

Noble, King's biographer, "who had stepped into the shop of Mr. Jerome King and had there seen his son up to the elbows in grocery, would have perceived in him a future chancellor of Great Britain?" So, too, another lord chancellor, Lord Erskine, was, before his call to the bar, a midshipman in the royal navy for four years, and subsequently for seven years a subaltern in an infantry regiment; while a third lord chancellor, Lord Brougham, migrated from the Scotch to the English bar, to which he was called at the mature age of nine and twenty; and a fourth holder of the great seal, Lord Truro, better known as Sir Thomas Wilde, was for thirteen years a practising solicitor, not being called to the bar till he had entered on his thirty-fifth year.

At least one chief justice of England, Sir Charles Abbott, afterward created Lord Tenterden, was on the point, before his call to the bar, of taking holy orders in the Anglican communion; as were, before their call to the Irish bar, the late Right Hon. William Brooke, a master in chancery, and one of the greatest equity lawyers of the past generation—and the Hon. Francis A. Fitzgerald, whose brother was a bishop of Killaloe, who was for twenty-three years one of the barons of the Irish Court of Exchequer, and who retired from the Irish bench in 1882, amid universal regret, almost immediately after he had been offered and had declined the great office of Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. So, too, the late Mr. Justice O'Hagan, the judicial member of the Irish Land Commission, and the Right Hon. The MacDermott, Q. C., who was attorney-general for Ireland in the late administration, were both educated for the Roman Catholic priesthood.

At the Irish bar there were in comparatively recent years two instances of men who attained great eminence, having followed for many years other callings. The Hon. Charles Burton, who was a justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland from 1820 till his death in 1847, came to Dublin from England and worked for ten years before his call to the bar as clerk in an attorney's office. The late Mr. Gerald Fitzgibbon, an Irish master in chancery, was, till his approach to middle age, the chief clerk in a distillery. Mr. Justice Burton, before whom Mr. Fitzgibbon was examined as a witness in a complicated matter of account, was so much struck by his ability that he recommended him from the bench to get called to the bar, instancing his own case.