the days when *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce* was dragging its weary length along in an unreformed Court of Chancery, and law and equity were on worse terms than Katherine and Petruchio in the early days of their courtship. Called to the Bar more than half a century ago, what a retrospect is his; what kaleidoscopic changes of law and life have passed before his view! Yet through them all Lord Esher has come, not only ripe in experience, but almost unscathed by time. With all his burden of more than eighty years, the Master of the Rolls is still—or was till yesterday—the youngest judge on the Bench, the most light-hearted, and the most popular. Whatever attractions there might be in other Courts, Court of Appeal No. 1 was always full. His genial wit played round all alike—his brothers on the Bench, Attorneys-General, eminent Queen's Counsel, confident juniors—piercing often to the heart of the case; *ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?* But it was "beautifullest sheet-lightning," as