

—I may say this as I did not invent it—but very interesting to me individually, as I got it from Lord Westbury when a young hand at the Bar and pleading before him. I was plunging into citation of cases, when he very good-naturedly pulled me up and said: “Mr. Russell, don’t trouble yourself with authorities until we have ascertained with precision the facts, and then we shall probably find that a number of authorities which seem to bear some relation to the question have really nothing important to do with it.” My fourth rule is to try to apply judicial faculty to your own case in order to determine what are its strong and weak points, and in order to settle in your own mind what is the real turning-point in the case. This method enables you to discard irrelevant topics and to mass your strength on the point on which the case hinges.’

Thirteen years after joining the Bar—a period more notably brief in those days than at the present time—Russell took silk. This important step, which he took in 1872, created some misgiving among his friends. Baron Martin, in a letter written some years later to Lord Selborne, confessed that he had misjudged the young barrister’s powers, but that events had shown how wisely he had acted. He was fortunate in the circumstances that attended his early career as a leader. Coleridge and Hawkins and several other leading advocates were giving their whole time to the Tichborne case. But Russell, with his rare combination of forensic gifts, must have achieved with rapidity a foremost place in the profession, even if his career as a Q.C. had been commenced under less favorable conditions. Few men have brought a richer store of gifts to forensic work. He possessed a broad knowledge of legal principles, a firm and ready grasp of essential facts, and a wide acquaintance with the world; he was gifted with an eloquent tongue, a pleasant voice, and a handsome presence; he was a man of remarkable tact, of dauntless courage, and boundless industry. To mention the cases in which he appeared in the heyday of his success would be to write a list of all the causes celebres from the seventies to the nineties. Among the more celebrated were the convent case of *Saurin v. Starr*, the Belt case, the Dilke divorce case, the Colin Campbell case, Miss Fortescue’s breach of promise case, the famous Baccarat case, the great ‘Pearl’ case, the Maybrick murder trial, the Marks and Butterfield case, and the Hansard Union trial. His practice was by no means, however, confined to mere *Nisi Prius* advocacy. But the most notable of his triumphs was achieved before the Parnell Commission in 1889. He appeared, with Sir R. T. Reid, the late Sir Frank Lockwood, and Mr. Asquith, for Mr. Parnell, to rebut the serious accusations of the *Times*. The six days’ speech he delivered on this occasion was the most brilliant effort of his lifetime, and will probably rank among the finest orations ever delivered at the Bar. ‘I have spoken,’ he said at the close of this memorable speech, ‘not merely as an advocate—I have spoken for the land of my birth; but I feel, I profoundly feel, that I have been speaking, too, for and in the