

Chancellorship. From that date till the defeat of the Beaconsfield government in 1880, Cairns (on whom, by the way, an earldom was conferred in 1878) was, after the Prime Minister, the leader of the Conservative party in the House of Lords, and his speeches on the Triple Alliance, the unconstitutional appointment of Sir Robert Collier to a seat in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and the autocratic suppression of the rebellion of Langalibalele by the late Sir Benjamin Pine, deserve and will repay perusal as models of nervous eloquence and critical ability. On the death of Lord Beaconsfield, Cairns' accession to the vacant leadership was fervently desired by a section of the Conservative party, which, while fully admitting the great intellectual power of the Marquis of Salisbury, feared his rashness and distrusted his statesmanship. But years and health were on Lord Salisbury's side, and Cairns retired definitely from public life. He died at Bournemouth on April 2nd, 1885.

Earl Cairns was the most distinguished, and not the least earnest, of our great religious chancellors. A stern Protestant in his views of ecclesiastical polity, he disliked, with all the strength of his upright, austere nature, the excessive tolerance of modern politico-Protestant thought. He laboured faithfully to spread the growth of religious teaching, lent the aid of his voice and his purse to Dr. Barnardo's Homes, frequently presided at religious meetings at Exeter Hall, and was a Sunday-school teacher up to, practically, the end of his long career. Mr. Gladstone is believed to have expressed the opinion that Sir George Jessel, the late Master of the Rolls, was "the greatest legal genius of the century." But there are few lawyers who would endorse this verdict. Sir George Jessel undoubtedly possessed a legal intellect of the highest order. He disposed of the most complex legal problems with the ease and vigour, although not without some of the coarseness, of a huge mastiff worrying an insignificant terrier. But he lacked what Cairns possessed—the cultured imagination and the vein of poetry which are essential to the exercise of the highest genius in the juridical art. In Cairns' best judgments Burke's idea, that "all human law is properly declaratory," is realized. They are not so much ratiocinations as illuminations. Disregarding the slow, syllogistic processes by which ordinary judges arrive at their decisions, he goes straight to his mark, with the swift, strong, subtle instinct of a woman for truth, and